FIGHTING FORD
More people are talking mass action, as the Ontario government plans more and deeper health cuts.
pg.5

ORGANIZING TO BEAT PRECARIOUS WORK
Game Workers Unite - the first part in a special series about efforts to unionize precariously employed workers
pg.6

DEFENDING VENEZUELA
Report from the Sao Paulo Forum, where delegates committed to building global solidarity with Venezuela.
pg.9

FEDERAL ELECTION COUNTDOWN
Communist Party leader Liz Rowley talks about what’s at stake in this election, and what labour needs to do.
pg.12

NO TIME TO WASTE!
This situation will worsen under the USMCA, according to the际, the renegotiated NAFTA deal that gives corporations even more power to cut jobs and manufacturing in Canada, to put the suppo- agement system in agriculture, to privatize universal public healthcare, and to weaken labour rights. Corpora- rations and the state are driven by the goal of maximizing profit and this country is projected to be the target of the North's plan of a 30% net reduction in emissions by 2030. Instead of fronting this crisis, successive conservative governments and the bourgeoisie support policies that worsen the struggles of the working class.

There is no time to waste – the labour movement needs to start now, to engage the entire working class and its allies in an escalating fight against austerity, environmental destruction, and war.

In the face of this, the labour movement needs to move into action for a full employment crisis with permanent jobs, decent wages and benefits, strong union militancy and democracy, and racial and national equality. One way to do this is to challenge the short work week, with no loss in take home pay, in combination with other improvements like livable wages and strong plant closure legisla- tion. Another is to demand ex- ample improvements in every ing, public services and social programs.

The climate crisis and threat of environmental disaster are at the forefront of the majority of people in this country. Temperatures in Canada are ris- ing – 2.5 C higher than the 40 faren- heat regions of the world. The results are flooding and forest fires in the Arctic, rising sea levels and a whole host of other severe climate effects. The climate crisis means that extreme weather leading to drought, flooding and forest fires. Already, climate change is serious enough af-fecting health and livelihoods, industries like agriculture and fishing, and threatened or exting- uished species.

It's a global crisis that calls for urgent and radical measures by governments, but the promises from the Canadian government have been woefully inadequate and this country is projected to be the target of the North's plan of a 30% net reduction in emissions by 2030. Instead of fronting this crisis, successive conservative governments and the bourgeoisie support up and coming federal governments that will protect their allies in the big en- ergy and resource monopolies.

Labour needs to take a lead in responding to the climate crisis by demanding that the energy cor- porations be placed under public ownership and democratic control. This would take profit out of the picture and allow for effective climate change action, through sharply reduced emission limi- ts and strict enforcement, while maintaining good jobs and sal- es. This kind of action can unite workers from the US, Canada, Mex- ico and beyond, and with the support of millions of everyday people, and cap-and-trade schemes need to end. The labour movement needs to step up and demand that government spending re- flect working class priorities, not the priorities of military-related industries or Donald Trump or the generals at NATO.

There is no time to waste – the labour movement needs to start now, to engage the entire working class and its allies in an escalating fight against austerity, environmental destruction, and war. This means building unity in the trade union movement – including unions like Unifor who are outside the CLC – on a class struggle basis, with the working class leading, and defea- ting those right-wing trade union leaders who block mass inde- pendent labour political action so they can have more inroads with capitalists. It means pre- paring for the election and the struggles afterwards, by advanc- ing labour's own political de- mands and insisting that can- didates and parties seeking labour's support take public policy direction from the Har- dward.
Workers and allies fight for Winnipeg transit

Hundreds of members of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1303, who are in negotiations with Winnipeg Transit, marched in front of the Winnipeg General Strike centenary monument to deliver a message to City Hall and the rest of the city that they are united and prepared to strike if necessary. Two years ago, this was the scene as the City of Winnipeg imposed a contract on Winnipeg Transit operators that was only a stunt. But poor scheduling, which prefers car culture and the disastrous form of development which goes along with it. If the ATU can strike, it could be a catalyst for car culture and the disastrous form of development which goes along with it. If the ATU can strike, it could be a catalyst for a new vision for transit that connects Manitobans across the province. It is important to have a good public system in place. We're the ones that keep the city moving. But poor scheduling and high bus prices mean increased delays and frustrated passengers who can only escape and lead to assaults on operators. At any given time, 40% of buses are running late, a direct result of the lack of transit funding from the City. The ATU is facing an estimated budget surplus of $4.2 million because the City is not doing a much-needed expansion of service.

The ATU representative pointed out that 26 years ago, the City had a fleet of 260 buses. Now the City has a fleet of 570 buses, but even that does not represent an increase in capacity as the newer, more accessible, low-floor buses have fewer passengers than the older vehicles.

BC COMMUNISTS DEMAND EDUCATION MINISTER'S OUSTER

Party calls for justice for teachers, students

The Communist Party of BC has issued a statement saying the present course of the NDP government on public education issues poses serious threat to the interests of teachers, support staff, students and families across the province. The Party is demanding that Premier Horgan replace Education Minister Rob Fleming with someone who can act swiftly to help workers and students or suffer the consequences.

The Party is demanding that the government, led by Brian Pallister, is advancing a corporate agenda that has seen many public services cut and social problems exacerbated by the privatization of social housing. In its first three years, through every struggle against the anti-education and anti-union BC Liberals, "Today we express our full solidarity with the BCCTF, WGEU, the City of Calgary, and the teachers and other working people who will treat teachers professionally and with respect; who will demand that the progressive demand for free public transit is being raised."

The Communist Party is the only one of our partners running that has made free public transit part of its platform. A spokesperson for the Communist Party said, "Our proposal is that the province establish a public corporation under democratic control, that provides open-access, accessible, free and frequent public transit across Manitoba and between rural and urban communities. The demise of private operators like Greyhound, which no longer saw a profit in exploiting rural Manitoba has been a shock to many as well as a safety risk. We think mobility is a public good. This province needs a vision for the 21st century of green and free transit that connects Manitobans within and outside their communities.

Despite the City's intransigence, the ATU remains strong and united with a savvy leadership. The demands for expanded service are truly responsive to the needs of residents of Winnipeg, a city-dominated by a ruling class which prefers car culture and the disastrous form of development that goes along with it. If the ATU can strike, it could be a catalyst for a new vision for transit that connects Manitobans across the province. It is important to have a good public system in place. We're the ones that keep the city moving. But poor scheduling and high bus prices mean increased delays and frustrated passengers who can only escape and lead to assaults on operators. At any given time, 40% of buses are running late, a direct result of the lack of transit funding from the City.
OPINION

WHAT WE REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE SNC-LAVALIN AFFAIR

The Federal Ethics Commission’s ruling that Prime Minister Justin Trudeau violated conflict of interest rules, when he pressured then-Attorney General Jody Wilson-Raybould to halt major criminal charges against SNC-Lavalin and instead provide a Deferred Prosecution Agreement (DPA), could indeed cost the Liberals the next election. The Deferred Prosecution Agreement route, established by the transnational corporations and their governments in the US, UK, and now Canada, is the “get out jail free” law that lets corporations break laws and avoid criminal prosecution. Instead of enforcing the law, a DPA allows a corporation to pay a fine, acknowledge guilt, and promise not to do it again. It’s worked so well for the corporations that the same TNCs have come back again and again for DPA in the US and the UK. It’s just a cost of doing business, which is why SNC-Lavalin pushed the Liberals to introduce DPA legislation in the 2018 federal budget. None of the opposition parties, including the NDP and Greens, opposed Deferred Prosecution Agreements when this went through Parliament last year. There was no hue and cry from Tory leader Andrew Scheer – in Parliament or outside – about the enormous power that DPAs gave to corporations and about the danger to democracy and the rule of law that were the built-in feature of Deferred Prosecution Agreements. One of the very few organizations that did sound the alarm and call for repeal of the DPA law was the Communist Party of Canada. So far, the focus has been on Trudeau and the Liberals, as if the problem were limited to a Liberal PM pressuring a Liberal Cabinet Minister who is also Attorney General. But this is the tip of the iceberg – with 90% of the problem submerged in the corporate press and media. The real issue here is corporate crime and the rule of law, of the legal system, and of democracy. As we approach the federal election, a key question is who will elect to protect working people against corporations? A sharp shift to the left, including the election of Communists and others committed to sovereignty, democracy, peace, and redistribution of wealth, is the only way forward. With a world-wide recession on the horizon, the likely alternative is a return to war, reaction and corporatism.

Liz Rowley, Leader CPC
DREW GARVIE

so does need for mass action

verted into loans. Many are ask-

teachers and the classes they

planned government spending

Economic review has identified

tween life and death for many.

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“wage freeze legislation” which is

Ontario alone.

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The government has already tak-

Agency extraordinary powers to

future, thanks to a new law giv -

one who is ill face an uncertain

school at all.

2023-24. As Table 1 shows, even

type 1 and 2 above, the govern-

identified some spending cuts

in program budgeting. (See

The new cuts are the same

level of cuts in the 1990s, and (b)

2023-24. As Table 1 shows, even

the Ford government's plan also has some

unannounced tax changes that will reduce revenue by $0.2 bil-

lion in 2020-21, and by $0.6 bil-

lion in 2023-24. So, not only has the PC government produced

unannounced tax cuts in this year, we will also get more, as yet un-

named, tax cuts in the years ahead. These revenue cuts delay

the achievement of a balanced budget, deepen the provincial de-

ficit, and require more cuts to social programs. And these tax

cuts are planned even as the gov-

government continues to claim – with shambling logic – that the

program cuts it is imposing are required by the province's fiscal

situation.

Table 5 shows the revenue im-

pact of unannounced tax policy

changes.

Bottom line – The govern-

ment must identify and imple-

ment very major cuts for health care

and all social programs over the next five years if it keeps to its Budget plan.

Local communities need to

speak out and require this gov-

ernment to change direction –

just as the previous PC govern-

ment did.

Table 3 shows a chart for all pro-

gram spending. (See

Table 5)

As Ford agenda comes into focus, so does need for mass action

DREW GARVIE

People in Ontario are start-

ing to understand what the Doug

Ford agenda is all about.

High school students will be return-

ning to school in a few weeks to

find that 35% of their teachers’

salaries will be cut, as they are

in classroom culture.

University and college stu-

dents are seeing the loss of

their student assistance, and

thousands are finding out that

they rely on have been cut

from loans. Many are ask-

ning whether they can return to

school at all.

Health care workers and any-

one who is ill face an uncertain

future, thanks to a new law giv-

ing the government the power to

Five years ago.

The Ford agenda is about

joblessness and the decimation of

communities. This is seen in the actions of major corpora-

tions like Bombardier and GM, both in jobs in search of higher

profits.

The Conservatives made ma-

jor cuts to Indigenous Affairs in

Ontario. This will slow land claim

processes, and greatly increase the cost of

and re-development. It means the Ontario
government program plans on ignoring the sovereignty of

Indigenous people while it invades corpora-

tions to exploit Ontario's Ring of

Fire in Northern Ontario. This

week, people in Attawapiskat dis-

covered they are again unable to

drink their water or use it to wash

food or themselves.

When Ford cancelled the

minimum wage increase, it

meant a transfer of wealth from

Ontario’s lowest-paid workers to

business in the order of $1.3 bil-

lion. And the government has done

nothing in terms of meaningful

action to protect the envi-

ronment. Along with the threat of a major imperialist war, the

single biggest danger for human-

ity is a climate crisis. Doug is

headed for a cliff and the driver

is refusing to change direction.

We know that the situation in

Ontario wasn’t rosy last year be-

cause Doug Ford was elected.

More than two decades of

brutal austerity in the public sec-

tor have meant to fall far far

behind inflation. Workers today have significantly lower living standards than they did twen-

ty-five years ago.

The Ford cuts are not a

change in direction in Ontario, but rather an acceleration of ag-

gressive neoliberal policy. On-

tario now sits dead last among the provinces in per-capita gov-

ernment expenditures and more than $2,000 below the average for the rest of Canada. Program spending over the last decade has been growing at half the rate it has been in the rest of Canada.

While maintaining one of

the lowest corporate tax rates

in North America, Ford is lying when he says that cuts are the

only response to a provincial

deficit.

The good news is more and

more people understand we can-

not wait for the next election, and that we need to act now to block these measures and stop this government. The massive high school walkouts and rallies to protect public healthcare and stop education cuts put tens of thousands into the streets and have clearly shown that mass action is possible.

Now is the time to build a People’s Coalition, with labour at its head, to undertake mass action like the 1990s Days of Ac-

tion which, by the way, could have brought down the last Conservative government in On-

tario.

Drew Garvie is leader of the

CPC (Ontario)
Economic developments have brought sweeping changes to the character of work. The rapid growth of precarious employment and the rise of the gig economy are among the most challenging factors that affect workers’ ability to organize and struggle collectively. Confronting these challenges has required new approaches by labour movements. In this three-part series, People’s Voice examines how workers and unions are navigating the stormy seas of the new economy.

PART ONE: THE GAME INDUSTRY

Game Workers Unite is not a union. It’s stated purpose is to “connect pro-union activists, employed workers, and allies across borders and across ideologies in the name of building a unionized game industry.” It is a non-union part of the broader labour movement whose key role lies in its ability to educate game workers. GWU has developed dynamic and active relationships with a large number of trade unions in Canada and in countries around the world.

EDUCATION FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION

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The organization is just over a year old and has made a tremendous impact on the labour movement in a short time. Joseph is confident that the group’s unique approach to labour struggle is paying off. “Game Workers Unite was also felt by the trade union movement in Canada. The jobs can be attractive – game industry contractors rely on digital “transaction platforms” for their work, a corporate practice that accelerates the replacement of regular jobs by contracts. Platforms have also been proven to contribute to reproducing racist and sexist patterns in employment, as the terms of commission-based contracts are typically “screened” toward specific target demographics.

And then there’s Crunch. Even among the tech sector, the game industry is notorious for its mandatory uncompensated overtime. Last year, Rockstar Games co-founder Dan Houser boasted in a magazine interview that one of the company’s project teams had “worked several 100-hour weeks” when they were finishing Red Dead Redemption 2. The “March or Die” management approach, and corresponding marketing pitch, paid off mightily for Rockstar: the game sold 25 million copies within months and generated $720 million in sales during its opening weekend. But the costs of Crunch on workers are enormous: burnout, doctor-mandated stress leave, and mental and physical breakdowns. The hiring and firing of temporary workers who are not unionized is much more likely to result in lower pay and worse conditions than hiring a permanent worker who is unionized.

Some of the difficulties are legislative. In a number of provinces, for example, labour legislation includes exceptions for information technology workers, excluding them from the right to collective bargaining and other labour rights. For game workers who rely on transaction platforms, one of the key challenges is getting the platform treated as an employer. As these workers are contractors and have no access to union communication to young workers, there’s nothing preventing a platform from treating them as independent contractors.

Another difficulty is workforce turnover. The combination of precarious employment and a high stress environment means that a lot of game workers leave in short order. A recent survey done last year, based on data from LinkedIn, showed that the tech sector has the highest turnover rate of industries, at 13.2%. Notably, the tech sector is in the top 10% workforce turnover across all sectors, while the game industry had the highest turnover rate, at 13.3%. By comparison, the average turnover across all sectors was 10.9%.

In a major fundamental challenge, observes Joseph, is a generational divide in which many young workers simply don’t identify with unions. “There’s been a long stretch of time since the union movement had strong organizing campaigns, and so this whole industry and area of work have grown up in a vacuum. Sure, lots of game workers know what unions are and what they’ve accomplished, but they tend to view that as something that happened in another time. Unions exist but the process of organizing is quite a foreign idea. If young workers have experience with union, it’s usually because they worked somewhere that was already organized. There’s a big difference between getting a job in a union workplace and actually joining a union.”

He notes that this divide was also felt by the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people. You’re in it for the long haul so it’s a real commitment from the trade union movement who seemed unsure, at best, of how to approach game workers. To organize this industry, you need a group of dedicated, politically engaged people.
The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU) represents more than 130 million workers in 180 countries including those from most of South America and Africa, India, China, Vietnam, the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea, Cuba, Europe, Russia, the Middle East, and many more. There are two features that differentiate it from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to which the Canadian labour movement is aligned. The WFTU is a “class-oriented international trade union organization, which has as its prime objective the emancipation of the working people by means of struggle.” It is also virulently anti-imperialist.

The report, available at www.wftucentral.org, provides an assessment of the current state of work in 130 countries including those from most of South America and Africa, India, China, Vietnam, the Democratic Peoples’ Republic of Korea, Cuba, Europe, Russia, the Middle East, and many more. There are two features that differentiate it from the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) to which the Canadian labour movement is aligned. The WFTU is a “class-oriented international trade union organization, which has as its prime objective the emancipation of the working people by means of struggle.” It is also virulently anti-imperialist.

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GLOBAL CLASS STRUGGLE

US/INDONESIA: “Chicken of the Sea" violates labour rights

US-headquartered packaged seafood provider Chicken of the Sea, a Sea of Good, also likes to talk about sustainability, but workers have been seeing through the Americas. Like many US seafood companies, Chicken of the Sea sources products from the Indonesian company Bumi Nusantara Internusa (BMI), which is trying to send a trade union leader to prison for six years.

For many years, a union of workers at BMI factories in Lampung, Indonesia, has been seeking to end abusive practices which particularly affect many women employees. Union secre- tary Reni Destria, a young mother, has been employing BMI workers in the government mandatory health insurance program since she returned from giving birth.

In retaliation, Reni was ar- rested and jailed at the compa- ny’s insistence on May 17, and is currently on trial. The indict- ment offers the judges multiple options on which to convict her. BMI has nominated her crimes as “acting in jail — the maximum penalty for an infraction she committed eight years ago, when she submitted a fake high school certificate — for which she is not even an issue until the company had to start contributing to em- ployees’ health insurance.

BMI has told Reni she can go free if she resigns from her union position. She has refused, and for months, unions have been raising funds for Reni’s legal de- fences at BMI. The labour move- ments in Lampung are now calling on workers that at its source firms should be doing the same to exercise their la- bour rights.

JAPAN/SOUTH KOREA: Unions join forces

The presidents of the sec- ond-largest trade unions in Ja- pan and South Korea have joined forces to oppose Tokyo’s export restrictions against Seoul, saying the measures were doing im- mense harm to both countries’ economies.

Yoshikuni Odagawa, presi- dent of Japan’s National Confed- eration of Trade Unions (Roken), and Zenroren, spoke on August 15 at the headquarters of the Ko- rean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU) in central Seoul. Fourteen thousand union members have nearly 1.2 million members from 21 union federations.

Odagawa warned that the ad- ministration of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe was trying to resolve a diplomatic issue with an economic measure in order to rally support from his right-wing base.

Odagawa said it was crucial for his confederation to join forces with the KCTU to criticize the Abe administration, and that Zenroren would rally on Aug. 27 in front of the Prime Minister’s residence in response to the economic retaliations against Seoul.

The press conference was among a number of events in August that highlighted a day in which the Korea day gained independence from Japanese colonial rule in 1945.

His visit to Seoul followed a statement from Zenroren on Aug. 15 that Korea had been held as a labor exporter of Japan since the years of retaliating against Seoul for Seoul’s Supreme Court rulings last year ordering two Japanese companies to compensate Korean war-related forced laborers. Zenroren added that Abe was acting as “an international nationalizing” that political action to match Japan’s Constitutional status. "In Tokyo, suppose you can’t possess mili- tary forces."

“People that are the Abe gov- ernment’s export restrictions will inflict gross harm on the econo- mies of both Korea and Japan,” Zenroren said. "Not only labourers and citizens but Japa- nese beauty and citizens also be subject to the severe ram- ifications.

Zenroren says it will coop- erate with Korean citizens and workers in calling for Abe’s res- ignation, after the PM imposed export restrictions and then re- peated Seoul’s decision to call for "No one wants to start a war, for which countries could suffer the most?"

The social and trade unions movements want to inform so- cial movements, governments, and legisl- ation, and to pressure Sena- tos to vote against. They see the pension changes as the start of right-wing Ministry of Finance’s agenda to eliminate the rigidity of the Korean Social Security system, cutting cuts and budget cuts for public universities.

"The pensions act followed an Au- gust vote by the chamber of deputies to approve an amend- ment to the Social Security Law, putting it on to the Senate where it needs to pass for implementation.

"The unions and women’s rights organizations are Inde- pendent Democratic Union of Lesotho (IDU), United Textile Employers (UNITE), the Nation- al Clashing Textile and Allied Workers Union (NACTFU), the Federation of Women Lawyers in Lesotho (FIDA) and Women- and Law in Southern Afri- can Research and Education Trust-Lesotho (WALAT). Under the agreement, an independent organization will be established in each factory to receive com- plaints, carry out investigations and assessors, identify vi- olations of a jointly developed code of conduct, and direct and enforce remedies in accordance with the Lesotho. The project will also involve extensive worker-to-worker and manage- ment education, and related activities.

JAPAN: Heatstroke kills Tokyo building trades worker

On August 8, a 50-year-old construction worker died of sus- pected heatstroke while laying a cable outside the Tokyo Big Bind airport and the southern Algarve- region, said Rennco, a trade union that has been presenting to its members in higher temperatures.

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On August 13, three days into a strike, Portuguese fuel tanker drivers rejected a new govern- ment decree requiring them to fulfill minimum services or face arrest.

"No-one will respect the min- imum service or civil requisi- tion," said union spokespeople Pedro Portal Henriques. The union said the government is屦行 increases in their basic salaries and improved working conditions.

Japan's trade unions have called on the govern- ment to follow the protests. The protest calls for the government to secure the rights of the workers and the ma- jority of the population, especial- ly the poor. Instead, they are demanding sustainable econom- ic growth, and the right to decent work and a decent retirement.

LEBANON: Pact to end gender-based violence

Civil society groups, an in- dustrial manufacturer, and the national government have agreed to launch a pilot program to generate long-term solutions to gender violence and harmlessness. The program also aims to meet the needs of victims of violence in Lebanon, employing more than 10,000 workers.

Five Lebanese-based trade unions and workers’ organiz- ations, as well as U.S.-based Worker Rights Consortium, Solidarity Center and Workers United, have signed agreements to port 28 fuel tankers during the first two days of the strike.

If the strike goes on for a third day, a report noting there has been a series of “indications of a con- trolled tragic fate, strongly re- fused to believe that the organ- ism on the grounds that it fell outside of their jurisdiction.

Zenroren added that Abe was acting as “a nationalizing national” that political action to match Japan’s Constitutional status. "In Tokyo, suppose you can’t possess mili- tary forces."

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"The pensions act followed an Au- gust vote by the chamber of deputies to approve an amend- ment to the Social Security Law, putting it on to the Senate where it needs to pass for implementation.

"The unions and women’s rights organizations are Inde- pendent Democratic Union of Lesotho (IDU), United Textile Employers (UNITE), the Nation- al Clashing Textile and Allied Workers Union (NACTFU), the Federation of Women Lawyers in Lesotho (FIDA) and Women- and Law in Southern Afri- can Research and Education Trust-Lesotho (WALAT). Under the agreement, an independent organization will be established in each factory to receive com- plaints, carry out investigations and assessors, identify vi- olations of a jointly developed code of conduct, and direct and enforce remedies in accordance with the Lesotho. The project will also involve extensive worker-to-worker and manage- ment education, and related activities.

On August 13, three days into a strike, Portuguese fuel tanker drivers rejected a new govern- ment decree requiring them to fulfill minimum services or face arrest.

"No-one will respect the min- imum service or civil requisi- tion," said union spokespeople Pedro Portal Henriques. The union said the government is屦行 increases in their basic salaries and improved working conditions.

Japan’s trade unions have called on the govern- ment to follow the protests. The protest calls for the government to secure the rights of the workers and the ma- jority of the population, especial- ly the poor. Instead, they are demanding sustainable econom- ic growth, and the right to decent work and a decent retirement.

LEBANON: Pact to end gender-based violence

Civil society groups, an in- dustrial manufacturer, and the national government have agreed to launch a pilot program to generate long-term solutions to gender violence and harmlessness. The program also aims to meet the needs of victims of violence in Lebanon, employing more than 10,000 workers.

Five Lebanese-based trade unions and workers’ organiz- ations, as well as U.S.-based Worker Rights Consortium, Solidarity Center and Workers United, have signed agreements to
As the United States and its allies escalate their attack on the Bolivarian Republic, the people of Venezuela and millions of supporters around the world continue the fight for sovereignty, peace and progress. Nino Pagliccia reports on the balance of support that favours the Maduro government.

Defending Venezuela is "DEFENDING OUR AMERICA!"

Venezuela Retains Political Control After New US Coercive Measures

In political terms the government of Venezuela had a good month of July while managing very critical economic circumstances. Reps of 120 Non Aligned Movement (NAM) countries attended their ministerial meeting in Caracas, and more than 700 delegates from dozens of leftist parties and social movements from around 32 countries were in attendance for the 51st conference of the Sao Paulo Forum (SPF), also in Caracas. A few days earlier, the quick recovery from what appeared to be another sabotage of the electric power grid, which occurred in the days between the two meetings, was seen as a sign of an efficient and responsive government fully in control.

However, the month of August had a more challenging beginning for Venezuela. But we think that the Maduro government still retains full command of the political situation. On August 3, the day before the meeting of the so-called Lima Group in Lima, Peru, US President Donald Trump signed a so-called Executive Order on "Blocking Property or Interests of Persons Whose Actions Are Detrimental to the National Security and Foreign Policy Interests of the United States," targeting Venezuela.

The EU immediately opposed Washington's threat and other countries may follow. However, we know that Trump is not shying away from his version of "if you're not with us, you are against us." He has recently implemented, for the first time since 1990, Title II of the Helms-Burton Act (blockade) on Cuba, which allows US persons, whose property was taken over by the Cuban government after 1959, to sue companies and individuals who "traffic" in those properties in US courts. This has serious implications for many European and Canadian companies currently operating in Cuba.

The US blockade of Venezuela is intended to "make the Venezuelan economy scream," nevertheless, the blockade does not guarantee the collapse of the economy. After almost 60 years of persistence and harsh US blockade, Cuba's economy has done fairly well in maintaining its socialist project, initially with the support of the former Soviet Union, and since the early 1990s with the development of a thriving tourist sector that has brought substantial foreign investment into the island of the US government.

Therefore, in geopolitical terms, the extraterritorial element of the US blockade on Venezuela is the US second line of attack - unlikely directed at the EU or Canada that have recognized self-appointed "interim president" Juan Guaido - rather directed at Russia and China that have sided with the elected president Nicolás Maduro.

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Perhaps most important, the images and text of “1919” drive home the point that the events in Winnipeg were not simply a rather quaint mass strike in one prairie city; this was a bitter clash between most of the city’s working class and a ruling class determined to use every weapon at its disposal to smash a rebellion for better working and living conditions. Lester’s illustrations bring to life the six-week general strike, the power of the working class resistance and action, and the violence inflicted by the capitalist state.

The book pays a welcome tribute to the origins of political struggle on the prairies, in particular the 1885 uprising by the Metis and their Cree, Assiniboine and Saulteaux allies under the leadership of Louis Riel. That struggle, though defeated, marked the beginning of resistance against the new Canadian state. A project of capitalist expansion into the west, which saw tens of thousands of impoverished European workers migrate to Manitoba and beyond in search of a better life.

For many, these dreams ran into the harsh reality of ruthless exploitation in the mines, mills and shops of western Canada. Other workers were convinced to enlist for the First World War, which educated them in the deadly consequences of imperialist war. “1919” shows how all these factors came together to bring 35,000 workers out on strike, much to the dismay of the bosses and the big business governments of Manitoba and Canada.

The fear of the capitalist class was so palpable that the mass mobilization of solidarity strikes across Canada, and by a rally of 10,000 returning soldiers in support of the strikers at the Legislature in Winnipeg, was a fact of life. These and other episodes are depicted clearly and sympathetically, providing a sweeping historical overview of the clash which shook the country a century ago.

The book touches on the political and social reverberations of 1919, such as the formation of the Communist Party and the CCF, and on struggles from more recent periods, such as the Quebec General Strike of 1972 (little remembered in the rest of the country, unfortunately) as an inspiring example of the days of action in the 1990s. It includes two fascinating photo essays about the working class of Winnipeg a century ago. “1919” is a tremendous addition to working class literature in Canada, and an excellent gift for anyone with an interest in the struggle for social and economic freedom.

Johnny Clegg, the South African musician who defied apartheid by forming two highly successful biracial bands, died in his home in Johannesburg on July 16 after a long fight with cancer. Clegg’s first band, Juluka, began in 1969 as a duo with co-founder, Sipho Mchunu, a Zulu migrant worker and musician. Juluka, the first biracial group of the South African apartheid-era, was closely identified with the 1975-76 student protests and the University of Natal’s student newspaper, Savuka, founded in 1966. Both groups were bilingual, singing in Zulu and English, and belonged to the Suid Afrikaanse Muziek en Letterkunde (SAMLA) music collective. The journey of Juluka and Savuka was as enlightening as it was inspiring, and their music and passion for justice and equality left a lasting impact on the South African music scene.

The 1975 meets Greta Thunberg

Best-selling British pop band The 1975 has teamed up with Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg to amplify her message on the global climate emergency. Thunberg’s spoken word track, with instrumental backing, is based upon her celebrated speech to the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland in 2019 when she was 15 years old.

The track, released in late July, will open The 1975’s fourth album, Notes on a Conditional Form. Proceeds will go to Extinction Rebellion, whose members engage in civil disobedience across the globe to demand that governments take action to address the climate crisis. The 1975, one of the most popular bands of the past decade, has six million monthly listeners on the platform.

Johnny Clegg: 1953-2019

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CarePartners ... or Partner in Crime?  
Solidarity for Sudbury workers locked out May 31

The scheduling staff, who are paid a maximum of $16 per hour, weren’t ask-
ing for the moon when they met to bar-
gain with private homecare corporation CarePartners. The Sudbury workers, represented by USW Local 2020, wanted contract language around bullying and harassment, and wage parity with their counterparts in Kitchener who are paid $4 more per hour by the same employ-
er for the same job. CarePartners insisted nothing but concessions, including claw-
ing back sick days, health benefits and pensions. When the six workers — all but one of whom are women — turned down CarePartners’ final, they were im-
mediately locked out.

That was May 31. As People’s Voice goes to press, the workers are still locked out and the company is still refusing to negotiate. The union has organized a mass action, calling on the provincial government to force CarePartners to re-
negotiate the contract. The logic is that the company’s intransigence amounts to withholding public healthcare services, for which CarePartners is contracted by the province.

The Sudbury schedulers han-
dle a massive geographic area, from Moosonee to Gravenhurst to Thunder Bay. Coordinating home-
care visits over such a huge area means knowing how to access isolated commu-
nities in northern Ontario.

CarePartners is a private company, so its financial information is not pub-
licly available. However, it is clearly benefitting by proxying on government outsourcing of health services. By part-
nering with Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) that has grown from a small home-based business in CEO Lin-
da Knight’s basement to a major play-
er in Ontario healthcare that now serves nearly 5,000 people.

This is a for-profit company that is paid by the public, and as such it’s a key factor in the privatization of healthcare.

In fact, Linda Knight (or someone with that same name) seems to be leading the charge to privatize the healthcare system with reduced worker rights that she made large donations to Doug Ford’s Conservatives this year and in 2018. The contributions only began last year, after Ford was elected Tory leader, and there is no record that Knight donated to any other party be-
fore or since.

This isn’t the first time CarePartners has fought with its unionized workers — it has had repeated labour disputes with numerous unions at its different loca-
tions. The lockout in Sudbury is a lesson to all workers in Ontario, about the perils of the neoliberal agenda of privatization and attacks on labour rights. Sixteen schedulers are standing firm against an anti-union employer that is a partner in crime with the worst right-wing ele-
ments to provincial politics. Their strug-
gle needs, and deserves, active solidarity and support from across Ontario.

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ACROSS

2 Bankura heard the roar of their silence
5 With 16 across, organization that initiated the Subbotnik Appeal. — Council
6 Winnipeg Communists Mary and Bill
8 See 1 down
10 With 33 down, British pop singer and former Young Communist
13 Syndicalist labour org founded in 1919
14 See 8 down
15 Queer magazine, The Body
16 See 8 across
17 Rhys Tunstall — 2012 student strike
18 Populist political movement during the English Civil War
20 of Labour, 19th century federation
27 Nova Scotia cooperative development effort, “... Mouvement!”
28 Formula from 1945 Ford Strike
29 US union activist who asked, “Which Side Are You On?” (2 words)
30 Organization protested at 7 down
32 19th century wars fought by China against British aggression
34 Site of landmark 1949 strike in Québec
35 FARC-ELF leader Manuel “...” Marulanda
41 One of five households spends more than half their income on these costs
42 Teamsters logo animal
44 23 US rules were detonated here
46 South Asian community? — “... Salmi”
47 “...” early printsters union (2 words)
48 Racial post-Peckham legislation precludes to Jim Crow laws (2 words)
50 Second largest union federation in QC
53 1935 Trek destination

DOWN
1 With 8 across, his last words were “Be good, courage boys, don’t be ashamed of anything you’ve done.”
3 Socialism involves planning this
4 Union label bother
5 Target of 1999 “Battle of Seattle”
6 Scent symbolizing Palestinian solidarity
7 Vancouver’s 1968 “ Riot at the...”
8 With 14 across, Canadian — short-lived first attempt at a union council, 1872 (2 words)
9 Socialist youth magazine, “... Horizons”
11 Quebec Premier who opposed 34 across
12 Tim, stag, or dollar
16 Indigenous political prisoner at Coleman Prison
19 Site of first Ontario Days of Action protest
20 Progressive farmer org from unfreeing portion
21 Italian Communist leader imprisoned by Mussolini
23 Name fishers’ union leader, Homer Stevens, gave his first boat (2 words)
24 Attawapiskat chief and hunger striker (2 words)
25 Largest union in NL
26 With 45 down, major Nanaski economic and cultural centre, inhabited since 1200
30 Angela Davis: “What this country needs is... workers” (2 words)
33 See 10 across
35 Johnny Paycheck classic, “Take This Job and...” (2 words)
36 Legendary Cape Breton union leader James Bryson
37 AFL partner
38 Rosa Luxemburg: “Those who do not move...” (2 words)
40 Wobbly greeting, “... Worker!”
42 Home to 1792 anti-slavery and anti-colonial revolution
43 Joel Morrissey’s eye colour?
45 See 26 down

Answers to last issue

PV CROSSWORD #2

VANCOUVER

SEP 7 | REBEL YOUTH FESTIVAL

London Music Club, 470 Colborne St, 7:30 PM. Speakers, musicians, artists, food, and a raffle!

TORONTO

SEP 2 | LABOUR DAY

Parade leaves Queen St. W. at University Ave. 10:00 AM and enters the CNE grounds at Dufferin Gate. Join the Toronto CPC contingent - 416-469-2446

SEP 6 | REBEL YOUTH FESTIVAL

6:00 PM at USWA Hall, 25 Cecil St.

SEP 18-22 | TORONTO PALESTINE FILM FESTIVAL

12th annual festival! All films will be submitted in English and screened at the TIFF Bell Lightbox in Toronto.

SEP 19 | WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE - THE STORY OF JEWISH INVOLVEMENT

17:00 PM, Wischusky Centre, 385 Cranbrooke Ave. Sponsored by UJPO, 416-789-5502

SEP 27 | DAN KOVALIK AND ARNOLD AUGUST


MONTEREAL

SEP 7 | FESTIVAL REBEL YOUTH

Festival Rebel Youth à Montréal le 7 septembre à l’Association des travail-
leurs grecs de Montréal, 5309 ave du Parc.
Federal Election Coverage
analysis of the issues and politics

As part of our special federal election coverage, People’s Voice will be preparing a series of articles, analyses and interviews, for both our print and online editions, that examine the key issues and discuss real solutions.

Here, we speak with Communist Party leader Liz Rowley, about what’s at stake for workers and their communities in this election.

Liz, election campaigning typically picks up steam after Labour Day, but there’s already been a lot of political heat – sticking by the big parties. What do you think are the main issues for the working class?

ER. There are probably three main areas of concern to working people across the country. The first, obviously, is the climate crisis. The second, which doesn’t have the same public attention, is the issue of peace and Canadian foreign policy. And the third area is what we might call “bread and butter – class questions.”

So, talking about these in reverse order, a poll last winter that showed 50% of people in Canada are $200 or less away from financial disaster at the end of every month. This is a reflection of 30-plus years of austerity, cutsbacks, and changes in employment. The government claims that unemployment has virtually disappeared, but that’s not true at all. There are many great many people who are unemployed but are no longer searching for work, so they aren’t counted. The labour participation rate shows that about 80% of the working age population is not employed and not looking for work. On the other side we have a very large group, particularly of young people, who are working contract, part-time and precarious work. So, you have a large portion that is out of work, and a large portion that is working way too much but still earning way below what is needed.

On top of this, democratic and equality rights are under attack. Wins that were won through struggle by Indigenous people, women, racialized people and 2S/LGBTQ people are threatened, to the point that people’s safety and lives are in jeopardy.

So, we have to confront the issues of austerity, of right-wing governments, and of corporate control over the main levers of the economy and over successive governments. We need an agenda that addresses people’s economic and social needs – it’s urgent.

Now, what about the question of peace and war?

Canada’s foreign policy has certainly shifted far to the right under the Liberal government. They claimed during the last election that they were very different from the Conservatives, but the Liberals have continued with Harper’s very right wing foreign policy. The government is sending troops to wherever the US administration or NATO demands. Canada is involved in a dirty and undeclared war against Venezuela. It’s also involved with US targeting of Cuba, by freezing up international relations and reducing consular services for Cubans wanting to visit Canada. Canada has troops stationed in hot spots around the world – “hot” because the US has made them that way – which is interference in the affairs of other countries and the right of peoples to determine their own path of development. This has to do with the right of nations to self-determination, and the Canadian government has taken a really dangerous turn.

Related to this is the question of military spending. The government claims there isn’t enough money to increase wages and pensions, to provide a livable Guaranteed Annual Income, for a Canada-wide childcare program, or for all sorts of things that are important to the majority of people in Canada. But, apparently there’s tonnes of money available for military spending. It’s an issue of what’s the priority. In our view, the priority should be a foreign policy of peace and disarmament, and government spending on the things working people need.

You mentioned the climate crisis as a key area of concern. Is the real reason it’s been so neglected likely to be reflected and addressed during this election?

We certainly feel that the climate crisis has the same urgency as the whole issue of peace and the danger of nuclear war. But the proposals that are coming out for dealing with this emergency are absolutely inadequate. The big elephant in the room is the energy corporations and the mining companies, who control the course of development in these areas. People think it’s the government but it’s the corporations who decide where and when a pipeline is going to be built, and then they put demands on the government to make that happen. Because of this, and because of the urgency of the situation, the immediate thing to do is to nationalize energy and natural resources – place them under public ownership and democratic control and take the private corporations out of the picture. This would allow the government to really deal with climate change by legislating and implementing sharp reductions in emissions. We call for a 50% cut by 2030 and completely end emissions by 2050. And we mean an absolute cut, not so-called “net reduction” that allows corporations to trade emissions across jurisdictions. This is pretty radical but what that’s called for is radical action.

Now, let’s compare this with the Liberals’ proposal for a carbon tax. The Tories, of course, are just doing the same thing to any kind of action. First, the proposed tax is way too low to make a difference. Second, a carbon tax becomes a cost of doing business for large corporations, and they can cut costs by laying off workers who have the ability to pay, working people. Really, these business parties are just doing what they always do, which is protecting the interests of large corporations who support them politically and financially.

So, when we ask whether the urgency of the crisis will be reflected, I think the public understands the urgency, but we will have to compel the political discussion to reflect that. When the Trudeau government bought the Trans Mountain Pipeline for $4.5 billion, that represented a huge intervention in the economy, against the sovereign civil liberties – place them under public ownership and reduce rents, action to protect and expand equality rights, free post-secondary education, expanded public health.

It’s important to keep in mind that, unlike the NDP for example, the Communist Party’s strategic aim is socialization, that is, we don’t support nationalism but socialism involves systemic change and the elimination of exploitation and oppression. On a specific point, the formation of a majority in Parliament which can be swept away in the next election by corporate money and power. We fight to elect Communist MPs to sharpen the critique of capitalism, to fight for immediate reforms, and to build up the forces in the labour and people’s movements for more fundamental change – for socialism.

Certainly, the labour movement has a huge role to play here, to make sure that working class issues and demands get projected strongly into the political discussion.

Let me say off the top that a lot of workers in this country would identify as NDPers. But they are increasingly unhappy with the timid policies and pro-business direction of the NDP. Yet, the labour movement has maintained, for a long time, a policy of “acquiescence.” We support the NDP, even when that party does not advocate policies that are strong enough for the labour movement to set some benchmarks for the NDP and for all political parties. Generally, the labour movement has strong policies around issues like work, social programs, wages, working conditions, peace, the environment, and equality. Whyere they to campaign for those policies during the election it would help to move politics in a more progressive direction. If it’s left to the

NDP and, increasingly, the Liberals to put forward what passes for progressive policies, there will be a real short-change. Rather than settling for what these parties have to offer, the labour movement needs to put forward its own demands, and any party or candidate that wants an endorsement should be expected to campaign and deliver. We certainly have to insist that the candidates and parties that are running for the labour movement is set some benchmarks for the NDP and for all political parties. Generally, the labour movement has strong policies around issues like work, social programs, wages, working conditions, peace, the environment, and equality. Whyere they to campaign for those policies during the election it would help to move politics in a more progressive direction.