Wealthy tax-dodgers

If you are rich enough, you can hire lawyers and accountants to lower your taxes. Every year, over 6000 high-income earners use legal deductions to avoid paying any federal income tax at all.

Women in Trades

Despite training programs and other initiatives, the percentage of women in the trades across Canada remains stuck at just 3%. What’s the reason?

US squeezes Cambodia

Nearly 50 years ago, the US military rained death and destruction on Cambodia. Now, Uncle Sam is demanding repayment of $500 million in “loans” to the former government.

Defeat the coup in Venezuela

Page 12
Austerity, fascism, and political upheaval in France

By Adrien Welsh, Montreal

On April 23rd, French voters chose two out of eleven presidential election candidates to make it to the second round and aspire to be the next tenant of Élysée palace.

In France, the first round of voting has never been a moment of great suspense. For decades, the two main political parties which have run the country for decades, the Socialists (PS) and the right (Les Républicains and, formerly, the UMP or RPR) get to the second round with a comfortable margin. This time, however, four candidates could count on a score near 20% for the first round: Jean-Luc Mélenchon, Marine Le Pen, Francois Fillon and Emmanuel Macron.

At 9 pm, first results were broadcast, making it clear that the seats for the second round would be filled by Marine Le Pen and the “centrist” Emmanuel Macron, getting respectively 21.7% and 20%. The candidate of Les Républicains, the right wing party, finished third with 20% and Jean-Luc Mélenchon, from the left, obtained 19.2%. The Socialist candidate, Benoît Hamon, had to obtain 16.1%. In the votes on May 7, the first candidate to win the presidency without the explicit support of any political party.

This certainly has a lot to do with the decadence of bourgeois democracy in France and elsewhere.

The crisis of capitalism started hitting Europe, the lines of a political recomposition started emerging, as the so-called “peripheries” (like in Greece with the raise of Syriza, in Spain with Podemos or in Italy, with Matteo Renzi and Beppo Grillo, but also like Corbyn in Britain at 17, with 18 per cent undecided). In all these countries, the traditional parties of social democracy, because of their compromises with neo-liberal policies since the 1980s and 1990s, are being replaced by new political forces which adopts a seemingly radical rhetoric.

In France though, probably because the left wing was slow to adopt a social-liberal line (unlike in Germany, or in Britain with Corbyn and the Labour) and because the PS was in opposition when the capitalist crisis burst in 2008, this political recomposition emerged slowly and slowly. The process of political division, the old division between the “right” and the “left”, coming from the Third French Revolution, seemed to serve bourgeois democracy just fine. During the last five years though, the PS government has been constantly attacking the left. As the “Social Europe” model emerged, as the “left wing” of the Socialist and the PS was on the verge of being privatized. The El-Khomri law attacks on the Labour Code in spring 2016 went so far that even the right had no obvious objections. In the colonies, the sector is over 60% in some areas (like in Guadeloupe and Martinique), access to education is not recognized as nations. In French Guyana, social and labour reforms were hit by the whole department for weeks, even impending the launching of rockets and the sporting of a group of European Union policies of deindustrialization. In local and European elections, Le Pen party has reached its highest share of vote.

When Le Pen made it to the second round, she was not a surprise at all. The Socialists provided the corporates with high subsidies for low-paid and precarious jobs, through the CICE and others, and the budget deficit cost to them, in interest, costings tens of billions of euros. François Hollande’s five-year mandate was marked by several attacks against democratic rights, through security measures and the suppression of the 2015 January 23rd, without interruption since the January 2015 attack against Charlie’s Hebdo. They both tried to be the people being arrested without evidence (including children), deporting people to concentred labor, streets, and attacks on protesters, but in no way it did prevent the results of November 2016 attacks could testify. The rhetoric of “total war against terrorism”, as named by Prime Minister Valls, gave justification for France to be more involved in imperialist wars, such as in Syria, Iraq and its former African colonies, Mali and Central African Republic.

This all led to massive populist discontent and desperation which, combined with the far-right rhetoric, gave fertile ground for the ultra-right, xenophobic and fascist Le Pen of the Front National.

This is particularly the case in the northern and eastern part of France, by groups supporting European Union policies of deindustrialization. In local and European elections, Le Pen’s party has reached its highest share of vote.

The Mother’s Day Brunch...
Break from status quo, urges young communist candidate

Tyson Strandlund was the Communist Party of BC candidate in the May 9 British Columbia election, in the riding of Esquimalt-Metchosin, just west of Victoria on Vancouver Island. A student member of the Young Communist League of Victoria’s club, a student at University of Victoria, and a musician. He has organised students around the demand for free universal post-secondary education, such as during last November’s pan-Canadian student rallies. Tyson is M.J.’s, and a fierce advocate of decolonisation and the rights of Indigenous peoples. During the campaign, Rebel Youth asked Tyson some questions about this election.

What’s at stake in this election for the people of BC?

British Columbians are faced with overwhelmingly economic burdens while multinational corporations make off with ever greater profits in stolen resources. Any semblance of democracy has been completely undermined by corporate donations and a rigged electoral system.

The allegedly “progressive” parties have been a number of ambiguous and inconsistent statements, and promised minor cosmetic changes to the working class while carefully avoiding any criticism of capitalism. NDP-NDP-victory would over the next four years at best constitute a tree saved amidst an ocean of deforestation and over a continued trend in capitalist decline and environmental destruction, and at worst, a betrayal of the working class and student activists whose resistance to their dictates they’ve opted for their political gains. Rather than a break from the status quo that the NDP is promising, these parties would represent not a step forwards, but to the side. British Columbians must overwhelmingly vote for parties that will first let past-the-post and fail progressive rhetoric push them into lending legitimacy to the parliamentary charade, or if they will push for the new direction our society so desperately needs.

What has been the record of the BC Liberal government, and how does this affect the rights of young people in BC?

The economic scene in BC is not so rosy as the Liberals would have you believe. British Columbians would have to work for forty years to reach the average pension and health coverage in Canada. Personal debt levels are at an all-time high, and this is particularly true for youth. More and more upper-income earners in Canada are taking advantage of allowable deductions to avoid paying income taxes. A CBC News analysis of Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) data compiled all individual income tax and benefit returns filed between 2011 and 2014, focused on the top three income brackets: $100,000 to $149,999, $150,000 to $249,999 and $250,000 and over. During those four fiscal years, the number of people who legally avoided paying tax rose about 50 per cent from 4,050 to 6,110. The number of filers who made more than $250,000 a year and completely avoided taxes doubled.

Every year, one out of three income tax returns filed in Canada is considered non-taxable, meaning the tax payable amounts to less than $2. Most of these are filed by low-income residents earning less than $15,000 a year. The CRA says: “It is possible for individuals classified in the upper income ranges to reduce their liability to zero by using deductions such as business or farm losses of previous years and available business investment losses, or significant contributions to RRSPs. Tax filers can also use non-refundable tax credits such as charitable donations, or dividend and foreign tax credits.”

For more on the Communist Party of BC campaign check out: http://cpcbc.ca. Look for analysis of the results in our next issue.

Tyson Strandlund

Canada’s wealthy tax-dodgers write off incomes

Canada Post's $34 million loss皇家邮政的$3400万美元亏损

Canada Post has once again turned a profit. The Crown corporation today reported a net profit in 2016, says the Canada Union of Postal Workers, "in spite of a management team that refuses to innovate, and despite management threats to lock out postal workers last summer, which scared away a hundred million dollars in business." The union representing the majority of postal workers says it’s time to stop the doom and gloom.

"Canada Post is a public sector success story," said CUPW National President Mike Palecek. "We are working to ensure our public services and jobs by claiming the tax cuts are falling. Their budget is a disaster that our members have never materialized." 

Palecek pointed out the post system has been consistently made money and will continue to, if it plots the right course. "The Province must have a plan that ensures the future viability of the postal service," said Palecek. "Access to the door, post offices are expanding services to bring in new revenue. This country urgently needs services such as broadband, postal banking, services at the door for seniors and electric charging stations. Canada Post could offer solutions. Instead, they offered a raft of service cuts that wasted hundreds of millions of dollars."

Palecek said the union also hopes the government will make good on its election pledge to restore home mail delivery. "The Prime Minister promised to restore door-to-door delivery on the campaign trail. It's time for the Liberals to live up to their promises."
Greed kills: the Westray disaster

May 9 marked the 25th anniversary of the Westray disaster in Nova Scotia, where an underground methane explosion killed 26 coal miners in 1992. Over the history of the coal mining industry, tens of thousands have died in similar explosions and collapses, often described as “accidents”. But as the Westray case proves, there is no such thing as an accident about the dangers to miners’ lives posed by the pursuit of profits.

Owned and operated by Curragh Resources, Westray Coal opened in September 1991, but closed eight months later when the methane explosion killed all the miners working underground at the time. After an investigation ordered by the Nova Scotia government concluded that the causes of the disaster were “incompetence, mismanagement, bureaucratic bungling, deceit, ruthlessness … and cynical indifference”, and that Westray management and its owner, Clifford Frame, were ultimately responsible. The punishment for these crimes? Westray and four of its managers were charged with 52 non-criminal counts of operating an unsafe mine. But these charges were later withdrawn, on the excuse that they might jeopardize future criminal charges. A criminal case against two managers did eventually go to trial, only to be dropped in 1998. The only real punishment went to the families of those killed in the explosion, and the 117 remaining Westray miners who lost their jobs. After years of public pressure, they were finally paid a pitance of 12 weeks’ severance.

In 2003, Parliament passed the “Westray Bill”, to increase legal penalties for owners and managers who fail to take steps to prevent bodily harm. Nova Scotia, British Columbia and Alberta have all introduced new rules aimed at ensuring safer workplaces. But as the Westray case makes clear, the CEOs and directors of mining companies will never get into jail for killing workers in the course of maximizing shareholder profits.

Back off threats against DPRK

There are hopes that the victory of Moon Jae-in, the moderate candidate in South Korea’s presidential election, may become a turning point in the relentless escalation of tensions by the Trump administration. Every US president since 1950 has considered launching military strikes against the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. But this time, the danger became even more ominous when the White House sent more heavily-armed vessels to the region and convened an emergency meeting with 100 Senators on the situation in Korea and Peninsula.

Threats of war and aggression against sovereign states, including the DPRK, are completely outside the rules of international law. The US is not a world power, but a global scourge, even more so when the White House sent more heavily-armed vessels to the region and convened an emergency meeting with 100 Senators on the situation in Korea and Peninsula.

The road to war against the DPRK must be blocked, in favour of peaceful alternatives. The new political balance of forces in the South could provide an opportunity to finally achieve a binding peace treaty to replace the 1953 Armistice agreement which ended the “hot” phase of the Korean War. Most serious obstructions to an agreement are genuine security guarantees, including the suspension of US-South Korea military exercises and removal of US troops from the South, which could lead to a freeze of the DPRK.

We call on the federal government to oppose US threats against the DPRK, and to stand up for peace, for international law, and for negotiated political solutions.

By Nora Lorenzo, Canadian Association of Labour Media

The Basic Income, as promised by the Ontario Liberals, could spell the demise of our welfare and social assistance programs. Recent reports to fulfill their promise of ensuring that every family in Quebec will have a family doctor, Liberal Minister of Health Dr. Gaétan Barrette unveiled an online appointment booking tool. It is supporting them in turning profits into better wages. But there is a trade-off between creating a universal basic income and better wages. The federal government and other areas of Canada have never seen a

 Liberal schemes and Trojan horses

The Basic Income, as promised by the Ontario Liberals, could spell the demise of our welfare and social assistance programs. Recent reports to fulfill their promise of ensuring that every family in Quebec will have a family doctor, Liberal Minister of Health Dr. Gaétan Barrette unveiled an online appointment booking tool. It is supporting them in turning profits into better wages. But there is a trade-off between creating a universal basic income and better wages. The federal government and other areas of Canada have never seen a

We concluded that programs could be designed to meet people where there is need, to ensure that they are not left behind. If we had the same goals. But, when the napkin-blue blueprint is put into action, the new nutrition and energy programs have been privatized and a load of student debt. We never had a formal agreement: he had faith in his colleges and their students, and that the Liberals, that a Basic Income should be a liberationary, life-altering improvement to our social and economic lifeline from the state.

It’s in this context that Canadians must wade cautiously into the discussion about the Basic Income (BI). At a debate in Toronto on Thursday, April 13, the struggle between the Willock in theory and the practical realities of the Ontario Liberal’s BI plan was laid bare. Listening to this debate, it was clear there was a difference of opinion among the participants: was that the Basic Income should be a universal, life-altering change or a Trojan horse for a universal basic income. The other was that the maximum rate of taxation, combined with the austerity policies of the BI, that a Basic Income will never be able to implement that can be a demand workers can agree on. The results are the same: the Basic Income is a Trojan horse, not a real deal for social change. It’s a Trojan horse with a progressive policy and a regressive system. This is why many people prefer to focus on the BI in a more minimum wage: because it’s a demand that would never be given to people without the people fighting for it. It’s a demand workers can make through collective bargaining. It’s a good income redistribution mechanism as it reduces profits and turns profits into better wages. But a higher minimum wage isn’t the other side of the anti-poverty coin from a basic or guaranteed income. It’s a campaign that talks about workplace improvements and regulation. The basic income is about expanding the publicly funded social safety net. It’s different, and equally important.

This is why the merits of the basic income must be untangled from a binary debate between it or a higher minimum wage, but also why any basic income debate must be wedded to the current political context. For example, it’s not good enough to say that a basic income will help people while assuming they’d be accompanied with rent control policies, because rent controls are so far off the table they’d have to be death by garbage basement apartments.

The Ontario Liberals’ Basic Income will be funded and developed in a scheme with social services like ODB being eliminated to fund it? Rather than extolling the virtues of a basic income in theory, progressives would be better off fighting to protect the social programs that might be eliminated to pay for the Liberals’ basic income plans.
The Trade Justice Network reported on May 2 that high level negotiators from 11 countries were meeting behind closed doors in Toronto in an attempt to resurrect the Trans Pacific Partnership (TPP). The proposed corporate mega-trade deal appeared to be dead after another round of intense pressure prompted the U.S. to withdraw from the pact following the presidential election.

The TPP sparked strong public opposition in all 12 countries, in part because the deal which could have covered 40% of the world’s economy was negotiated entirely in secret and without public input. As details of the TPP began to leak out, opinion polls in most of the participating countries tracked growing public opposition.

The renewed talks have sparked protests from the Trade Justice Network and other civil society groups who warn that this secretive pact cannot be the basis for Canada’s future trade relationships with Asia-Pacific nations. The groups say it’s absurd and undemocratic for the federal government to host secret talks at a secret location on a deal that will dramatically impact the lives of Canadians.

‘The TPP is only marginally about trade. It is about harmonizing standards and regulations across countries and strengthening the rights of corporations at the expense of citizens, workers, the public at large, and the environment. The costs of ratifying the TPP far outweigh any small benefit that may be gained. We urge the Trudeau government to stand up for Canadians and against the TPP,’ Robert Chan, President of the Canadian Partnership for Justice and Larry Brown, Co-Chair of the Trade Justice Network and President of the National Union of Public and General Employees.

‘Deals like the TPP never truly die. Their destructive nature – killing jobs and the environment – lives on in other forms,’ said Maude Barlow, National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians. ‘Even without the U.S., other countries are trying to revive the dubious legacy of the TPP. It’s time they got the message: People are tired of these agreements, and we must do better.’

TPP was a bad deal then, and it’s a bad deal now,” said Unifor National President Jerry Dias. ‘We were told we had to be in the TPP because the U.S. was in it. Now, the U.S. is out. Why would we revive a trade deal that was so bad for Canadian workers and communities? The federal government has not even completed its review of the last TPP deal. Canadians have said they do not want the TPP. The government does not have a mandate to bring this bad deal back to life.’

‘The TPP is an unfair and undemocratic deal that was negotiated behind closed doors without any meaningful public participation,’ said David Christopher, Communications manager with OpenMedia, the Internet advocacy watchdog. ‘Such a flawed and unpopular deal cannot be the basis for Canada’s future trade relationships. Instead of hosting secret talks to resurrect the TPP behind closed doors, the government needs to go back to the drawing board and ensure any future trade deal is shaped by citizens every step of the way.’

The recent Let’s Talk TPP report, crowd-sourced from nearly 28,000 Canadians, found that the most common reason for opposing the TPP was the failure of the federal government to consult with the public during negotiations. Canadians also highlighted concerns around digital rights, corporate overreach, democratic accountability, healthcare and public services, the environment, labour issues, and the economy as reasons they opposed the deal.

Deals like the TPP never truly die. Their destructive nature – killing jobs and the environment – lives on in other forms,” said Larry Brown, Co-Chair of the Trade Justice Network and President of the National Union of Public and General Employees.

By Helen Kennedy

Forty years ago, the percentage of women in the building trades in Canada was 3%. Today, after hundreds of millions of dollars in investments in recruitment strategies, apprenticeship programs and training in human rights legislation, the percentage of women in the building trades is still 3%. The government does not want anyone to know about this, as the numbers have not changed since 1977.

Conditions in Community College training programs have improved over the years, issues of rampant sexism and misogyny have begun to be addressed. It is now not as common for electrical apprentices in training for example, to be taught resistor code through the misogynistic ‘Bad Boys Rape Young Girls But Violet Goes Willingly.’ However, echoes of the grossly misogynist phrase are heard regularly in today’s construction sites and workplaces. There are more support programs in colleges and enforcement of human rights legislation for example that make it easier to address these issues there than in the workplace.

If a worker forgets his hardhat at a site, the replacement he is forced to wear, to discourage him from doing it again, is often pink with the words ‘forget-me-not’ printed clearly for all to see. The intention is humiliation. Contrast this practice with ‘Days of Pink’ held in schools and other public sector workplaces to protest against bullying.

Heather Hamilton, a manager from Thompson River University, has stated that Canada is desperate for skilled trades and the need will only grow over the next few years. Hamilton quantifies the impending skills shortage as the need for one million more skilled workers across all trades by 2020. There is already a whole generation of women who haven’t come into the trades. We cannot let the opportunity for another generation of young women to miss out on well-paid skilled trades jobs.

Increasing the number of women in the skilled trades would help close the gender wage gap. What steps can be taken to address the incredibly low percentage of women in the workforce? First of all, we need to recognize that we can’t expect changes to come from the 3% who survive in their workplaces every day. We need to demand the enforcement of key legislation in all trades workplaces. We need to demand the enforcement of the Occupational Health and Safety Act which includes measures to prevent harassment and violence in the workplace.

Gender neutral language may seem like a small measure, but if regularly enforced, it would contribute to a more respectful workplace. Programs need to be developed to train male tradesworkers to address the chauvinist culture in the workplace. A recent example of a program for skilled tradeswomen is the Calgary, as part of the CFL’s charm offensive.

What could the labour movement do to address the gender gap in the building trades? The Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario recently passed a resolution supported by the National Convention that called for an investigation on why the retention rate of women in the trades is low.

They have begun their investigation by talking to groups like the Sisters in the Trades to get input on what needs to be done. Local Labour Councils can support and encourage the leadership of trades unions to take measures to assist in developing training programs to address gender issues in workplaces. Labour Council’s Women’s Committees should be encouraged to connect with Sisters in the Trades groups in their region.

Resolutions at Federations of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress conventions would put this issue on the agenda for the broader labour movement. Until then, labour activists should bring the issue to the attention of their local Labour Council, to begin a much needed conversation about equity and access for women.
Protesters blocked roads and marched to vent their anger over a decades-long dispute with the government over looming austerity measures. Demonstrators denounced the leadership of the country's National Assembly over their economic troubles on a federal control board overarching the legislature's financial oversight and demanding an audit to identify those responsible for rampant corruption and public debt. The protests affected services at Puerto Rico’s largest public hospital, paralyzed the bus system and forced many businesses to close. Demonstrators briefly blocked traffic near San Juan International airport, prompting some travellers to walk along the highway dragging suitcases.

**Transportation Authority and workers facing detention over Portland Cement.**

Transportation Authority and workers facing detention over Portland Cement. regulations, including by workers against unfair payment and work strikes continued in the country.

**Celebrations in Egypt, workers’ flags with the Soviet hammer and thousand people.**

Many carried red skirted Red Square, drew several traditions alive. Their march, which years have kept the May Day celebrations. Marchers, across the cobblestones of Red Square, the site of Soviet-era May Day demonstrations for the Russian tricolor flag from a nearby building. In 1977, 34 people were killed in the square during a May Day event when police fired shots into a crowd from a nearby building.

**Two May Day marches were held in Moscow.**

Police estimated that about 130,000 people paraded across the cobblestones of Red Square, where Soviet government’s May Day celebrations. Marchers, organized by official trade unions, waved red flags with the Soviet hammer and sickle. The Communist Party still has a large group of MPs in the Russian parliament.

**Two May Day marches were held in Moscow.**

Police estimated that about 130,000 people paraded across the cobblestones of Red Square, where Soviet government’s May Day celebrations. Marchers, organized by official trade unions, waved red flags with the Soviet hammer and sickle. The Communist Party still has a large group of MPs in the Russian parliament.

**CYPRUS**

Greek and Turkish Cypriots marked May Day with a “Rock for Peace” concert in support of talks aimed at reunifying ethnically divided Cyprus. The concert kicked off with a gathering of left-wing trade unionists in front of Cyprus’ Finance Ministry, with their support for a peace deal that would bring about an united country.

**In conjunction with May Day celebrations in Barcelona,**

in addition to other companies and factories.

**Spain**

Spain’s two major unions called marches in 10 cities under the slogan “No More Excuses.” The CCOO and UGT reported that Spain’s conservative government roll back its labor reforms and increase minimum wages, and workers have pushed for higher wages and an end to temporary jobs. The CCOO general secretary Ignacio Fernandez Toxo said that Spain has been growing for two years and it is time for the economy to align itself with the needs of the people. He spoke at a march of several thousand people in Madrid, alongside UGT leader Jose Maria Alvarez. Thousands of workers took part in the demonstrations, which also included those of firefighters and high school students.

**From the Morning Star**

Raul Castro led his final May Day march as president in Havana, dedicated to late leader Fidel. Crows gathered from 2 am in the morning for the rally, which solution for workers’ celebrations around the world. Raul Castro, who said he will step down next February, presided over the rally, flanked by members of the Communist party for the political union present.

**Cuba continues left-wing solidarity**

Cubans continue left-wing solidarity. The march ended around noon, where they were joined by Turkish Cypriot north and south. In unison, they entered a soccer field inside the United Nations-controlled buffer zone where Greek and Turkish Cypriot rock acts took to the stage.

**Democratic Left Alliance (SLD), which lost all parliament seats in the 2015 election that brought the center-left government, down from 9.9 percent under the current center-left government, down from the high of 16.2 in 2013.**

**From the Morning Star**

Raul Castro led his final May Day march as president in Havana, dedicated to late leader Fidel. Crows gathered from 2 am in the morning for the rally, which solution for workers’ celebrations around the world. Raul Castro, who said he will step down next February, presided over the rally, flanked by members of the Communist party for the political union present.

**Cuba continues left-wing solidarity**

Cubans continue left-wing solidarity. The march ended around noon, where they were joined by Turkish Cypriot north and south. In unison, they entered a soccer field inside the United Nations-controlled buffer zone where Greek and Turkish Cypriot rock acts took to the stage.

**From the Morning Star**

Raul Castro led his final May Day march as president in Havana, dedicated to late leader Fidel. Crows gathered from 2 am in the morning for the rally, which solution for workers’ celebrations around the world. Raul Castro, who said he will step down next February, presided over the rally, flanked by members of the Communist party for the political union present.

**Cuba continues left-wing solidarity**

Cubans continue left-wing solidarity. The march ended around noon, where they were joined by Turkish Cypriot north and south. In unison, they entered a soccer field inside the United Nations-controlled buffer zone where Greek and Turkish Cypriot rock acts took to the stage.
By Tom Sibley, Morning Star

In July 1936, international fascism launched a war of intervention against the Spanish people.

Earlier in that year the democratic forces, making up the Popular Front, were elected following a period of extreme right-wing government in which the fascists played a leading role. The Popular Front government was initially supported by the whole of the left, including many members of the powerful anarchist movement and the centrist Republican Party.

It brought forward a progressive programme aimed at democratising and modernising Spain, which, at the time, was dominated by the Church, the military and the big landowners and whose industries were often controlled by foreign capital. The Republican government’s measures to introduce land reform in order to end widespread and abject poverty in the countryside, educational expansion and change and women’s rights were anathema to the interests of the Church and the military. They were seen to be against the interests of the Church and were presented by the right as the first steps along the road to a communist society.

With anti-communism as its principal weapon, the Spanish military, led by General Franco, launched a military coup in July which was immediately supported with copious supplies of trained troops and modern weaponry by Nazi Germany and fascist Italy.

Initially Franco’s forces were repulsed in most of the big cities and towns as workers’ militias and armed police loyal to the elected government came together in defence of the republic. Madrid continued to hold firm, thanks mainly to the arrival of modern armed police loyal to the elected government, and continued to hold firm, thanks mainly to the arrival of modern armed police loyal to the elected government.

In Catalonia the Popular Front administration, in the teeth of opposition from both POUM and the local anarchists, took measures in line with central government policies. The government called on the local militia to surrender its arms and join the national army. It shut down the local patrol groups controlled by the anarchists and launched into local government hard.

Catalonia’s important arms industry was nationalised and the government sought to take over the strategically vital community centre, the Barcelona telephone exchange, which until May 3 had been controlled by an anarchist trade union committee.

The insurrection was instigated by dissident anarchist militias, which had a strong base in Barcelona, encouraged by the Trotskyist-influenced POUM which since the beginning of 1936 had been actively and very publicly campaigning for the overthrow of the Popular Front government in Catalonia.

What was the subsection which led to the May uprising and put at risk the whole of the republican movement’s attempts to withstand the fascist offensive?

The underlying catalyst was the determination of the Republican government to radically reshape the war effort following months of military setbacks. This followed widespread demands to incorporate all militia in a national popular army with a unified command.

In Catalonia the Popular Front administration, in the teeth of opposition from both POUM and the local anarchists, took measures in line with central government policies. The government called on the local militia to surrender its arms and join the national army. It shut down the local patrol groups controlled by the anarchists and launched into local government hard.

Catalonia’s important arms industry was nationalised and the government sought to take over the strategically vital community centre, the Barcelona telephone exchange, which until May 3 had been controlled by an anarchist trade union committee. All of these centralising measures were taken primarily to strengthen the government. But they also threatened to totally undermine what the anarchist and POUMists saw as pillars of their strength, influence and control. Rather than fall in line, in the interests of boosting the anti-fascist war effort, the ultra-leftists launched an insurrection against the elected government.

The immediate spark for the insurrection was the control of the government to the telephone exchange. The anarchists had used their control of this facility to disrupt fascist calls between government ministers and military leaders. The uprising erupted in a war situation where the country was fighting for its very existence. Communist and anarchist ministers ordered the police to take back into state control the telephone exchange.

Unarmed police officers were met with a volley of shots and a standoff followed. But the sound of gunfire and the subsequent surrounding of the exchange by armed police officers was signal for the anarchist militia to take to the streets, erect barricades and bring tanks and other armed vehicles into the fray.

In the fighting that ensued in which the rebels were opposed by Communist Party milita and the Republican Guards, hundreds were killed. This was a turning point for the Catalan ministers quickly called for central government reinforcements and within a day the government, by their national leadership, the local anarchists had laid down their arms.

Throughout the piece the overwhelming majority of Republicans were taken government advice and stayed at home. Eighty years later arguments still appear from both the anti-communist left (sometimes described as the anti-Stalinist left) and the liberal right suggesting that the Barcelona events were provoked by Moscow to spark a nascent social revolution.

Such action was necessary, the critics argued, in order to reassure Western imperialist powers, with which the Soviet Union was seeking to build an anti-Hitler front, that Republican Spain was not about to usher in communist control and cast Spain into the breach. Some of the commentators also assert that it was to remove hopes for a fully fledged socialist revolution in the Republican government destroyed any possibility of a military victory.

Given the balance of political forces both in Spain and internationally these hopes were entirely unrealistic. In this they partly reflect Orwell’s definitive assessment made in late 1937 that whichever side won the civil war fascist-type regime would be installed in Spain.

What are we to make of these assessments? First, there is no evidence to back assertions that the Soviets provoked the uprising. From a speech by Spanish Communist leader Dolores Ibarruri, at a meeting of 100,000 people organized by the People’s Front at Madrid’s Plaza de la Cebada, Aug. 23, 1936

Fascism shall not pass. From a speech by Spanish Communist leader Dolores Ibarruri, at a meeting of 100,000 people organized by the People’s Front at Madrid’s Plaza de la Cebada, Aug. 23, 1936

Fascism shall not pass because the wall of bodies with which we have barred its way today strengthened by weapons of defence we have captured from the enemy - a cowardly enemy, because he has not the ideals which lead us into battle. The enemy therefore has no dash and impulsiveness, whereas we are born on the wings of our ideals, of our love, not for the Spain which is dying together with the enemy, but for the Spain we want to have - a democratic Spain. When we speak of Spain, we mean not only the name; we mean a democratic Spain, not the Spain which is clinging to her old traditions; we mean a Spain which will give the peasants land, which will socialise the heroic development of the control of the workers, which will introduce social insurance so that the worker may not be condemned to a homeless old age; we mean a Spain which will completely and unreservedly understand the revolutionary spirit, solve the economic problems that lie at the foundation of all revolutions.

On all fronts communists, anarchists, socialists and republicans are fighting shoulder to shoulder. We have also been joined by non-party people from town and country, because they too have realized what a victory of fascism would mean for Spain.

The struggle, started within the frontiers of our country, is already assuming an international character, because the working people of the whole world know that if fascism were to triumph it would be the turn of every democratic country in the world to be confronted with the fascist danger. The working people have realized this, as is borne out by the messages of solidarity we are constantly receiving from all parts of the world.

In the circumstances of 1937, to call for a final socialist uprising would have created deep divisions in the republican movement, thereby guaranteeing certain and early victory for the fascist forces.

The Barcelona events were indeed an important turning point but not as some anti-communist and liberal commentators suggest. For there followed a period during which the national Popular Front government was transformed into an effective fighting force.

Despite the overwhelming military advantages enjoyed by the fascist enemy and the continuing arms embargo placed on republican Spain by the Western powers, the government of the Republic was able to hold on for a further 18 months, giving space for Spain’s outspoken demagogues to negotiate with fascist leader Juan Negrín to negotiate for increased international assistance.

First came the withdrawal of the fascist powers to stop their war of intervention. By May it was clear to Negrín and the Communist Party, which provided the backbone to his administration, that only the centralising strategy of the Popular Front government could stop the slide to military defeat, and consolidate the substantial and profoundly democratic changes it had brought forward.

These reforms could have rapidly moved Spain from a largely backward, medieval theocracy to a modern democratic republic. Many on the left saw such changes as necessary steps on the road to socialism.
Solidarity with hunger strikers

The hunger strike by over 1,600 Palestinian prisoners held illegally in Israeli jails has resulted in a huge wave of global solidarity for the prisoners and their families and the besieged Palestinian people. On the occasion of the annual Palestinian Prisoners’ Day, April 17, the WFTU Secretariat “expressed its firm internationalist solidarity with the more than 6,700 Palestinians, including 389 children and 50 women, currently imprisoned by the Israeli occupation forces. We strongly demand an end to the illegal imprisonment of Palestinian people by Israel, the humane detention conditions and the acts of abuse like the violent beating against our Palestinian brothers and sisters and we demand that immediate release of all Palestinian prisoners and the end of Israel’s arrest campaign, again in solidarity with all of the Palestinian territories.”

For its part, the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITUC) began to speak out against the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories in recent years. The 2014 ITUC Congress denounced the occupation of Palestine by Israel, and called for an end to the construction of illegal Israeli settlements and removal of existing settlements. The ITUC also called for protection from new Palestinian lands in line with the 4th of June 1967 borders, and an end to the illegal separation wall.

On this occasion, an ITUC statement says, “We call on all workers to take action in solidarity with the Palestinian workers to speak and act out in support of the Palestinian people. The ITUC reiterates that it is the right of Palestinian people to self-determination and to live in peace and freedom, as is the case for all other peoples in the world.”

Changes help domestic workers

Foreign domestic workers in Singapore will enjoy better protection under changes to their Personal Accident Insurance requirements which take effect next October. The move is to ensure all FDWs are adequately compensated in the event of permanent disability or death while employed in Singapore. Higher salaries were also announced on May 7, as demanded by the Union.

In the event of death or permanent disability, FDWs and their families will be assured a minimum sum of $560,000 — up from the previous $540,000. The Ministry of Manpower also requires the insurance to cover all FDWs who lack basic and unexpected incidents that result in the death or permanent disability of the FDW.

Changes will also be made to allow FDWs or their legal representatives to file claims directly with insurers, or have an MOM-appointed representative act on their behalf. Coverage will also need to start when the worker first arrives in Singapore and the date she returns to her country, or in the case where she changes employers, to the date her new work permit is issued.

Refinery strike at Total

French oil and gas company Total said on May 5 it was gradually shutting down the Fos refinery in the French east due to a strike. Some 190 workers at the refinery, which employs around 600, began the strike the previous evening after talks with management reached a deadlock over bonuses and other issues. Talks were ongoing with the Force Ouvriere, the dominant trade union at the refinery which called the strike. The shutting down and restart of refinery operations takes several days. Total said there was no risk of fuel and products shortage because it will continue importing more products from other sources. The company, Europe’s biggest refiner, operates five refineries in France.

London Tube worker firing

Rail, Maritime and Transport Union members based at London Bridge tube station in the British capital, began a 24-hour walkout at 10 pm on Sunday, May 7, following the sacking of one station staff member and the disciplining of two others over an incident involving a fare dodger. The NUT said such sacking had been praised for tackling a violent passenger but London Underground would be MUGGED by their version of events.

London Tube worker firing

Rail, Maritime and Transport Union members based at London Bridge tube station in the British capital, began a 24-hour walkout at 10 pm on Sunday, May 7, following the sacking of one station staff member and the disciplining of two others over an incident involving a fare dodger. The NUT said such sacking had been praised for tackling a violent passenger but London Underground would be MUGGED by their version of events.

London Tube worker firing

Rail, Maritime and Transport Union members based at London Bridge tube station in the British capital, began a 24-hour walkout at 10 pm on Sunday, May 7, following the sacking of one station staff member and the disciplining of two others over an incident involving a fare dodger. The NUT said such sacking had been praised for tackling a violent passenger but London Underground would be MUGGED by their version of events.
Greece capitulated on May 2 to eurozone creditors with more cuts, in return for releasing bailout funds. The Syriza-ANEL coalition government — elected in 2015 in an anti-austerity manifesto — agreed to a round of pension cuts in 2019. It committed to maintaining a strict budget surplus target along with new tax increases for the current bailout programme — signed in 2015 despite voters rejecting it in a referendum the next year.

In return, the creditors will pay Greece 2.8 billion euros it needs to pay off its debt next year. July, and start talks on how to ease the country's debt burden.

Syriza yields to EU creditors over pension cuts

Julian Assange’s lawyer asks Sweden to drop arrest warrant

Julian Assange’s lawyer filed a new request on May 3 in Stockholm for Sweden to scrap the arrest warrant against the WikiLeaks founder, arguing that he should be released from jail, as Assange allowed to go to Ecuador.

The main protests were organized in 78 cities across the country by the All-Workers Militant Front (PAME), including a mass rally at Syntagma Square near the parliament in Athens, and showdowns with the riot police near the parliament in Athens.

The US, which invaded Cambodia in May 1970, bombing and killing hundreds of thousands of people in Cambodia, the United States seems to be demanding that the country pay back US$200 million in war debts, a move that has sparked outcry across the political spectrum in Cambodia.

To me, Cambodia does not respect the United Nations. They dropped bombs on our heads and then ask us to repay. When we do not repay, they tell the IMF [International Monetary Fund] not to lend us money. Hun Sen said. “We should raise our voices to talk about the issue of the country that has invaded other countries and has killed children.”

The US had given a US$274 million loan, mostly for food supplies, to the government of Lon Nol, who had taken power in a coup in 1970. The debt has almost doubled over the years as Cambodia refused to enter into a repayment program.

The US, which invaded Cambodia in May 1970, bombing and killing hundreds of thousands of people in Cambodia, the United States seems to be demanding that the country pay back US$200 million in war debts, a move that has sparked outcry across the political spectrum in Cambodia.

The US, which invaded Cambodia in May 1970, bombing and killing hundreds of thousands of people in Cambodia, the United States seems to be demanding that the country pay back US$200 million in war debts, a move that has sparked outcry across the political spectrum in Cambodia.

The main protests were organized in 78 cities across the country by the All-Workers Militant Front (PAME), including a mass rally at Syntagma Square near the parliament in Athens, and showdowns with the riot police near the parliament in Athens.

To me, Cambodia does not respect the United Nations. They dropped bombs on our heads and then ask us to repay. When we do not repay, they tell the IMF [International Monetary Fund] not to lend us money. Hun Sen said. “We should raise our voices to talk about the issue of the country that has invaded other countries and has killed children.”

The US had given a US$274 million loan, mostly for food supplies, to the government of Lon Nol, who had taken power in a coup in 1970. The debt has almost doubled over the years as Cambodia refused to enter into a repayment program.

The US, which invaded Cambodia in May 1970, bombing and killing hundreds of thousands of people in Cambodia, the United States seems to be demanding that the country pay back US$200 million in war debts, a move that has sparked outcry across the political spectrum in Cambodia.
Iran’s communists have put the blame on the May 3 mining disaster in Golestan province fairly squarely on government pursuit of privatisation and economic deregulation. Thirty-five miners have been confirmed dead following the huge explosion, and 21 bodies have been recovered. Most perished for lack of oxygen. Reports indicate that the bodies recovered at this point are of miners who were killed after the explosion in a bid to save their comrades already trapped at a depth of 1,200 to 1,800 metres underground. The Tudeh Party of Iran (TPi) charged that they have been trying in vain to get workers and safety and health standards have allowed greedy mineowners to cut corners to the point where workers are perishing on the job.

Community Says Tehran to Blame for Mine Blast

The Tudeh Party of Iran (TPi) charged that they have been trying in vain to get workers and safety and health standards have allowed greedy mineowners to cut corners to the point where workers are perishing on the job.

The Tudeh Party of Iran (TPi) charged that they have been trying in vain to get workers and safety and health standards have allowed greedy mineowners to cut corners to the point where workers are perishing on the job.

The Tudeh Party of Iran (TPi) charged that they have been trying in vain to get workers and safety and health standards have allowed greedy mineowners to cut corners to the point where workers are perishing on the job.
account for less than 3% of the total Canadian population. Aboriginal people represent a staggering 23% of the total Canadian population. One-in-three women in federal custody found that they are racialized, criminalized, and under-protected. We will not stand silent; we demand accountability.

"We are not in a mood to celebrate"

Excerpts from the French Communist Party statement on the results of the May 7 presidential election

This year, the candidate from the National Front was roundly defeated. What a relief! 65% of French voters refused to elect a head of state who promotes ideas of hatred and division, a project that is racist and xenophobic, a project that is violently discriminatory, economically liberal, and belligerent.

As Communists, we are proud to have worked with resolve to defeat the far right. We know that the National Front project continues to threaten the Republic and our unity. But tonight, we are not in the mood to celebrate. Our country is living through dark days. This second round, once again, is a serious alarm for all those who feel strongly about protecting our democracy and preserving equality. Marine Le Pen obtained a score of 35%, which is 14% more than her first-round score.

This is the result of the “normalisation” of these right-wing ideas; we are more determined than ever to fight them. This is also the result of successive administrations’ betrayal and abandonment of the people.

Tonight, we share the deep-seated anger of the millions of people who feltAmbushed by this second round. An ambushed organisation by the worn-out, perversive workings of the 5th Republic. In the future, we do not want to have to be obliged to vote by default to defeat the far right. We never want to see the far right in such a position again. For this reason, we must build up to the victory of a genuine political change that will deliver France from the clutches of financial markets, that will put “human first”, that will attack the domination of finance by granting new powers on all levels, opening the path to a new society of happiness, solidarity, justice, environmental preservation, peace and equality.

On the strength of the votes of millions of citizens for Jean-Luc Mélenchon in the first round of the presidential elections on 23 April, and with all the forces that supported his candidacy and those that may join us, we can go far towards electing a National Assembly that will truly represent us and constitute a new majority for action.

"Fascism shall not pass..."

continued from page 7

world. International fascism, too, has realized the significance of the struggle of the Spanish people against the enemies who have violated their oath of loyalty to the country and to the country’s flag. These violations of their vows have broken their promises and have rebelled in vile alliance with seditionary priests and debauched sons of the aristocracy, and are committing endless crimes in all the inhabited places through which they pass. One needs the brush of Goya and the eloquent pen of Blanco Ibáñez to depict the horrors and revolting, crimes committed by these elements led by arrogant fascist generals who have long ago revealed who they are, and what they are capable of.

Dante’s Inferno is but a pale reflection of what happens in places through which these modern vandals pass. The slaughtered children and the old people, the raped and hacked bodies of women, the demolished monuments of art. Wherever they pass they sow death and desolation. And what is taking place in the districts captured by the Fascists, there has taken place all over Spain, if they had not been opposed by a people inspired by faith in its own strength.

In Memory of
Betty Griffin
Who passed away on May Day in her 95th year

An inspiring fighter for justice, solidarity and socialism

Anna, Kim, Karin and Elisabeth

Surrey cops terrorize Black teenagers

Statement from Black Lives Matter-Vancouver

Earlier this week (April 28 - Ed) in Surrey, two male police officers slapped a 16-year old Black girl to the ground and handcuffed her. The officers (one white, one South Asian) were on duty, waiting for the bus, assuming she was someone else. When she told them they had made a mistake, they threw her to the ground, handcuffed her, and one officer held her down with his knee in her back. Her response was one of absolute terror. When they finally realized she was not the person they were looking for they left the scene (after going through her belongings to check her ID), without ensuring she got home safely. This traumatized child was left at a bus stop after being assaulted by two police officers... and people continue to tell us that Black Lives Matter is not a movement in Canada.

We need to disburse ourselves from the illusion that Canada is a multicultural haven of peace and equality. It is not. We need to recognize how deeply embedded racism is within Canadian culture. “At least it’s not as bad as the U.S. At least it’s not as bad as Toronto,” people say. This is gaslighting. Any mistreatment of Black people by law enforcement is too much. In light of Jordan Edwards’ murder by Texas police this week, this is another painful reminder that Black people are targeted, criminalized, and oppressed by policing institutions across North America. We remain over-policing and under-protected. We will not stand silent; we demand accountability.

This is also not an isolated incident. Canada is an illegitimate state founded on white supremacy and the genocide of Indigenous peoples. Canada is actively continuing colonization. This shows up in how Black people are policed, surveilled, targeted, and disproportionately incarcerated. Law enforcement is necessarily an instrument of the prison-industrial complex that channels Black and Indigenous peoples into the prison system. The alarming rise in the percentage of incarcerated Black people and Indigenous people in Canada was the subject of a report in 2013. Howard Sapers, former federal Correctional Investigator for Canada, said that the findings of the report reveal a “troubling pattern.”

“9.5% of federal inmates today and an increase of 80% since 2003-04,” yet Black Canadians
**Maduro condemns violence as opposition-fuelled Venezuela death toll nears 40**

By Ryan Mallen-Outtrim, venezuelananalysis.com

Venezuelan President Nicolas Maduro spoke out on May 5 against the wave of political violence gripping his country, as the death toll continued to rise.

Speaking at the Tiana Military Fort in Caracas, Maduro called for an end to “violence and guarimbas”. Guarimba is a term used to refer to violent demonstrations that use street barricades to shut down neighbourhoods across the country.

“Enough killings, you murderers! I extend my condolences to the family of the police, the National Guard and the young man who was murdered yesterday by these violent people ... I send my solidarity to all of Venezuela,” he said.

Among the latest deaths is 18 year old Amando Canizales, who died May 3 during a protest in Caracas. According to an autopsy report, Canizales may have been killed by fellow protesters. The report concluded he died after being hit by a ball bearing. Interior minister Nestor Reverol explained opposition protesters were seen using ball bearings as ammunition during a running gunfight with the National Guard (GNB).

Canizales’ death sparked national attention, though at least two other people have died since then. A police officer in the state of Carabobo, Gerardo Barrera, also died on May 4 from injuries sustained during a battle with armed anti-government groups the day before. Meanwhile in the state of Anzoategui, Chavista student organiser Juan Lopez was gunned down during a public event on the same day. The assailants remain unidentified, though authorities say they are investigating the case.

The latest deaths bring the total death toll of more than a month of violence to 39, including 13 killed as a result of the actions of opposition supporters and five civilians killed at the hands of state security forces.

During his speech, Maduro defended the work of security forces.

“The Bolivarian National Guard has put up a great, heroic fight. They have lost men, been killed by snipers ... and attacked by criminal gangs,” he said.

In light of the dangerous terrorist escalation, which is putting our national sovereignty, independence, and the gains of the working people at risk, we call for a united, forceful, and coherent response. It is necessary to mobilise without delay the widest possible anti-imperialist alliance to defeat the anti-democratic terrorist plans.

We urgently need the central government, the parties of the Great Patriotic Pole, the forces of the popular and working-class movement, and the patriotic command of the armed forces to work together.

It is necessary to develop a popular and patriotic plan to defeat the pro-imperialist and terrorist extreme right. To not do so would be to act with irresponsibility and, in reality, to hand oneself over without a fight.

The true revolutionaries do not hand ourselves over, we fight united until we succeed.

The Venezuelan working class needs to defend the Revolution and counter the plans of the pro-US right and also the imperialist alliance so as to halt the seditious actions of enemies and collaborators.

The Great Patriotic Pole, the forces of the popular and working-class movement, and the patriotic command of the armed forces to work together.

The Venezuelan extreme right, following instructions from US imperialism and with its direct financing, does not control itself in its crimes of violence and provocation.

With such objectives in mind, the pro-US right are pressuring military officers with diverse forces of blackmail and manipulation.

We call on the patriotic soldiers and officers to not cede to these unpatriotic terrorists and to take up the cause of the defence of our national sovereignty and our independence and the security of our people without hesitation and with complete commitment.

Powed in the Venezuelan communists, it is clear that what is happening is the sharpening of the class struggle in its political form—the heightening of the struggle for power.

The forces which represent the interests of the US imperialists and North American great monopoly capital are attempting to take over control of Venezuela and all of Latin America by defeating and vanquishing the social and political sectors which offer resistance to such objectives.

Maduro then urged the opposition to join his planned constituent assembly. Called by Maduro on May 1, the assembly will have the power to rewrite Venezuela’s constitution. While Maduro has hailed the planned assembly as a way to bridge the country’s political divide, the opposition has dismissed the initiative as an attempt to bypass Venezuela’s opposition-controlled National Assembly.

“My message of hope, is that we can definitively get out of this cycle of violence, of insurgencies, in a way of ... the constituent assembly,” Maduro said.

The first meeting of a presidential commission for the organisation of the constituent assembly is set for May 8. The head of the commission, Elias Jaua, has invited the main opposition coalition, the MUD, to attend, but no response has been received.

---

**News for People, Not for Profits!**

Every issue of *People’s Voice* gives you the latest on the fightback from coast to coast. Whether it’s the fightback against neoliberalism and austerity, solidarity with Cuba or workers’ struggles around the world, we’ve got the news the corporate media won’t print.

And we do more than that—we report and analyze events from a revolutionary perspective, helping to build the movements for justice and equality, and eventually for a socialist society.

Read this paper that fights for working people—on every page—in every issue!