USMCA
new name, tighter handcuffs on the working class... page 6

Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs condemn LNG project - page 3

“We have to stand up for our traditional territories. We have to make sure that we are the ones that make the decisions on them. If we say no to a project, if we say no to any kind of development because it would impede our ability to take care of our future generations, then that’s going to be the answer.”

Anti-poverty organizing
One of the best known grassroots organizers in Canada, John Clarke of the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty, (OCAP) shares his thoughts on thirty years of struggles against austerity. Page 2

Minority gov’t for N.B.
For the first time in a century, a New Brunswick election did not end in a Conservative or Liberal majority. That’s the good news; on the down side, a populist right-wing party made gains. Page 6

Liberation or chaos?
Seven years after Libya was “liberated” with the help of NATO bombers, the country remains in chaos. But we rarely read about this shining example of “regime change” in the western media. Page 9

More on USMCA
The USMCA - Trump’s “new NAFTA” - is already drawing sharp criticism from the National Farmers’ Union and from some prominent labour organizations across the country. Pages 5 & 6
**PV photos by Drew Garvie.**

**OneCity calls to rezone Little Mountain Housing site for rental-only**

VANCOUVER - OneCity Council Candidates in Vancouver’s Oct. 20 civic election are calling for the rezoning of former Little Mountain Social Housing to rental-only. OneCity is also calling on the provincial government to renegotiate the terms of the development deal with Holborn Holdings Ltd. to ensure increased non-market and social housing.

In 2009, the City of Vancouver lost 224 units of social housing when the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to the buildings on the Little Mountain site near 35th and Main were demolished. The residents were told that they could expect to return to

**Changing the equation - anti-austerity organizing in Ontario**

An interview with John Clarke

John Clarke is a well-known figure in the political left in Ontario, and across Canada. As he gets ready to retire, later this year, from 30 years as organizer for the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP), Dave McKee interviewed John for People’s Voice about the development opportunities, and challenges of the anti-poverty organizing and the working class movement in Ontario.

The following excerpts are from that longer interview:

**DM:** OCAP has been an important organization in Ontario for almost 30 years. Tell me a little about how the organization came together.

**JC:** In the mid-1980s, there was a large explosion of anti-poverty organizing that drew people from many different sectors into the freelancing of a political movement. People were involved in tenants associations, in community organizing, in trades unions, in women’s groups, in the gay community, and in other organizations. These people came together to form the Ontario Coalition Against Poverty (OCAP).

**DM:** OCAP organizer John Clarke. PV photo by Dave McKee

The result came in, about a quarter of the room got up and walked out. And I must say that the 25% that walked out made absolutely the right choice. It was a really healthy clearing of the purpose and tactic of the organization.

But the NDP was now the government, and their enthusiasm for a militant poor people’s organization took a bit of a nose-dive. The resources weren’t there, and after about a year we fell back on organizing within Toronto.

How has being rooted in a particular community – specifically the poor tenants and the homeless people in Toronto’s downtown east – helped to sustain the work of OCAP over the years and in different conditions?

There’s always been this double side – in a certain sense, we’ve been a sort of catalyst for province-wide organizing but in another sense, we’ve been an organization from downtown Toronto East. And the balance has been difficult to maintain at times during the Harris years, we were more provincially focussed – but we’ve always drawn back to this specific community.

**What role do organizations of poor and homeless people play in the broader labour movement?**

Every positive relationship we’ve built with trade unions, trade union members and trade union leaders, has always been based on an important recognition of the fact that there is a working class that is broad. The reality is as you confront this neoliberal austerity agenda, an ever-growing number of people are forced onto the periphery of the workforce as the most precarious and vulnerable workers, and beyond that a section of people is forced into extreme poverty and literal destitution. It’s something that trade unions ignore at their peril – without casting a wide net, we won’t build a movement that defends its gains and leaves nobody behind.

**Thinking back to 1989/1990, how has the condition of poor tenants and homeless people changed over the years? Have these changes had an impact on the work and organization of anti-poverty groups?**

If OCAP had been formed in 1960, we’d be talking about the social programs we’d won and the reforms that were achieved. Today, we’re talking primarily about the rear-guard actions we’ve fought against a worsening attack. I think we’ve won important victories and we’ve shown that resistance is possible, but we’ve done so in a situation where we’re being driven back. I fear that retreat is not entirely over.

**Are there any general conclusions you’ve made regarding the work of the organizing, based on your work as an anti-poverty organizer?**

One thing that really has to be recognized is just how volatile the mood of grievance and anger is. Nobody saw the student walkout coming – things can happen that you never saw coming, and that you never predicted. Sometimes, you expect a fight to happen and it doesn’t happen, but other times you’re surprised the other way.

Clearly, the labour movement is not even as strong as it was during the Harris years, and it was weaker then than it had been. The possibility of something like the Days of Action happening immediately seems remote, but that can change quickly.

Particularly in the context where there isn’t much of a lead being given, we’ve got to look to organize locally and we’ve got to pull together a base. There are important and impressive struggles that are happening, like the Fight for $15 and Fairness, and the energy that went into the student walkout, but I do think we’re going to go through a bitter period.

It’s got to come from the base, but what’s also got to be understood is that while the working class is much broader than the trade unions, the trade unions have a vital role to play. Without the use of the political strike weapon, I don’t think we can put anything onto the streets that is anything more than a police problem.

But, if you had thriving anti-consultant committees and assemblies that were actually directing local struggles, and these decide they are going to do a day of action in a community, then the equation changes.

(End of interview, full text available at people’svoice.ca)

**CUPW “Delivering Community Power” campaign**

On October 9, postal workers and allies picketed a Canada Post office in downtown Toronto, to promote the “Delivering Community Power” campaign launched by the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Props of an ATM and electric car charging station were used to show what an expanded public post office could include, and solar panels were installed on the rooftop. The action highlighted demands for postal banking, door to door delivery of mail and groceries, and 100% renewable powered post offices and postal fleet. CUPW is raising these issues in bargaining for a new collective agreement, to show the importance of expanded and strengthened public services. For more information, visit www.deliveringcommunitypower.ca.
The announcement of a major new liquefied natural gas (LNG) export facility near Kitimat, British Columbia, escalates the climate change crisis to the planet, in exchange for dubious promises of benefits for the province. The Communist Party of BC joins with Indigenous leaders, environmental groups and others who oppose the Port of Mexico project. We call upon the provincial and federal governments to cancel this project and to ensure immediate measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Despite the hypothesis that in some regions the nation have signed on to support the LNG Canada deal, the Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs have never ceded their traditional territories (Yin’tah), and have been opposed to attempts by governments of British Columbia and Canada to impose another unwarranted “take” on people who have never lost in court, starting with the Delgamuukw-Gidimt’en decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, which ruled that Wet’suwet’en rights and title had never been extinguished across the 22,000 square kilometers of Yin’tah.

The argument by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and BC Premier John Horgan that the LNG-Canada project will not affect Canada’s Paris Agreement commitments is simply bogus. Despite claims that this project will underwrite BC’s carbon tax and provide a “green transition” that will undercut efforts to transition to renewable energy, the LNG Canada project economically undercuts efforts to transition to international market with a bigger supply of “cheaper” fossil fuels by displacing domestic GHG emissions from the gas supply chain (fracking, processing and transportation) and the liquefaction facility itself. The LNG Canada consortium says its Kitimat facility would be twice as efficient in terms of GHG emissions per tonne of LNG produced compared to the new project is unproven. All told, emissions from the Kitimat terminal plus those from further up the supply chain would hit 9-12 million tonnes of CO2 per year. Nearly double the province’s current emissions from the oil and gas sector.

The Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs have never lost in court, and stand in solidarity with the Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs of the region, who released the following statement condemning the project.

SMITHERS, BC, Oct. 1, 2018 -- The Wet’suwet’en Hereditary Chiefs condemn ongoing attempts by the governments of British Columbia and Canada to force unwanted industrial projects onto Wet’suwet’en traditional territories (Yin’tah) by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people as represented by the Hereditary Chiefs (Dini’ ze’ and Ts’ak ë ze’), by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people as represented by the Hereditary Chiefs (Dini’ ze’ and Ts’ak ë ze’), by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people as represented by the Hereditary Chiefs (Dini’ ze’ and Ts’ak ë ze’), by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people as represented by the Hereditary Chiefs (Dini’ ze’ and Ts’ak ë ze’), by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people as represented by the Hereditary Chiefs (Dini’ ze’ and Ts’ak ë ze’), ignoring our nation’s (Yin’tah) by ignoring the jurisdiction and title of the Wet’suwet’en people. We recognize Wet’suwet’en rights and title had never been extinguished across the 22,000km² of Wet’suwet’en territory. As we stated in 2006, “We are truly democratic. We are the people. We speak the words and we make the decisions. We do not have to have someone else to make decisions for us. There is nothing in the court system that says we don’t have to prove it.” The Wet’suwet’en people have never lost in court against BC or Canada. In the Delgamuukw-Gidimt’en decision, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that Wet’suwet’en rights and title had never been extinguished across the 22,000km² of Wet’suwet’en territory.

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“Tactic that they use is divide and conquer – the federal elected government and the provincial elected government. But both systems are not seeing eye to eye because of what the province is being given in the exercise of their jurisdiction on reserve land. Regarding the territories, the cretakets are the hereditary chiefs, the Clans, stated Dini’ ze’ Smgelgem, head chief of the Laksamusi Clan. Wet’suwet’en people have already witnessed catastrophic impacts from unimpeded industrial access to our Yin’tah and neighbouring territories. From the damming of the Nechako River, which drowned our Caribou in 1992, to seepage of toxic tailings from Equity’s silver mine that decimated the salmon stocks of Goosly Lake in the 1980s, to the many cuts to our land, it is clear that industry cannot be left to their own devices to operate on our Yin’tah land.”

We have to stand up for our traditional territories. We have to make sure that we are the ones that make the decisions on them. If we say no to a project, if we say no to any development that threatens to undermine our ability to take care of our future generations, then that’s going to be the answer,” stated Dini’ ze’ Smgelgem.
Attack of the patriarchs

The US Senate approval of Brett Kavanaugh for the ninth Supreme Court position is not just another win for Donald Trump, who has seen more victories than setbacks as he approaches two years in the Oval Office. This approval vote is a new high-water mark for Trump and his ultra-right backers as they gut the traditional “checks and balances” designed to prevent full state encroachment being gathered in the hands of one person, i.e. so that the President of the new capitalist state could not become an “elected” version of European feudal monarchs.

As the Kavanaugh vote shows, a key element of the strategy is to pack the courts with judges who are eager to help push the Trump agenda, stripping legal, civil and democratic freedoms from the millions of people, and accelerating the shift of wealth into the bank accounts of the economic elite. Equality gains and labour rights won through centuries of struggle are threatened by politicians and judges who are openly determined to restore the hegemony of the propertied, slave-owning white male patriarchs who became the US ruling class.

But the blatant misogyny and racism of the President and his inner circle has sparked a massive fightback by women and racialized communities, and by an embattled trade union movement. In fact, the open embrace of fascist policies by sections of the capitalist ruling class has encouraged many Americans to turn towards radical and socialist alternatives (even if these are not far-reaching and fundamental as we would advocate). The Kavanaugh debacle is not the end of this story, nor would a mid-term elections win for the Democrats eliminate the danger. The struggle to push back the ultra-right and the fascist fighters that have come, in Canada and the rest of the world, not just in the USA.

Bigotry is not “an American problem”

News of bigotry or violence from south of the border often elicits the view that racism, misogyny, Islamophobia, xenophobia, heterosexism, or transphobia are somehow mostly “American problems.” It is certainly true that far-right, fundamentalist and neo-Nazi groups in the US are feeling legitimized by the outpouring of hatred from the White House, and taking advantage to go on the offensive. Events in the USA have a definite impact in Canada; Trump wannabe forces are flexing their muscles here as well.

But nobody should be lulled into complacency by any mistaken thought that Canada is relatively free from these deadly ideologies. The “origin myth” that Canada is supposed to be a “white Christian” homeland remains alive, as seen by the anti-immigrant hatred erupting in provinces and cities from coast to coast. The latest threats directed against Masuma Khan (see story on this page) in New Brunswick are typical of the dangerous level which fascist thuggery is reaching today. So too is the open involvement by the fascist Soldiers of Odin in the fundamentalist anti-SOGI (“sexual orientation and gender identity” school curricula) campaigns by city council and school trustee candidates in British Columbia this fall. In Quebec, the virulently anti-immigrant CAQ began threatening racialized communities within hours after some trustees in the National Assembly, and of course Doug Ford’s majority Tory government in Ontario uses the same divisive politics which helped Donald Trump win in 2016. Far-right pro-business groups which use anti-immigrant rhetoric are also escalating calls to block minimum wage gains and to push for “right-to-work” in a “right-to-work” state-for-work.

Things are indeed scary in the US these days, but the tactics of hatred and fear are also being heavily promoted in Canada. Our response must be to push back, to unite and fight against the fascists before their momentum becomes hard to stop.

Masuma Khan pushes on, knee deep in prejudice

By Norm Knight

A Halifax-based campaigner for social justice and indigenous rights continues to be harassed by anti-immigrant activists. On September 19, moments before she was to give a speech in Fredericton, N.B., Masuma Khan was confronted by a video-camera wielding woman who questioned her right to be in Canada.

Khan is of Afghan descent, often wears a long dress and covers her hair with a scarf, and speaks critically of the effects of imperialist colonialism on her homeland and on the Indigenous peoples of North America.

She received wide attention in the commercial press in 2017 when the Dalhousie University Student Union passed a motion, introduced by her, not to participate in the Canada 150 celebration. The move was intended to show solidarity with the Wet’suwet’en, the pre-colonial inhabitants of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and eastern New Brunswick.

Following the DSU’s decision, Khan became the recipient of high levels of verbal and emotional abuse — including death threats, suggestions that she emigrate herself, and that she leave the country — delivered via email, telephone, letter mail, social media, and in person. She reports having been followed on the Dalhousie campus by people who shoot video of her as a form of intimidation.

The Federation video-shooter approached her at the front of the lecture hall where she was to speak, and, assuming the manner of a news reporter, asked her the single question: “Do you agree that all immigrants should have the right to work?”

The person was prevented from approaching further by a New Brunswick indigenous Chief who stood in front of her, and pointed out that she too was an immigrant, that she was on his “terrorist” list, that she was excluded by Canadian law from participating in the protest, and that she should leave the room. After a few minutes’ argument, she did.

Khan proceeded to speak to an appreciative audience of approximately 50 people, about her experiences as an activist in Halifax, and about the importance of solidarity between the Indigenous peoples of this continent and those of other continents who have been similarly affected by modern imperialism. She also spoke of her experience, even prior to her political activism, of racial and ethnic prejudice, such as exclusion and being called a “terrorist.”

In a 2017 roundtable discussion, Khan and Halifax social justice activists El Jones and Jade Byard Peek, all women of colour, all reported that the level of verbal and emotional attacks directed at their bodies was higher than in the previous year.

Khan was elected Vice President External and Academic of the Dalhousie Student Union in 2017, and re-elected in 2018. She was born at a hospital beside the Dalhousie campus; her mother was born in Afghanistan.
Canada sells out in revamped NAFTA deal
Joint statement by Common Frontiers, the Council of Canadians and the Trade Justice Network

After weeks of intense negotiations behind closed doors, a renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has emerged. The newly-ratified North American Free Trade Agreement, or USMCA, falls short, reports show, and continues to evade environmental policies by shifting toxic ingredients at a price that allowed them to compete with American dairy processors. Now, Canadian farmers are being punished for complying with world trade rules. In the wake of CETA the compensation package offered to Canadian farmers, yet NAFTA deal hits Canadian steel, aluminum workers

The Canadian Union of Public Employees warns that “given a generation’s work to revamp NAFTA, the Trudeau government has fallen short on its promise to negotiate the modern, progressive trade deal that Canadians deserve. The USMCA is not anything but ‘progressive’, and it will set Canada on a downward spiral of trade deals.”

The union’s response comes as the USMCA appeared to eliminate the Chapter 11, the ISDS (Investor-State dispute settlement) provision of the original NAFTA, which CUPE has long fought to have removed, though it’s still unclear whether that will remain subject to ISDS provisions. Under Chapter 11, Canada became the most-sued country in the world. Governments in Canada were used almost 40 times exercising enforcement of their own democratic decision-making, dishing out close to 250 million in public money to private corporations.”

However, CUPE calls it “a big game about Pharmacies and making life-saving medication more affordable for Canadians,” said CUPE National President Mark Hancock. “But behind the scenes they’ve been complicit in allowing the cost of prescription drugs to skyrocket, and extending patent protections doesn’t help.”

NAFTA deal hits Canadian steel, aluminum workers

The United Steelworkers (USW) Canadian Director, Ken Neumann, says tens of thousands of Canadian families have been left in the lurch from concessions made by the Liberal government to get a deal with the United States of a renegotiated North American Free Trade Agreement. “Time and time again during the NAFTA renegotiations, the Liberal government assured Canadians that it was defending our steel and aluminum sectors and the livelihoods of tens of thousands of Canadian families,” said Neumann. “Given the Liberal government’s rhetoric throughout the process, it was inconceivable that it would agree to any deal that harms Canada’s steel and aluminum sectors.”

“Instead, the Canadian government struck a deal with the U.S. that fails to remove the senseless and damaging tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminium imposed by the Trump administration in June,” he said. “Canadians expected that an agreement on NAFTA would result in the U.S. lifting the bogs national-security tariffs on Canadian steel and aluminium. Instead, it appears Canadian steel and aluminum workers are among those being sacrificed in the concessions made by the Liberal government in this deal. We remain committed to take- negotiations that would generate new provisions to improve Canada’s trading position with the U.S., the Liberal government engaged strictly in concession bargaining. The Liberals made concessions after concessions, until the Trump administration got the deal it wanted. In the process, Canadian government sold out Canadian steel and aluminum workers. So much for the ‘win-win’ deal promised by this government.”

The United Steelworkers on both sides of the border continue to insist that Canada’s government must draw a line on this issue,” Neumann added. “U.S. quotas are unacceptable and the current steel and aluminium tariffs must be lifted immediately.”

USMCA is “anything but progressive” warns CUPE

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The Canadian government seems to have succumbed to the thinking that without NAFTA we would have no trade, although this myth has been disproved by experts. As a result, Canada sold 3.25% of its domestic market in the supply managed dairy, poultry and eggs sectors to the 11 countries involved in the NAFTA as one of those countries. After Free Trade the U.S. out of the TPP, Canada concluded virtually the same deal with the remaining 10 countries.

Now, in the USMCA Canada has given an additional over 23 million in public money to private corporations. This change will impede access to affordable medicines for Canadians. The deal extends the patent protection term for biologic medicines to 10 years (from 8 years), thereby delaying the entry of generic medicines into the market and contributing to rising drug costs. It is worth noting that the new agreement removes the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism between Canada and the US. Though long overdue, this move represents a big win for the labour, environmental and social movements that have long called for the elimination of ISDS. Unfortunately, Mexico will continue to be subject to ISDS provisions.

Despite the Trudeau government’s commitment to negotiate strong provisions on labour rights, gender equality, Indigenous rights and environmental protection, as part of its USMCA Trade Agenda, USMCA fails to provide these tools for building a more just and sustainable economy that benefits people across the continent.

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The NAFTA-USMCA agreement announced by the US and Canada has been received with a mixed reaction by both Donald Trump and Justin Trudeau; but for working people, this deal only tightens the corporate handcuffs. The Communist Party of Canada calls on Parliament to refuse to ratify the USMCA, and urge the labour and democratic movements to mobilize against this sellout of the interests of working people and farmers in Canada.

Some critics have expressed relief, arguing that the USMCA "could have been worse", pointing to details such as the removal of the investor-state dispute settlement mechanisms (ISDS) which have allowed transnational capital to sue for environmental regulations which result in a alleged “loss of export revenues” in Canada, using the USMCA as a whole, the sharply negative features far outweigh a few such gains. In fact, ISDS has been replaced with other provisions that attack sovereignty and the right to regulate in the name of corporate power.

There are no gains here for working people, considering the fact that the steel and aluminum tariffs imposed last June against the US were only a temporary economic well-being of tens of thousands of Canadian workers, and that a permanent losses of jobs. The extension of drug patents to ten years from the previous eight will make it more expensive for people in Canada to get cheaper generic drugs, and more difficult to implement a national pharmacare plan. Tobacco and poultry producers are facing new threats from the sections of this deal which open the domestic market by another 3.5% share for US products, and restricting Canada's exports. The attack on supply management is the latest step in the trend towards agribusiness control of food production, the reduction of farm families, and the loss of jobs.

Even before this deal, the corporate rhetoric of the Trudeau Liberals was simply a cover for making gains for the US auto manufacturers at the expense of other economies. NDI is a U.S.-based National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI) in Nepal, Bangladesh, and Cambodia. NDI is a U.S.-funded organisation whose purpose is to interfere in the politics of other countries to promote them on adopted social policies or nationalist positions that resist U.S. economic and cultural domination. After six years as New Brunswick leader, Carney was ousted from the NDP in 2017 because of disaffection with his party. The Conservatives won in English-speaking western half of the province. Although they gained one seat, the Conservatives actually lost popular support, falling to 31.9 percent from 34.6 percent last time. The Liberals dropped six seats and fell to 37.7 from 42.7 per cent. The Greens doubled their vote, going to 11.9 from 6.6 per cent.

The NDP won the People’s Alliance which won its first seats ever and increased its vote to 12.6 percent from 2.1 percent. Its leader, Kris Austin has stated clearly that his party would vote with the Conservatives if they try to bring down the Liberals.

The Greens, who won two seats in New Brunswick, are the lone left-of-centre voice in the legislature, winning a Saint John riding four times in a row.

Since then the NDP has not had a seat. Before the current Liberal government, the People’s Alliance leader Kris Austin has stated clearly that his party would vote with the Conservatives if they try to bring down the Liberals.

The Greens might vote with a Conservative government in order to avoid a new election. However, keeping the Greens and the People’s Alliance happy simultaneously would be difficult for a Conservative government, as the two small parties have conflicting agendas.

The People’s Alliance is an independent progressive political party which wants to backtrack on the policies of official bilingualism which the major parties have maintained since the days of Liberal premier Louis Robichaud (1960-1970). They appear to favour the small woodlot owners over the Irvings and the forestry multinationals, but they oppose the carbon tax. The Alliance won in English-speaking form country just north and east of Fredericton, and in Miramichi, where there is a concentration of English speakers in a generally Acadian part of the province.

The Greens campaign as an anti-capitalist party, and would undoubtedly make positive gains in the riding four times in a row.

The NDP did even worse, dropping from falling to 5.0 from 13.0 percent of the vote. For the preceding four decades it has held their vote about ten percent; through the 1990s and until 2005, NDP leader Elizabeth Weir played a somewhat heroic role as the lone left-of-centre voice in the legislature, warning a Saint John voting for Conservative bills “within reason” for 18 months.

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**Labour’s stake in the struggle for peace**

"Peace and war is a bread and butter issue for workers in Canada." That's the perspective of a new leaflet published by the Canadian Peace Congress for circulation to trade union members and bodies across the country. During the years leading up to and following the US-UK invasion of Iraq (2002 and later), hundreds of union locals and labour councils were active in the anti-war movement. Many passed anti-war resolutions, joined peace coalitions, and mobilized their members to take part in rallies and protests. Since that time, labour participation in anti-war actions has fallen dramatically, but over the past couple of years, more trade unions are again taking up this issue. We reprint here the text of the Peace Congress leaflet, as a contribution to efforts to engage organized workers in this crucial struggle.

**Why should my trade union put war and peace on the agenda?**

Working people in Canada today have troubling issues to deal with. The costs of living is leaving wages far behind, pensions and social programs are under constant attack, and full-time jobs with benefits are being replaced with part-time, precarious employment. Housing and child care are out of reach for most, and climate change threatens our very future. Some working people have trade unions to defend our interests, but the labour movement is under intense pressure from corporations and right-wing governments. So why should our trade unions talk about war and peace? It's not like Canada is invading other countries, after all. Haven't we got bigger fish to fry?

A bread and butter issue for trade unions

Most people don’t realize that Canada spends over $20 billion on the military every single year, projected to top $32 billion within a few years. Donald Trump is demanding that other NATO countries spend 4% of their GDP on the military - over $70 billion for Canada!

That staggering amount would mean an annual average of over $3500 from every person in the workforce, up from $1000 at today’s levels. Can you really afford to fork out that much, to purchase fighter-bombers, submarines, and weapons systems from transnational arms corporations? If our trade unions don’t pay attention to this shocking trend, we may end up paying a high price.

Consider the impact on other areas of government spending if Canada continues to pour tens of billions into the military. That’s money directly taken from health care, education, child care, housing programs, or clean water for Indigenous communities, to name just a few. Trade unions and other people’s movements face a stark choice: let governments turn a blind eye to these issues, or stand up for our immediate needs.

A bigger military does not make us safe

The Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) are increasingly integrated into the US/NATO alliance, which has elbowed the United Nations out of the picture. In 2017 alone, the operating costs of CF-18 planes, Canada is preparing to buy 88 new fighter-bombers which will operate "seamlessly" with other NATO partners, at a cost of $15-19 billion. Canada is upgrading its naval forces, which could total $60 billion or more.

"Peace and war is a bread and butter issue for the working class of China," said a leaflet of the Peace Congress China. That's the perspective of the Peace Congress China, of the Peace Congress leaflet, as a contribution to efforts to engage organized workers in this crucial struggle.

For more information, visit [www.canadianpeacecongress.ca](http://www.canadianpeacecongress.ca)

Israel’s ongoing crimes against Palestinians

Israel’s blockade is a major obstacle to medical treatment for Palestinians in the besieged Gaza Strip. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), less than half of patients in Gaza are able to access the healthcare they need. The WHO report focuses on key indicators for monitoring access to health in the occupied territories, detailing the barriers faced by Palestinians who require specialised care. It points to the lack of specialist doctors and medical staff. It is unable to provide specialist healthcare for complex medical problems in fields such as oncology, cardiology and orthopaedics, with many of those requiring treatment referred to private hospitals in East Jerusalem. However, Palestinians require medical care that is unavailable in their country. They are prevented from travel outside the occupied territories to receive treatment. Meanwhile, on Oct. 4, Israeli peace activists defending the Palestinian village of Khan al-Ahmar from destruction called on their government to pursue the path of peace and renounce racism and hatred. They also reaffirmed their support for the right of the Palestinian people to establish their own independent state.

Combinations for Peace members have camped in a solidarity tent in protest at Israeli government plans to demolish the Bedouin village, east of occupied Jerusalem. Plans are set to go ahead despite appeals from villagers who have lived in Khan al-Ahmar for more than 60 years since being driven from their homes in the Negev desert. They say the actions of the Israeli government, which will affect about 1500 residents, amount to war crimes. Israeli activist Toby Flink said: “I am here because I believe in the importance of strengthening human rights everywhere and I, as a Jew, if my government were to demolish a school and houses in Khan al-Ahmar, I have to stand against it because it is a war crime. My presence here is more than contributing to stop this crime. It is my duty.” Khan al-Ahmar is surrounded by illegal settlements and is subjected to frequent attacks in a bid to intimidate the population into leaving the area. Settlers from Kfar Adumim pumped waste water and sewage into the village on October 1. Peace activists filled bottles with the waste water and returned them to the settlers in protest. (With files from the UK Morning Star)
Nestlé workers fight layoffs and cuts

On October 2, buses carrying 400 Nestlé workers from across Germany arrived in Switzerland for a mass protest at the company headquarters. The workers are threatening the employment of some 600 workers in Germany, which is leading to demands from the CEO Ulf Mark Schneider's call for increasing profit margins up to 15%.

In recent months, Nestlé has announced the closure of its factory in Ludwigsburg, which produces coffee substitutes and employs 107 workers; the closure of its quality assurance laboratory in Weining, which analyses baby food products and employs 85 workers; and the closure of its production lines in Lüdinghausen in Germany, and supporters in Germany. The protests were organized by the German Food Workers Union, NACK, and the German Confederation of Trade Unions (DGB) and the Swiss union, UNIA.

Lesotho workers fired for “unlawful strike”

Adient, a company based in the US, manufactures car seat covers, has dismissed 250 workers for engaging in an unlawful strike. This follows the decision of the company’s workforce of 540.

NACTWU President Siphiwe M diverse and Allied Workers Union (NACTWU) Secretary General Sam Makhakesha said: “The company made the decision on January 29, 2018, ending the strike. The majority of the locked-out workers, who have been called back to work, are now on 15-minute ultimatum to do so.”

The union has also gone on strike this year to press for high wages and working conditions. The government has pleaded for patience, saying improving the workers’ conditions is not a one-day event but a process that requires time and resources.

UNRWA strike in Gaza

Workers belonging to the UN agency United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) are planning a strike in Gaza City. The strike was expected to begin on October 2, against the decision to cut jobs and some of the agency’s programs as a result of a shortage of funds. The recent decision by the Trump administration to cease funding to the agency has directly led to this crisis.

According to Youssef Hamouda, secretary general of the staff union at the UNRWA, the strike is organized to protest “the reduction of the international funding of the agency and the risk of ending its services.”

The UNRWA operates more than 270 schools with 280,000 students in Gaza. It also provides other important services such as health care centers and food distribution offices. It operates the strike was called on January 29, 2018, and filed for permission to stop work.

In December 2017, 1,800 members of the Confederation of Thai Electrical Appliances, Machines, Tools and Metalworkers (METAW) were locked out by Mitsubishi Electric Consumer Products Thailand. A collective agreement was reached on January 29, 2018, ending the dispute.

Mitsubishi Electric has subjected locked-out union members at its plant in Thailand to degrading and humiliating treatment, and is now refusing to reinstate 26 union leaders and members.

In December 2017, 1,800 workers were also made to post bonds to return to the company. Some worked for 12 hours a day, seven days a week, for as little as 100 dollars, and are often refused adequate food. Some workers have been called back to work, and some refuse to work.

A key point of contention has been how to deal with job losses, with labor demanding a moratorium in both the private and public sectors. The final agreement commits government to undertaking that there will be no retrenchments in the public sector.

Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) general secretary Bheki Ntshalintshali said that labor would take forward the campaign for a moratorium in further discussions with business and government.

New domestic workers law in Morocco

Morocco’s new domestic workers law took effect on October 2, but labor rights activists are concerned that the compliance measures such as robust labor inspections, improved access to an adequate dispute-resolution system, and steps to raise awareness about the new law.

Parliament approved the law in July, but authorities delayed enforcement in order to seek related implementation decrees. The new law sets the minimum wage for domestic workers at 800 dirhams ($88) per month, with a phase-in period of five years during which 16- and 17-year-old workers will be allowed to work. Domestic workers are entitled to proper labor contracts, limits to working hours, guaranteed days off and paid vacations, and a set of other protections. Employers who violate these provisions will face financial penalties, with prison sentences for repeat offenders in some cases.

Despite these gains, the new law allows a maximum of 48 hours of work a week for adult domestic workers, compared with 54 for other workers, and sets a minimum wage 40 percent lower than the minimum wage for jobs in manufacturing, commerce, and free trade sectors.

Many domestic workers live and work in their employers’ homes, hidden from the outside world, almost always in informal working arrangements, leaving them vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Employers frequently beat and verbally abuse them, don’t let them go to school, and sometimes refuse them adequate food. Some worked for 12 hours a day, seven days a week, for as little as 100 dollars in minimum hourly wages ($111) per month.

Mitsubishi violates Thai labour laws

Mitsubishi Electric has subjected locked-out union members at its plant in Thailand to degrading and humiliating treatment, and is now refusing to reinstate 26 union leaders and members.

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Mitsubishi Electric agreed to reinstate all the locked-out workers, which is also a legal requirement. However, before reinstatement, workers were called into a meeting to “check their attitudes” and pressured to disclose compromising information about union leaders.

The company forced the locked-out workers to attend a training session at a military base to “learn discipline and order,” undergo five days of training at a local Nestlé human resources firm, where they were expected to “reflect on their wrong doing,” one day of cleaning old people’s homes to “earn merit,” and three days at a Buddhist temple. The workers were also made to post apologies to the company on their personal social media accounts.

Despite undergoing this process, not all workers have been reinstated. Mitsubishi subsequently laid off 24 workers waiting for reinstatement, including ten members of a new union created earlier in June 2018, and filed for permission to dismiss a labor court to dismiss two others.

The company requires workers who have been called back to sign new employment contracts to replace the collective agreement that expired in September 2018. It includes a clause where the worker must agree that they are not members of a union — or if they are, wage increases and benefits additionally gained from the individual contract will be revoked.

All this constitutes a clear violation of fundamental workers’ and trade union rights, including national labour law and international labour standards. The company is an official partner of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020, which is committed to “Consideration of Human Rights and Fair Business Practices.”

During the lockout, workers lost their contracts, and benefits, including health coverage. After a worker died during this period, his body was cremated for pregnant women only.
By Neil Clark, Russia Today

Libya remains a lawless land, with rival militias fighting battles in the streets of Tripoli and over one million people in need of aid. But the West’s “liberal interventionists” aren’t interested in the catastrophe they created.

“Hundreds escape prison amid deadly clashes in Tripoli,” a headline on the BBC News website declared last week.

Over 60 people have died in the current fighting with many more injured and hundreds of ordinary citizens displaced. The latest disturbances began after the Tarhuna’s 7th Infantry Kanist Brigade made advances into the capital from the south and clashed with a coalition of Tripoli militias.

“It’s really hard to keep up with who’s fighting who. If you think the situation in Syria is complicated, you haven’t been paying much attention to Libya. As the BBC article acknowledged: “Libya has faced continuing chaos since NATO-backed militias force, some of them, rivals, overthrowing long-served ruler Colonel Gaddafi in October 2011.”

Libya has rival governments but even they don’t control the majority of the country. There is no “rule of law”, only the rule of gun. Libya’s regression from the country with the highest Human Development Index figure in the whole of Africa just ten years ago, to a fragmented and very dangerous failed state, is hard to take in. Last year, the UN Agency IOM reported that slave markets had returned to the country.

Economic and societal collapse has had a devastating impact on the life of ordinary Libyans. Take health care. A 2017 Service Availability and Readiness Assessment survey, conducted by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Ministry of Health, found that 17 out of 97 hospitals are closed and only four hospitals were functioning properly due to the lack of electricity. Over 20% primary health care facilities are closed and unable to provide services for field treatment.

As I argued in a previous op-ed, the Western assault on Libya is about to be shouldered aside and trampled underfoot by renewable energy production.

The Morrison government’s new energy policy removes reference to carbon emissions, thereby denying the link between emissions and climate change. Climate change is now official federal policy. Taylor himself refers to “our unambiguous focus on lower electricity prices while keeping the lights on.” He represents a rural electorate, but he ridicules attempts to reduce carbon emissions and steadfastly turns a blind eye to the blantant evidence of extremely dangerous climate change, including Australia’s prolonged droughts and year-round bushfires.

Taylor insists Australia “needs to” subsidise renewable energy targets, including nuclear power, and the only way to “drive out” coal and gas energy is through “our unambiguous focus on lower electricity prices while keeping the lights on.”

Yet, those responsible for what happened have faced no conventional accountability. The UK Prime Minister at the time, David Cameron, is blamed for Brexit (by Remainers), but not for what he did to Libya and the claims he made to justify the military action. This is despite a House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee report concluding, five years later, that the conflict in Libya is “fueling the problem that Muammar Gaddafi would have ordered the massacre of civilians in Benghazi was not supported by the available evidence.”

Nicolas Sarkozy, the French President in 2011, faces a trial (or trials) in relation to three different investigations, including accepting money from Gaddafi to help his election campaign, but he has not yet been prosecuted for his role in the war.

Bernard-Henri Levy, the philosopher considered by some to be the intellectual godfather of the Western intervention – and who boasted “we are the first to save the world” – has silenced the legal representative”, is concluding, five years later, that the conflict in Libya is “fueling the problem that Muammar Gaddafi would have ordered the massacre of civilians in Benghazi was not supported by the available evidence.”

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Taylor said the intervention of emission reduction targets “…will drive up prices and drive down reliability by prematurely driving out economic viability. Yet the only practical way to substantially reduce emissions is to increase the proportion of renewable energy production, and the only way to “drive out” coal and gas energy is through ‘our unambiguous focus on lower electricity prices while keeping the lights on.”

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Bernard-Henri Levy, the respective energy targets the government will have to meet its international non- biding target to reduce emissions by 26-28 percent below its 2005 levels. Yet our atmospheric pollution level climbed 1.3 percent in one year. Rates have recently by a slight reduction in nationwide electricity rates, as more renewable energy plants have opened up. And as PM Scott Morrison himself has admitted, electricity rates have in large part risen because private energy firms “gold-plated” electrical infrastructure, to take advantage of government agreements under which they can increase consumer rates in proportion to infrastructure costs.

Taylor’s statement took an astonishing turn when he described cutting carbon emissions as “corporate greed dressed up as saving the planet”. He referred to the “corporate greed of companies involved in renewable energy generation, but has acknowledged this is the true greed to the notorious greed of the fossil fuel industries.

While the coal and gas corporations have traded blows with their renewable energy counterparts, the earth’s climate has grown more threatening and the government has taken virtually no action to deal with the problem.

While fires, droughts and massive storms break out all over the world, and the Great Barrier Reef dies, the government ponders how it can save the energy status quo while appearing to be taking effective action on the environmental. It’s thinking of boosting the Abbott regime’s ineffective carbon reduction scheme, under which the government pays companies to reduce their emissions, rather than forcing them to do so. It’s also talking about having a Royal Commission into the price of energy. But it’s virtually ignoring climate change, which necessitates an immediate drastic reduction in carbon emissions and the phasing out of coal and gas production.

Taylor was correct in pointing out that greed is the prime motivation of renewable infrastructure companies, and the driving force of capital itself, and the dog-eat-dog nature of capitalism’s modus operandi has been responsible for the appalling delay in taking action to mitigate climate change.

And it’s useless telling energy companies – or the banks, for that matter – not to be greedy, because greed is what makes the system tick. Greed is the essence of capitalism, and it is going to keep us in the current climate change disaster.

If we want a better deal for the planet we’re going to have to change the system, not just the current government.

Editorial from the Guardian, weekly newspaper of the Communist Party of Australia, October 3, 2018

This week Energy Minister Angus Taylor bitterly denounced attempts to promote renewable energy generation in order to reduce carbon emissions. He unreservedly backs the fossil fuel industries, but he knows they’re about to be shouldered aside and trampled underfoot by renewable energy production.

The Morrison government’s new energy policy removes reference to carbon emissions, thereby denying the link between emissions and climate change. Climate change is now official federal policy. Taylor himself refers to “our unambiguous focus on lower electricity prices while keeping the lights on.” He represents a rural electorate, but he ridicules attempts to reduce carbon emissions and steadfastly turns a blind eye to the blantant evidence of extremely dangerous climate change, including Australia’s prolonged droughts and year-round bushfires.

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If we want a better deal for the planet we’re going to have to change the system, not just the current government.
By W.T. Whitney, People's World

In late September of 2017 the State Department removed 60 percent of the staff at the US Embassy in Havana, ostensibly because the diplomatic mission was endangered. A week later, for “reciprocity”, the Department expelled 16 Cuban diplomats stationed in Washington. A travel alert warned potential US visitors to the island for danger there to their health.

The alarm had sounded in August 2017 in response to US diplomats in Havana and a handful of family members, one after the other, all having complained over months of one or more neurologic-type symptoms. These included: strange noises, hearing loss, headaches, impaired memory, confused thinking, dizziness, impaired vision, and more.

An understaffed US embassy in Havana quickly became unable to issue entry visas to Cubans seeking to visit the United States or migrate there. To those they’ve had to travel to a US embassy in a third country, which many couldn’t do. Dysfunction in both embassies impedes negotiations on a range of bilateral issues, among them: migration, environmental problems, maritime and air traffic regulations, illicit drug trade, and property claims.

The travel warning led to reduced numbers of US visitors to Cuba, and the US government has criticized the island for not doing more to stop their spending. Tourists from elsewhere evidently ignored the warning, and this year they appear to be outflanking both embassies and Cuba are projected for 2018, a new high.

The cause of the symptoms remains unknown despite a wide-ranging front-page article appearing September 2 in the New York Times that attributed them to microwaves. The Times thus revived the notion of a perpetrator with a weapon. From the beginning, US officials and the media had used terms like “sonic attacks” or “sonic incidents.”

The article filled a void created by teams of experts unable to explain the symptoms. University of Michigan scientists, Cuban specialists, US audiologists, and clinicians at the University of Pennsylvania had excluded possibilities like a viral agent or psychological phenomena.

The Pennsylvania specialists on February 14, 2018 published the results of multi-disciplinary assessments of 21 of those affected. They concluded that “the cases demonstrate...the consistency of clinical manifestations raised concerns for a novel mechanism of a possible acquired brain injury from a directional exposure to unknown energy.” The undetermined specifics was unclear “if or how” sound phenomena were involved.

But, according to the Times report, the “American military itself sought to develop microwave arms that could invisible beam painfully loud beams and even spoken words into people’s heads.” Now, doctors and scientists say such unconventional weapons may have caused the baffling symptoms.

William Broad, the report’s author; writes that Douglas Smith, the lead author of the Pennsylvania study, now views microwaves the “main suspect” in the epidemic. Broad cites the work of American scientist Allan H. Frey, who in the 1960s “found that microwaves can trick the brain into perceiving what seem to be ordinary sounds.” His article provoked a flood of criticism from Cuba and elsewhere. The Washington Post registered the negative opinions of several scientists. And yet, says the Post, “It’s impossible to prove the existence of invisible agents...the agent is a theoretical weapon wielded by unidentified assailants that leaves no trace.”

Adding to the confusion is the exposure to similar symptoms US diplomats in China and Canadian Embassy employees in Havana. There’s a report too that the first four US diplomats taken ill, and two more later on, were CIA agents working under diplomatic cover.

Cuba’s government has consistently denied responsibility for the illnesses and has facilitated four FBI visits to the island for investigation. The US government has confined itself to blaming Cuba for not protecting its diplomats. Florida Senator Marco Rubio called for the American Embassy in Cuba to be closed down unless Cuba’s government takes action.

What with Cuban and other investigators having rejected theories of brain injury, of hostile agents, of weapons, the possibility remains that the sick were foxed, were associated with collective anxiety or drama staged for unfriendly purposes.

As the story was emerging in late 2017, the theory emerged that dissident Cuban factions may have been protesting Cuba’s rapprochement with the United States. Times reporter Broad notes that “Russia, China and many European states are seen as having the know-how to make such weapons.” Weapons that can debilitating, sow noise or even kill. As if to blunt Russia, he indicates that President Putin has resolutely sought to improve relations with Cuba.

Vermont Sen. Patrick Leahy’s words of September 2017 carry new meaning. Alluding to the long-standing US confrontation against Cuba, Leahy declared that, “Whoever is doing this obviously is trying to disrupt the normalization process between the United States and Cuba.”

Someone or some government is trying to reverse that process.” That’s of course what the Trump administration intends to do.

Carlos Fernández de Cossío, head of the US section of the Cuban Foreign Ministry was more precise. The only winners from confrontation, he explained, are “Those who for years have lived and benefited, and economically too, from a situation of hostility between Cuba and the United States.” These do not include, he added, the Cuban government, the Cuban people, or the US people.

In essence, US animosity toward Cuba adds up to so-called “fourth generation warfare.” That’s when guns are quiet and bombs aren’t falling but an aggressor is “bypassing an opposing military force and striking directly at cultural, political, or population targets.”

In regard to Cuba, who in the United States decides on war? Clearly it’s not the many who like Cuban baseball, Cuban dance, Cuban music, and the idea of health care and education available to all. It’s not the theirs to long habits of interchange between the two countries who think of Cubans as neighbours. We agree with Mr. Fernández de Cossío that in that spirit it’s the rich and powerful who tend toward war. If so, what’s needed for peace with Cuba is more democracy.

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**Trump heaps more abuse on Cuba**

*By W.T. Whitney, People's World*

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On October 7, the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change launched its Special Report on the Impacts of Global Warming of 1.5°C. The IPCC report provides evidence that governments must now heed: there are still ways to avoid runaway climate change, but only if the world acts now, and with decisión going well beyond the commitments made under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change’s Paris Agreement. Our response to this important report was to respond to Friends of the Earth’s call for a global, people’s mobilization. The party’s national and local groups are mobilizing for “equitable and ambitious climate action that keeps global warming below 1.5 degrees without the need for dangerous techno-fixes.”

Speaking about the report, Karin Nansen, Chair of Friends of the Earth International, said “This is a climate emergency. The IPCC 1.5 report starkly illustrates the different consequences of temperatures rises of 1.5 degrees and 2 degrees — for many around the world this is a question of survival vs. death. It is crucial to keep temperature rise well below 1.5 degrees without offsetting, carbon markets and geoengineering, but the evidence presented by the IPCC shows that there is a now and shrinking window in which to do so.”

“Activists across the world are stepping up to call for an end to fossil fuels, dirty energy and climate dangers. Communist parties are taking on differentiated responsibilities and payment of the climate debt must be at the foundation of climate action. We want a just transition to a clean energy system that benefits people not corporations.”

“The IPCC 1.5 report shows that temperature increases must remain below 1.5 degrees: too many people are already suffering and dying because of climate impacts at 1 degree of warming. The consequences of 1.5 degrees are irreversible and potentially irreversible. The report shows that if we limit the increase to 1.5 degrees, only 2 degrees we could halve the number of people who might suffer from water scarcity, and significantly reduce the risks of extreme weather events (including severe droughts and forest fires), food shortages, heat-related illnesses and death, crop failures, soil erosion and biodiversity and ecosystems. We could avoid the displacement of up to 10 million people due to sea level rises. But, many of the 1.5 pathways analyzed by the IPCC contain dangerous assumptions about risky, unproven technologies that claim to suck carbon out of the atmosphere. One dangerous method, BioEnergy with Carbon Capture and Storage (BECCS), would require growing crops on vast amounts of land, burning them for fuel and then storing the carbon. This will create additional problems and crises, especially for the poorest peoples in the world.”

Foi: International argues that these risky technologies are not the solution. The IPCC itself says that limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees with no overshoot would require rapid and far-reaching systems transitions occurring during the coming one to two decades, in energy, land, urban, and industrial systems. This proves what Friends of the Earth has been saying for years — only with a radical integration of our economies and food and economic systems, embracing environmental, social, gender and economic justice, can we prevent climate catastrophe and temperature rises exceeding 1.5 degrees.”

Environmental Crisis: The Communist viewpoint

The Communist Party of Canada is about to begin an update of its national program, ‘The Future is Socialism,’ adopted in 2001 after an extensive discussion and debate from the party’s grassroots membership up to a central convention, includes the text below analyzing the roots of the deepening environmental crisis facing Canada and the entire planet. Some of the full consequences of global carbon emissions, especially the nature of climate change, have become much more widely understood, and the updated CPC program will address the changing aspect of the environmental crisis.

Under capitalism both labour and the natural environment are exploited for the capitalists’ overall profit. The environmental profit. As a system, capitalism can exist only by continually increasing the intensity of its exploitation and impoverishment of labour and the environment.

The imperialist system is the fundamental cause of environmental degradation and resource-use inequality. Capitalism, as a mode of production and consumption, has raised the degradation of nature to historically unprecedented levels.

The extent of capitalist environmental destruction is not only the magnitude of resource and energy consumption and waste, and the proliferation of new forms and concentrations of toxic products and production has the potential to unleash a further destruction and extinction of ecological systems and species. The scale of environmental calamities has escalated to a world level, with such critical problems as global warming and loss of biological diversity. Whole regions have been blackened in air pollution, lake and river systems made toxic, ocean waters and shores despoiled, soils degraded. The earth’s last major wild areas are being destroyed, with the shrinking concentrations of toxic materials, and vast areas have been turned over to the use of dangerous exuded substances.

...Capitalism by its nature is incapable of dealing with this crisis. Even the smallest reforms, such as specific, limited moratoria on resource extraction are being revisited, some even reversed. The drive for ever-increasing profits is being disguised as a concern for the environment.”

Vancouver BC: Hear Carlos Ron, Venezuelan Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs for North America, Monday, Oct. 22, 7 pm, at the CSE, 706 Clark Dr, sponsored by Hugo Chavez Defence Front. Vote YES on PR, Sat., Oct. 27, Noon-2 pm, Broadway Skytrain (Commercial & Broadway), display & leaflet according to proportional representation, organized by Vancouver East Club CPC.

Left Film Night, Sunday, Oct. 28, 7 pm, at the CSE, 706 Clark, “The Coming War on China”, John Pilger documentary on US imperialism’s anti-China military strategy.

Victoria BC: Overcoming the NDP’s anti-Palestinian History, with host-author yveS Engler, Sat, Nov. 3, 1 pm, U Victoria, Cornerbook, sponsored by Social Justice Studies UVic, and YCL Victoria.

Toronto ON: Rally for Public Health Care, Tuesday, Oct. 12, noon, organized by Ontario Health Coalition, Queen’s Park. Rally in support of Cuban Resolution against US Blockade, Tuesday Oct. 30, 5-6 pm, across from US Consulate 260 University Ave. For info: Canadian-Cuban Friendship Association, 847-501-1219 or 416 654 7105.

London ON: Day of Action for Free Tuition, Friday, Nov. 2, Noon-3 pm, at 340 UCC Building, Western University.

Yves Engler Tour

Author yveS Engler is on tour to launch his new book, “Left, Right. Marching to the Beat of Imperial Canada.” For more updates, https://yvesengler.com/
Communists call for universal Pharmacare

We write to add our voice to the 91% of Canadians who urge the government of Canada to introduce a universal, accessible, comprehensive and portable single-payer public prescription drug system by expanding the Canadian Medicare Act to include prescription drugs dispensed outside hospital. We are among the more than 70 national and provincial organizations in Canada who urge the government to act now on universal pharmacare, to make it part of the Canadian Medicare system.

Health care, including prescription drugs, is a human right. Yet 8.4 million Canadians, most of them young or precarious workers, have to pay for their prescriptions. As a result many cannot afford to buy these prescription medications, or to take them as prescribed. Similarly, low-income people who may have some drug coverage but whose incomes are too low to support their co-pays or deductibles they are required to pay, also can’t afford to buy their prescription medications, or to take them as prescribed. This leads inevitably to increased illness, more visits to doctors and hospitals, and more premature deaths.

A national pharmacare plan that is part of the Medicare system in Canada the Health Act is therefore urgent. We urge the government to act on this trend. The spread support for pharmacare that already exists across Canada. Delays will result in more deaths, more illness, and increasing pressure on hospitals. What is needed now is action to link pharmacare to Canada’s Medicare system.

The cost of the pharmacy is the highest in the country. The public plans and 100,000 private drug plans in Canada.

Our coalition believes that National Pharmacare should be a seamless extension of the existing universal health care system in Canada, which covers medically necessary physician and hospital services, and therefore operate in harmony with the principles of the Canada Health Act. National Pharmacare should be governed by the following principles:

1. Universality - Coverage for all residents of Canada on equal terms and conditions.
2. Public, Single-Payer Administration - A publicly administered and delivered program that is integrated with the Medicare systems in which it operates, directly accountable to the public it serves, and delivered program that is integrated with the Medicare systems in which it operates.
3. Accessibility - Access to covered medications without financial barriers or other impediments.
4. Comprehensive Coverage - Coverage for as many medications as judged safe and effective by scientific evidence and based on the best value for money. Ensure the public servant experts who select medications for coverage are appropriately insulated from political pressures and marketing campaigns.
5. Portable Coverage - Continuous and consistent coverage for residents who move within Canada.

In addition to the five principles above, our coalition believes that the federal government must offer leadership in order to achieve National Pharmacare. This must include substantial funding commitments, sufficient to induce provincial and territorial governments to opt-in to the national program.

SIGNED BY: Action Canada for Sexual Health and Rights; Canada Without Poverty; Canadian Association of Community Health Centres; Canadian Association of Retired Persons; Canadian Association of Retired Teachers; Canadian Association of Workers; Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions; Canadian Health Coalition; Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network; Canadian Medical Association; Canadian Nurses’ Association; Canadian National Council of Teachers; Canadian Pharmacists’ Association; Canadian Union of Public Employees; Canadian Women’s Foundation; Citizens for Public Justice; College of Registered Nurses of Ontario; Community Food Centres Canada; Congress of Union Referees of Canada; Council of Canadians; InterPares; Leadership Canada; National Farm Workers’ Federation; National Union of Public and General Employees; Professional Institute of the Public Service of Canada; SEIU Healthcare; Seniors’ Voice; United Food & Commercial Workers; Unifor; United Steelworkers of Canada; Women’s Shelters Canada / Hébergement femmes Canada.