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SOLIDARITY AGAINST AUSTERITY

PRIDE IS POLITICAL



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Casserole demonstrations in New York City

WHAT STARTED off as a strike by Quebec students against tuition fees has become a generalized fight against austerity that is starting to spread across the country.

Combining the legacy of the 2005 Quebec student strike with the new mood of revolt inspired by the Arab Spring, the “printemps érable” began through months of grassroots mobilizing of hundreds of thousands of students under the simple demand of “stop the hike.” The resulting mass participation and its resistance to police and government attacks—culminating in Quebec Premier Jean Charest’s draconian Bill 78—radicalized the

movement to raise demands of free education, defence of civil liberties and opposition to environmental destruction. There has been solidarity from the labour movement, but the missing ingredient is the mass participation of hundreds of thousands of rank-and-file workers.

Austerity

Despite a media firewall on events in Quebec, the sheer size and duration of events in Quebec have gained national recognition, encouraged by solidarity actions. The incredible number of “casserole” events across the country speaks not only to solidarity with Quebec—the largest anti-austerity fight on the

continent—but also to a desire to fight austerity across Canada.

Resistance

Harper may be strong in Parliament—where he can ram through austerity measures like the omnibus Bill C-38—but not without provoking anger in the streets, campuses and workplaces. Despite the summer break, students are already starting to mobilize for the fall.

While some have demanded an immediate strike called from above, simply demanding free education, Quebec students have demonstrated the importance of patient and persistent grassroots mobilizing on every

campus and on simple issues that can unite broad layers of students.

Debates in Quebec on the social strike also show the importance of working-class resistance.

From BC teachers to Ontario teachers, workers are starting to challenge the local austerity agenda, and building rank-and-file resistance will be key in the weeks and months to come. As the Eurozone crisis deepens—with a 50 per cent unemployment rate for Spanish youth—it is obvious the 1% have no solution but to make students and workers pay. But students can spark workers’ resistance, which has the potential to shut down the system of the 1%.

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CCPA exposes phony Enbridge job creation

by VALERIE LANNON

EARLIER THIS year, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) released *Enbridge Pipe Dreams and Nightmares: The Economic Costs and Benefits of the Proposed Northern Gateway Pipeline*.

It is full of insights that will help pipeline opponents argue their case against Enbridge and federal and provincial governments, and help inform people who are still learning about the economic “debates” associated with the pipeline.

Enbridge claims that the pipeline will create 63,000 person-years of employment during construction, and 1,146 full-time jobs once the pipeline is in operation. The CCPA counters that it is more likely there will only be 1,850 jobs a year during construction, and a handful after completion.

And while job creation will be low, profits will be phenomenal for Enbridge and tar sand oil producers, who will face little of the environmental risks associated with the pipeline.

What is particularly striking is the contrast the CCPA makes between the Enbridge plan versus jobs based on renewable energy. The report states that alternative \$5 billion investments, such as building retrofits and transportation options, would create between 3 and 34 times the number of direct jobs being claimed by Enbridge.

Support Haudenosaunee Six Nations

by VALERIE LANNON

ON APRIL 28, 2012, up to 1,000 people participated in the Walk, Rally, and Potluck for Peace, Respect, and Friendship. The organizing group, the April 28th Coalition, is now calling for a response to two immediate concerns.

The first is Samsung corporation’s “renewable energy” project on Six Nations lands. Until recently, archaeologists had respected a “cease and desist” letter from the Haudenosaunee. But in May, Samsung resumed work without consultation. Six Nations community members have been at the site to stop the work.

Second, we need to denounce the political repression of Francine “Flower” Doxtator, a Six Nations land defender, grandmother and member of the April 28th Coalition.

The court charged her with breaking bail conditions for having participated in the April 28th Walk. Her supporters stopped her incarceration, with a Toronto-based CUPE member acting as her surety. But she remains banned from returning to her family and community in Kanonhstaton. For information on how you can help, including how to donate to Fraucine’s legal defence fund, visit www.april28.net.



Students prepare challenge to Bill 78

by JESSICA SQUIRES

IN ALL the justified outrage about Bill 78 and its attacks on freedom of expression, most accounts, in both French and English, have missed the main objective of the “special law”: attack, undermine and subdue student unions.

Beyond its draconian fines regime for not notifying police in advance, filing a route, etc, there are targeted and specific measures that, come August, will really put the strength of the student movement—and the depth of solidarity with it—to the test.

Forced compliance

The attacks on student unions and on the student right to strike in the law are both explicit and implicit. The impact on workers will also be considerable.

First, the law gives sweeping powers to the Minister of Education—allowing the government to change any legislation or law in order to enforce Bill 78, on the Minister’s recommendation. The Minister can issue directives to institutions, which institutions are required to follow.

The law also requires people to police each other for compliance with the law. Anyone acting, or failing to try to stop others from acting, to “impede... instructional services or the performance... of work... or directly or indirectly contribute to slowing down... such work,” is in breach of the law.

The law also requires unions and student as-

sociations to “induce” their members to comply.

And agreements between administrations and unions representing staff need Ministerial approval.

The law requires employees to “report for work according to their normal work schedule,” and “perform all duties... without any stoppage, slowdown, reduction or degradation of their normal activities.” In other words, this law bans the practice of respecting strike votes by profs by either cancelling classes or otherwise altering teaching in order to respect a strike vote.

Although legal strikes under the labour code are allowed, unions and their members and representatives cannot participate in “concerted action” pickets or other strike-related activities if those activities would disrupt normal teaching.

Attacks on student democracy

But the attack on student unions is even more direct.

If any impediment arises, institutions must describe the situation to the Minister including the name of the student union to which the “affected students” belong.

If the Minister believes the disruption is due to illegal action by a student union, the Minister can order the institution to stop collecting membership dues and evict the student union from freely provided space including furniture, notice boards, etc., for one term for every day of disruption.

The law negates any previously agreed-upon dues structure established

by a student union for the duration of the time during which institutions are not collecting dues. A federation of associations such as FEUQ or CLASSE can lose its membership dues when the Minister orders student unions to stop paying fees or making any financial contributions to the federation.

What this means is that student unions’ internal democratic processes of referenda for dues increases, for example, are rendered immaterial by the law.

Further, the law makes employees unions, students’ unions and federations civilly liable for any damages suffered for any single or collective action that prevents anyone from attending classes or otherwise disrupts work. It also expressly allows class action lawsuits.

But where the rubber really hits the road is in the fines.

Mass fines

A single person can be fined \$1,000 to \$5,000 per day of disruption. However, the fine is \$7,000 to \$35,000 per day for officers and official representatives of unions, student unions and federations, or institutions, and “a natural person who is the organizer of a demonstration.” It is \$25,000 to \$125,000 per day for student unions and federations, employees’ unions, or “a legal person, a body or a group that is the organizer of a demonstration.” Fines are doubled for a second offence.

If an institution refuses to comply with a Minister’s order to withhold funds

and space, it can be fined \$25,000 to \$125,000. So can any student union refusing to withhold dues or fees from a federation if ordered to do so by a Minister. And finally, anyone, no matter who, who helps or encourages anyone else to break the law is liable to fines of \$1000 to \$35,000 depending on the circumstances.

Solidarity and resistance

That’s why politics is also an essential part of this. Beyond the lawsuit calling for sections of the law to be repealed, the government can only withstand so much pressure.

Outside Quebec, the solidarity actions should continue. Groups and individuals, especially from unions, should continue to donate to the strike fund. They should let both the students and the labour movement in Quebec know they are doing so.

The unions in Quebec are under pressure right now to finally mobilize for a social strike. Unfortunately some of them are so far inclined to focus on the elections, while others merely seem pessimistic about the potential to really mobilize.

The pressure on them should continue. For a time, the unions might be able to defer payment of fines by appealing to the courts. But in the long run, for the student movement in Quebec to continue to play the magnificent role it has played up to now, our solidarity and financial support must continue to expand.

Oil spills devastate Alberta Landscape

by BRADLEY HUGHES

OIL PIPELINES aren’t safe. The three pipeline spills in Alberta are just the most recent in a long list of spills.

At the end of May and twice more during June, large oil spills from ruptured pipelines in Alberta made the news.

In May, over 3.5 million litres of mixed oil and water spewed out over 10 acres near Rainbow Lake, north of Grand Prairie, Alberta. This is likely to be the third largest oil spill in Canada. A nearby school was forced to close after the fumes from the leak caused disorientation and nausea among staff and students.

In the second week of June, around 470,000 litres of crude oil spilled into a tributary of the Red Deer River. Red Deer River provides drinking water for thousands of people.

A farm owner whose land was soaked in oil, Gord Johnston told the *Globe and Mail*: “My place is destroyed. My whole life’s work is gone. I’ve pretty well lost it all here.” He was forced to seek hospital treatment for his exposure to the oil fumes.

Less than two weeks later, another pipeline spilled 230,000 litres of oil across farmland outside of Elk Point, Alberta.

Spills are not unusual for the oil and gas industry. A 2007 Alberta Energy Utilities Board report revealed that, between 1990 and 2005, there were at least 860 spills each year of various hydrocarbons, mostly oil. Three years saw over 1,100 spills each.

Enbridge censors cartoonist

CANADIAN OIL giant Enbridge recently pressured the *Vancouver Province* to pull a mock cartoon that drew attention to the company’s notorious oil spills.

Cartoonist Dan Murphy took Enbridge’s 30-second ad that promotes its Northern Gateway pipeline, and added loud and messy oil spills that disrupt the narrator.

Enbridge threatened to withdraw its advertising money. In response, the newspaper pulled the ad from its website.

But Murphy went to the press with the story, while people have been sharing his spoof over social media.

To view the spoof, visit <http://bit.ly/Lu0YAm>.

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Syria: defend the revolution

by YUSUR AL BAHRANI

THE UN “peace plan” in Syria has not made any progress as bloodshed continues. The West is using the Houla Massacre to call for military intervention, but the only path to peace is to stop imperial intervention and deepen the revolution.

It is undeniable that Assad’s regime is to be blamed for killing and torturing protestors and activists. According to a UN report, the Syrian military loyal to Bashar Al-Assad has been using children as young as eight years old as human shields. Children are also subjected to torture and abuse by the Syrian regime. Similarly, the UN report said that armed rebels fighting Assad’s

forces have been recruiting children as fighters. The “peace plan” does nothing to end the regime, so clashes between rebels or sections of the Free Syrian Army and the government forces are costing thousands of innocent lives.

Counter-revolution
Unlike in Libya, NATO has so far abstained from directly intervening in Syria. However, the intervention is indirect. Armed rebels from the Free Syrian Army (FSA) have been receiving weapons from the West’s allies Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The received arms include Kalashnikov assault rifles, BKC machine guns, rocket-propelled grenades and anti-tank weaponry, most of it transported

into Syria via Turkey.
While the United States has been supplying Saudi Arabia and Bahrain with weapons that have been used against protestors, Hillary Clinton condemned Russia for sending a new shipment of helicopter gunships to Syria. She also added that this could escalate the conflict “quite dramatically.” Indeed, the conflict has been increasing quite dramatically with Russian weapons on the one hand, and Saudi weapons made in the US on the other hand.
Solidarity
The revolution began in March 2011 with peaceful pro-democracy protests. Imperialists do not want a scenario in which the Syrian activists

and peaceful protestors win their demands for a true democracy in Syria. Countering the revolution in Syria is vital to controlling the region.
The FSA and the Syrian National Council have been calling for intervention, but the only way to stop bloodshed in Syria is to defend the revolutionaries who are resisting the regime’s repression and all attempts at intervention, whether from NATO, Russia or oppressive Gulf states. The Local Coordinating Committees have called mass strikes and protests, which are spreading to Damascus and Aleppo, with the potential of uniting Syrians across ethnic lines to topple the regime. Our duty is to be in solidarity with Syrians against dictatorship and imperialism.

Pakistan’s complex relations with the US

by PAUL STEVENSON

THE NATO Summit in Chicago gave us another glimpse into the fraught relations between the US and Pakistan. US president Barack Obama invited Pakistani president Asif Ali Zardari to the summit, but then refused a private meeting. The next day, Obama demanded Pakistan remain on side with US goals in Afghanistan.

This official snub is a product of an incoherent US policy towards Pakistan. On the one hand, Pakistan is seen as central to US designs in Afghanistan; on the other, the US is

loath to give Pakistan a real say in the process of imposing control on the Afghan people.
Pakistan for its part is much more concerned about increasing Indian influence in Afghanistan. It fears that a government in Afghanistan with strong ties to India may undermine Pakistan’s control over the tribal areas in Baluchistan and the North West Frontier provinces. A strong Taliban is seen as a helpful deterrent to Indian ambitions.

NATO
This, of course, runs at odds with the stated goals of the NATO mission in Afghanistan, which include

weakening the Taliban to maintain US dominance through the government of Hamid Karzai. This conflict between the two states has been exacerbated by the continuing drone strikes inside Pakistan. Since the NATO Summit, the US has ramped up its use of drones and hundreds of Pakistanis have been killed.
Pakistan has cut off NATO supply lines and the US has reacted to the jailing of Shakil Afridi—a Pakistani doctor who worked with the CIA to help find Osama Bin-Laden—by cutting military funding by \$33 million or one million dollars for each year Afridi is in prison.
The rift in the relationship be-

tween Pakistan and the US will only continue to grow.
Inside Pakistan anger at the US drone attacks and increasing US military presence has resulted in major domestic revolt. Pakistan cannot continue to do the bidding of the US without seriously weakening the government. In essence, the requirements are far too great and so deeply unpopular that any Pakistan government that continues to support the US does so at tremendous risk.
The US must stop the attacks on the people of Pakistan or will result in a broader rebellion that will make the Afghan war look easy.

The struggle continues in Yemen

by AHMED ELBASSIOUNY

AFTER BRUTAL clashes between the Yemeni army and “al-Qaeda” militants in southern provinces in Yemen, Washington commended the US-backed Yemeni government as troops took control of the city of Shuqra on Friday, June 15.

Yemen has been going through revolutionary changes, like many other Arab countries. Inspired by the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions, Yemenis have been protesting, demanding a change since January 2011. Even though the revolution in Yemen is important, the media seems to give it the least attention.
Yemen represents a threat because

it is the only country in the Gulf region that has seen mass demonstrations, massive movements and lots of armed fights between the rebels and the hated government. The success of the revolts in Yemen would help spread the revolution to its close neighbour, Saudi Arabia, a major US ally and leading counter-revolutionary force in the region. It is in Saudi Arabia’s interest (and the US essentially) to try to kill the hope for democracy in Yemen and divert attention away from the struggle.

‘Friends of Yemen’
The Saudi and Western-backed “transition plan” removed president Ali Abdullah Saleh from official power but gave him immunity and

maintained his regime—installing his vice-president Abd Rabbuh Mansur al-Hadi as ruler, while Saleh was welcomed at the Ritz Carlton. Although Yemen is a republic, it is more like a monarchy, very similar to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Saleh’s family remains rooted in all the high-level and decision-making machinery of the country.
To further reinforce the dictatorship, the “friends of Yemen” meeting in Riyadh pledged \$4 billion to the regime. At the same time, a growing number of special advising forces, from the US mainly, are getting involved in training the Yemeni military—using the excuse of fighting al-Qaeda in the Arab Peninsula (referred to as AQAP). But with all

that “effort,” the country has only seen increased anger, rebellions and bombings, which give the lie to “humanitarian intervention.”
The situation in Yemen is far more serious than some political unrest. According to a recent study conducted by the UN, there are one million children suffering from malnutrition under the age of five. The study also shows that corruption has expanded, gulping down funds raised by non-government organizations. Obviously, it is a humanitarian crisis that the imperialists and their allies should be held responsible for, and will only be solved when the Arab Spring overthrows all the Western-backed dictatorships across the region.

Rio + 20

by JOHN BELL

FOR YEARS environmental critics have been labelling international Climate Change summits as “failures.” With the just completed UN-sponsored Rio + 20 conference, the press release issued by Oxfam uses a more accurate term: “hoax.”

World leaders didn’t even pretend to care. They held a G20 economic summit in Mexico at the same time, fretting about how they were going to stop the “Greek disease” from threatening their profits.
World “leaders” like Stephen Harper are not only ignoring the growing climate crisis, not only obstructing any meaningful action to address it, they are doing all they can to make the problems worse. After all, there are petro-profits to be made—and damn the consequences.

The wrongheaded “solutions” put forward by the official UN “Green Economy Initiative” are in some ways worse than G20 inaction. They advocate putting “value” on every aspect of nature, and by that they mean a dollar value. They would accelerate the privatization of the natural world so that the “free market” can solve the crisis.
Groups like the UN Global Compact take “greenwashing” to new heights, appropriating terms like “sustainability” to mean unfettered growth.
It is ridiculous to expect that corporations, driven to accumulate profit or die, will suddenly exhibit “enlightened self-interest.”
Tens of thousands of activists, led by delegations of indigenous people from Latin America and around the world, also gathered in Rio. They marched through the streets and committed to defend the earth. Eleven-year-old Ta’Kaiya Blaney, of the BC Sliammon First Nation, ceremonially ripped up the official UN document, an image that led the Brazilian national TV news.
These are the people who will block the pipelines planned to market the Tar Sands’ toxic oil. These are the people who will tear down the Belo Monte Dam that threatens to drown 600 square kilometers of rainforest and the indigenous communities within.
These are the people with whom we must all stand in solidarity for the sake of the planet and of basic human rights.

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But we are confident that the rank and file are way to the left of these leaders.
Revolutionaries have to relate to this mood and help the fightback unfold. That is what we in Antarsya will be trying to do over the coming weeks.

Nazis
Golden Dawn, Greece’s main Nazi organization, held on to its share of the vote. It was helped by openly racist campaigning by New Democracy.
The conservatives put forward an agenda that tailed the Nazis—mass expulsions of “illegal” immigrants, talk of “reoccupying” the cities.
The only difference was that New Democracy promised to do this “lawfully” through the police force, as opposed to Golden Dawn’s vigilante approach.

Reading the Comintern Fourth Congress

SOCIALISTS ARE, almost universally, avid readers. As a minority current in capitalist society, socialists often feel isolated in their sharp criticism of how the ruling class rules, and seek to exchange and advance their ideas through intense, serious reading. Among the most engaging collections of reading material for socialists are the proceedings of the first four congresses of the Communist International, or Comintern, that took place between 1919 and 1922.

The recent publication of the first English translation of the proceedings of the Fourth Congress of the Comintern of 1922, *Toward the United Front* by John Riddell, presents an inviting opportunity for socialist readers. It has the potential to open a vastly expanded conversation about this rich period of socialist history. Riddell’s helpful introduction, biographical notes and annotations add texture and depth to this formative moment.

But the volume is a challenge to read.

Certainly, at just over 1,300 pages, it is a hefty volume. But length alone is not a deterrent for modern readers; each one of the seven-volume Harry Potter series, written by J. K. Rowling, was met by millions of readers with keen anticipation.

The challenge rests more specifically in shaping the context of the proceedings, and the context today. What elements of the Comintern discussions are relevant, and how are they relevant, for socialists today?

Actuality

Taking place in the immediate aftermath of World War I and the Russian Revolution, this period of living history is exciting to read. The actuality of the revolutionary process is palpable. The text provides a sense that another world was not only possible but also in the making, as the delegates discussed and debated next steps.

The 1930s ended with the return of world war, and the first four congresses continued to provide a source of inspiration and clarity for revolutionary socialists.

Leon Trotsky, a central participant in the first four congresses, pointed to these proceedings as a pivotal laboratory for socialists. As he stated in 1933:

“The first [four] congresses of the Communist International left us an invaluable programmatic heritage: the character of the modern epoch of imperialism, that is, of capitalist decline; the nature of modern reformism and the methods of struggle with it; the relation between democracy and proletarian dictatorship; the role of the party in the proletarian revolution; the relation between the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie, especially the peasantry (agrarian question); the problem of nationalities and the liberation struggle of colonial peoples; work in the trade unions; the policy of the united front; the relation to parliamentarianism, etc.—all these questions have been subjected by the first four congresses to a principled analysis that has remained unsurpassed until now.”

History

Preserving this history after 90 years, including periods of intense repression, would not have been possible without the monumental efforts of working-class movements—and socialist readers, writers and translators—all over the world. Framing “revolutionary continuity” has, understandably, become a central feature of contemporary readings of the classical socialist tradition.

There is commonly an emphasis on the persistence of capitalism, imperialism and war, and a stress on similarities between the movements of today with those that have come before us. This is a standard frame for reading about the Communist tradition.

But in the 21st century, obviously much has changed. To read Communist International history in a way that contributes to the reality of building socialism today demands recognition of new contexts and new questions, as well as the points of continuity.

Riddell’s *Toward the United Front* brings to life the deliberations of activists living in demonstrably different times. Many of the conversations and debates are strikingly relevant, but others appear, sometimes disturbingly, archaic.

Regarding the life and conditions of women, for example, the one day of the Congress devoted to discussions on “the woman question” was presented by the chair as a concession. And women in general were no more than ten per cent of the organized parties in the Comintern. The contributions of these early feminist pioneers are very inspiring. But without in any way minimizing the continued barriers of capitalism and oppression, the women’s movement has advanced tremendously since this time.

Moreover, the period after the Russian Revolution was widely anticipated to be a pause in the continuing movement of global socialism. But this has not been a linear path. It would be a mistake to burden the comrades of the Fourth Congress with the assumption that they were speaking to those of us, decades later, who had endured the longue durée of post-war liberal capitalist democracies.

Toward the United Front is not an ABC guide or “how to” book for socialists. It is not a textbook, to be quoted as if it could apply mechanistically to present day conditions. But it is a profoundly interesting history book. It is rich in lessons of the challenging conditions of the time and some of the efforts to build a new world of freedom.

INTERNATIONAL



Spanish miners protest austerity

The Spanish bailout and the spreading crisis of capitalism

by EVAN JOHNSTON

THE EU’S rescue of the Spanish banking system signals the newest phase in the worsening crisis of the global capitalist system.

On June 9, eurozone finance ministers agreed to bail out Spanish banks to the tune of €100 billion (\$124 billion), which Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy hailed as a major victory for the Euro.

Optimism about the efficacy of the bailout quickly faded, however, as analysts and investors began to realize that the money being given to Spain in order to recapitalize its banks will only worsen Spain’s government debt, which currently sits at 72 per cent of its GDP.

Spain has become the most recent eurozone country to have its banking sector bailed out—with its largest bank, Bankia, expected to receive €19 billion of Spain’s bailout funds. This comes shortly after Bankia received an initial bailout of €4.5 billion from Madrid in June.

Spain in crisis

Spain’s economy has fallen into its second recession since 2009, shrinking 0.3 per cent in the first three months of 2012. Spain’s unemployment rate is the highest in the eurozone at 24.4 per cent—beating out Greece’s unemployment of 22.6 per cent—with an unemployment rate of more than 50 per cent for workers under the age of 25.

Shortly after the bailout package was announced, the credit ratings agency Moody’s Investors Service cut its rating of Spanish government debt by three notches from A3 to BAA3, following

a similar downgrade by Fitch Ratings, which cut Spain’s debt rating from A to BBB. In both rating systems, this leaves Spain’s debt rating hovering just above “junk status,” and the markets have responded accordingly. Moody’s notes that the €100 billion bailout will increase the country’s already staggering debt, leading many to fear that Spain will be next in line for a full-on sovereign bailout like we’ve seen in Greece, Ireland and Portugal.

Prime Minister Rajoy has thus far refused to acknowledge the capital injection as a “bailout,” preferring instead to call it a “soft loan.”

Whatever Rajoy calls it, the bailout has caused ripples across the eurozone, with many working-class people in Greece, Ireland and Portugal furious over what appears to be a bailout package without the same types of austerity measures required under previous agreements. In May 2010, the first bailout package was given to Greece (\$146 billion), followed by bailouts to Ireland (\$113 billion) and Portugal (\$116 billion). Each bailout introduced massive waves of cuts and job losses as part of the terms for accepting the bailout package.

However, our sister publication *En Lucha* points out that until the details of the Memorandum of Understanding have been released—an agreement between the EU and the recipient government of a bailout—we won’t know for certain what the consequences will be for the Spanish working class.

According to *En Lucha*, conditions for the bailout are likely to include an increase in consumption taxes, cuts to workers’ benefits, more anti-labour reforms, and further cuts in social servi-

ces: in other words, the same program of austerity that we’ve seen imposed on countries not only across the eurozone but also around the world.

What’s next for Spain?

These austerity measures will be nothing new for the Spanish working class, who have been engaged in a militant fightback against the Spanish ruling class ever since the first round of cuts and anti-worker legislation was introduced by Spain’s previous “socialist” government, PSOE (Partido Socialista Obrero Español).

There were nation-wide work stoppages by trade unions in 2010, and last year we saw the emergence of the May 15 social movement—the “indignados”—which occupied city squares, organized marches and agitated for “real democracy.”

A one-day general strike was held in March, with railways and factories shut down and tens of thousands of people pouring into the streets. Most recently, over 8,000 miners have gone on an indefinite strike in the province of Asturias, with one of their banners reading: “no estamos indignados, estamos hasta los cojones” (“we are not indignant, we are pissed off to our balls”).

With each new bandaid solution to capitalism’s contradictions, the EU ruling class proclaims an end to the crisis. But as we’ve seen from Ireland to Greece, from the current upheavals in Spain to the increasing instability in Italy, each time the crisis is said to end, it deepens and spreads. And at each turn, workers are rising up to say no to austerity and no to bank bailouts.

Wisconsin

Democrats lose but struggle continues

by ALLAN WOOD

THE POPULAR movement behind the recall of Wisconsin governor Scott Walker failed on June 5 because the battle against the Republican extremist was moved from the streets to the ballot box of the corporate Democrats. Once the widespread movement was squeezed into the electoral theatre of the corporate duopoly, it fell victim to the insipid debates, soundbites and grandstanding that is the norm in American politics.

The recall offered two choices—both of them unpalatable. Colin Millard organized the first protest against Walker’s inhumane budget in February 2011. “The moment you start a recall,” he

said, “you’re playing their game by their rules.” That people in Wisconsin were able to collect the more than 1 million names to launch a recall is testament to the groundswell of opposition against the anti-union Republicans. But Democrat Tom Barrett’s budget plans were little better than Walker’s. During debates, Barrett refused to challenge Walker’s budget lies and he went out of his way to denounce labour. Indeed, his fellow Democrats quickly stopped talking about restoring collective bargaining and union rights. Yet the leadership of organized labour unquestioningly supported Barrett. It remains to be seen whether Walker’s victory will make labour in Wisconsin rethink its devotion to the Democrats.

Working people may cast their ballots for the Democratic party, but those politicians are not interested in the needs of the voters. Like Walker’s Republicans, the Democrats craft their policies to please their deep-pocketed funders. When the movement decided—or was funneled by Democrats and the trade union bureaucracy—to rely on the ballot box of the twin party of corporate America, any hopes for a sustained movement against the austerity measures proposed by both parties were snuffed out.

It will be up to working people in Wisconsin and across the US—who resoundingly support higher taxes on the rich and oppose cuts to education and healthcare—to relight that fire of protest.

SPAIN 1936: A GLIMPSE OF A WORLD WITHOUT CAPITALISM

Katie Leonard looks at the Spanish Civil War and the revolution it ignited, when farms and production were collectivized and run democratically, and workers' control was the key weapon in the fight against fascism.

In 1936 in Spain, workers responded to a fascist uprising by organizing a revolution.

A few months after winning the election, the Popular Front government of Spain—a coalition of left-wing Republicans, Socialists and Communists—was faced by an uprising within the army. The major resistance to the army came from the two major labour unions in Spain at the time, the anarcho-syndicalist CNT and the socialist UGT. The militias organized by these unions fought against the army of the fascists and quickly suppressed the uprising in more than half of the country. With the country effectively split between the fascists and the Republic, the militias not only fought a civil war against the fascist army of Francisco Franco, but also led the revolution within Republican Spain.

As the revolution spread, the militias, factories, local government and well farms were run collectively. Large sections of Spain were run by democratically elected committees, organized by local people.

Farm collectives

The militias played a significant role in the collectivization of farmland, especially in the early days of the war. As they liberated towns from fascist control, they would encourage democratic collectivization of cultivated lands for farming. Although the majority participated, land owners were not forced to join the collectives. Farmers were permitted to keep as much land as they could cultivate without hiring labourers.

The hope was that the minority would join the collectives voluntarily once it was shown how much more effective they were. Ricardo Zabalza, the general secretary of the National Federation of Land Workers, said, “I prefer a small, enthusiastic collective, formed by a group of active and honest workers, to a large collective set up by force and composed of peasants without enthusiasm, who would sabotage it until it failed.” He, and others like him, believed that well-run voluntary collectives would eventually attract the entire peasantry, who would see the practically in the structure. Leaders of the CNT and UGT understood how many small farmers had sacrificed to get even a small parcel of land, and that those farmers were very attached to their land. Even so, it was made clear by the unions that this was a temporary allowance, and that all land would be collectivized once the war ended.

In practice, many farmers were coerced through various means into joining collectives. The presence of armed militiamen, who supported the collectivization, was enough to convince some otherwise unenthusiastic landowners. Fear of reprisals from former workers led some medium-sized landowners to agree to conditions that they did not like. In addition, restrictions on hiring labourers and limits to the size of private farms meant that individuals had to work harder and would produce



Anti-fascist militia members

less than they had previously when they could exploit those they hired. If individual farmers did produce surpluses, they were forced to sell it to the local committee on the committee's terms.

Self-governance

The liberal government in Madrid could not maintain control over all the small towns and villages in Republican Spain, and so Spain was awash in experiments with self-governance. A basic structure emerged: an elected committee was formed to control production and distribution and deal with conflicts. Authority was democratized by limiting the amount of time any one person could serve on the committee.

In some towns, wages were abolished and money was replaced with coupons that could be exchanged for commodities and services. According to a local libertarian newspaper, “Here in Fraga, you can throw banknotes in the street and no one will take notice.” Coupons were given out in equal amount to everyone who participated in the collective. Those who were exempt from work because of age or ability received the same amount as those who could and did work. Those who refrained from joining the collective were excluded from receiving services and products from the community, making life very difficult.

Other towns did not abolish money, but instead implemented one wage for everyone. In the town of Muniesa, bread, olive oil and meat were freely distributed to those in the collective, but money was still in circulation and used for supplementary supplies. Services were free and those who provided the services (doctors, teachers, barbers, etc) received the

same wage from the committee as everyone else. Anarchists who did not join the militia saw themselves as the rearguard of the revolution. They were engaged in dismantling the class structures that kept power in the hands of a few, and replacing it with a system of self-rule that could resist the centralized government, which would attempt to reassert control at the end of the war.

Although the government maintained better control over the larger cities, the CNT and the UGT succeeded in expropriating factories and equipment from their former owners. Both large and small manufacturers were collectivized and the unions established equal wages for both employees and their former owners and managers.

In Barcelona alone, workers collectivized slaughterhouses, pasteurizing plants, and the wholesale business of fish and eggs. They shut down small and unsanitary plants and moved all equipment and production to the largest plants, where they operated with better efficiency. The unions took over the woodworking plants, keeping the former employers on as managers at the same pay as the workers, and concentrated production in the largest factories. The same efforts were made in the tanning trade and in barbershops and beauty parlours. Similar reorganization was going on in other cities across Republican Spain. In Valencia, socialization, as it was called, was going on in the metal and carpentry trades as well as in the dressmaking and tailoring industries. Even the candy industry in Torrente was socialized and production was centralized.

In the militias, officers were elected by battalions and answered to the troops who elected them.

They received the same wage as rank-and-file militiamen and received no special rations or accommodations. Political and practical education took place among the militias; political theories were discussed and those who could read attempted to teach those who were illiterate. Although the amount of authority held by officers varied based on the individual battalion and their politics, officers were often expected to justify their orders. Although this had the potential to, and sometimes did, decrease the effectiveness of the troops, it was held as a vital principle of organization.

Defeat

At the moment when the revolution had the opportunity to seize control of the state, and to centralize the struggle against the fascists, the anarchist-led organizations refused based on their opposition to “all states.”

This was a tragic error, as it allowed the revolution to become isolated, and allowed other forces to seize control of trade and finance, communications and broadcasting, and the army—all of which were used to crush the radical experiments in democracy at the local level.

Only the POUM, a small revolutionary socialist organization, argued for the necessity of forming a workers' revolutionary government based on the power of local councils of workers, peasants and farmers. But they weren't big enough to influence the debates and outcome of the struggle.

The experience of the Spanish Civil War shows both the possibility of ordinary people building a new and better world and the necessity of revolutionary organization to help make those gains last.

‘large sections of Spain were run by democratically elected committees, organized by local people’

PRIDE IS POLITICAL

The slogan of this year’s Toronto Pride, “celebrate and demonstrate,” reflects a growing radicalization in the movement for LGBT rights. **Socialist Worker** looks at some of the key struggles today.

by **DARREN EDGAR**

SINCE THE 1960s, the advancement of rights and status for many lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people has been remarkable, but this progress was not inevitable and its pace has slowed considerably over the past few decades. However, with the re-politicization of the queer community in recent years, many people are radicalizing with ideas far beyond the scope of legal or social reforms and instead are looking toward ending their oppression altogether and creating a world of true liberation.

With the Stonewall Inn riots in 1969, our modern era of struggle for LGBT rights was born. The Civil Rights movement, the women’s movement, the labour and student movements and the anti-war movement were the locus of activity for people of that time wanting to end oppression—racist, sexist, imperialist—and these movements provided the training ground for the most militant activists within the nascent movement for gay liberation.

These movements also served as the inspiration for many other people to fight for themselves for the very first time, but it was the solidarity between the various movements which gave each of them their radical edge: working-class people fighting together to end the oppression the capitalist system creates and which it relies on as a wedge to divide people, one against another.

But after this initial burst of radical activity put the struggle for LGBT rights on the map, we saw an inward turn toward identity and lifestyle politics. Only LGBT people could fight for their liberation and “coming out” or “being queer” were elevated to principles, slowing the advancement of the struggle for all those who deviated from the heterosexual or male-female gender binary “norms.”

However, just like the AIDS crisis spurred a muted movement into a more militant position, the age of austerity since the global financial crisis of 2008 has forced today’s movement out of its complacency again.

While many LGBT people in Western nations have fought and won struggles for equal rights and access to health benefits, housing and job security, civil unions, marriage and spousal benefits, anti-discrimination laws and the ability to work

and live openly, the vast majority of LGBT people—those in much of the world—do not enjoy these same rights. The status of trans people continues to lag far behind that of their more traditionally male- and female-identified counterparts. The march of progress is not inevitable, for advance on one front doesn’t preclude retreat on another.

Re-politicization

Take, for example, the repeal of the US military’s ridiculous “don’t ask, don’t tell” policy. This occurred while many American states passed legislation banning “gay marriage” and President Barack Obama continued to dither over his support for same-sex marriage, even if he now supports it.

In Canada, Prime Minister Stephen Harper claims his Conservative party has no intention of re-opening “the marriage debate” while it simultaneously passes legislation making it more difficult for more LGBT refugees and immigrants to enter or stay in Canada, and it defunds HIV/AIDS organizations and Pride festivals.

It is because of these set-backs—these rights which already have been won, only to be taken away—as well as all of the room for improvement still to be made in the lives of LGBT people that the re-politicization of Pride is taking shape. After all, just as working people and students around the world—from Egypt to Wisconsin, from Greece to Spain, from Chile to Quebec—are uniting to resist the austerity agenda being forced upon them by the ruling class, so must LGBT people join in solidarity to reject the notion that they should pay for this most recent crisis of capitalism when they did nothing to create it.

If an injury to one is an injury to all, then so too is a victory for one a victory for all. This is why we fight in common struggle throughout the year, and why we come together now during Pride: to remember our past victories as well as our defeats, to generalize the lessons we’ve learned from all these and to push our struggle forward. A better world is possible—a world free of exploitation and oppression which can allow for the expression of the full range of human diversity—but only if we fight for ourselves, together: people of all genders, sexualities, races and abilities.

Trans people win historic victory

by **AMELIA MURPHY-BEAUDOIN**

ON JUNE 13, the Ontario Human Rights Code was amended to prohibit prejudice against trans people. In this historic moment, “gender identity” and “gender expression” were enshrined in the code, making Ontario the first major jurisdiction in North America to make it against the law to discriminate against trans people.

This was New Democrat MPP Cheri DiNovo’s fourth attempt to get the amendment passed.

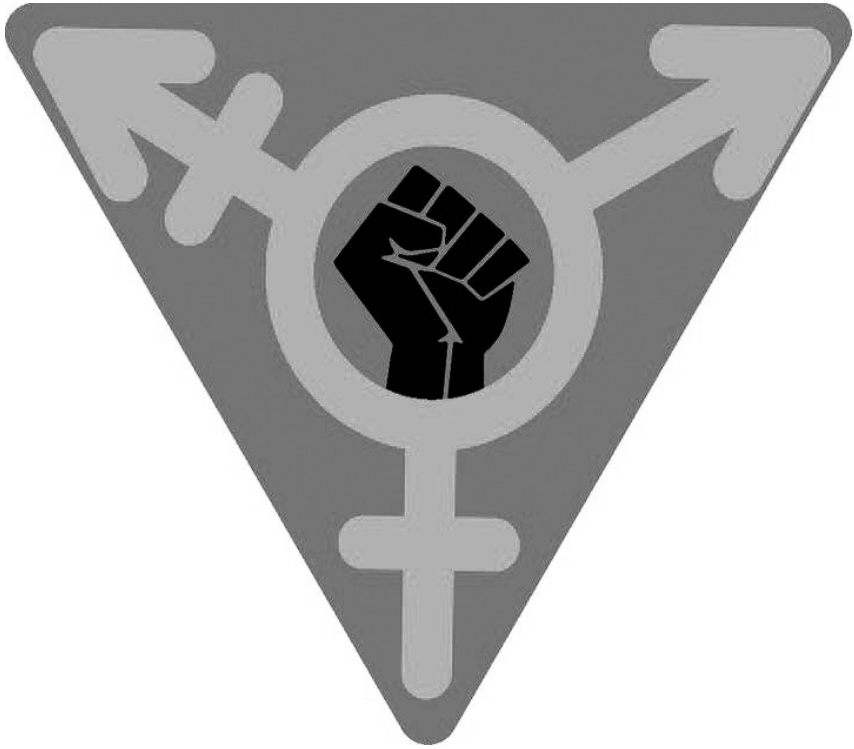
We are still waiting on federal Bill C-279—an act to amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code. The bill would make “gender identity” and “gender expression” prohibited grounds for discrimination, and amend the Criminal Code to include “gender identity” and “gender expression” in the

definition of identifiable groups in its provisions on hate propaganda, as well as adding the terms to the Criminal Code’s list of aggravating factors that affect sentencing.

The bill passed second reading in June by a vote of 150 to 132, and now it goes to committee before returning to the House for third reading, and ultimately to the Senate.

Currently, violence and murders motivated by transphobia are not hate crimes, and trans people do not have clear human rights protections against discrimination.

This year’s theme for Pride Toronto is “celebrate and demonstrate.” We celebrate the change to the Ontario Human Rights Code as a historic victory, but we must continue to demonstrate for the passage of Bill C-279, and for an end to transphobic violence and murder.



No pride in Israeli apartheid

SINCE 2008, the Zionist lobby has tried to ban Queers Against Israeli Apartheid Toronto (QuAIA) from the Toronto Pride parade. Amelia Murphy-Beaudoin from Socialist Worker talked to Dianne Moore from QuAIA about standing in solidarity with Palestinian queers who have no rights under Israel’s apartheid policies.

Why is Israeli apartheid a queer issue?

Queers have always been at the vanguard of human rights struggles, as far back as civil rights and anti-South African Apartheid struggles.

Israel is using queers to “rebrand” itself in what we call “pinkwashing.” Pinkwashing is covering up unethical practices by claiming support for queer rights. Israel pinkwashes its apartheid policies by claiming to be an oasis of gay tolerance. It is the responsibility of the queer community to speak against this—we will not be used.

Palestinian queers have no rights under Israel’s brutal occupation... there is no pink door in the apartheid wall.

What is Israel’s record on queer rights? Israel legalized homosexuality in 1988. It is

still largely homophobic, with Tel Aviv being an exception and actually called “The Bubble.”

Recently, the Knesset refused to legalize same-sex marriage and has also upheld Israel’s policy of not allowing mixed religions to marry.

Whatever queer rights have been gained in some parts of Israel, all of these gains have been made in spite of Israel’s pushback, and none of these rights extend to the Occupied Territories.

How does QuAIA counter accusations of being hateful and anti-Semitic?

We are criticizing Israel’s apartheid practices. We are not criticizing Jews. Many Jews in Israel, around the world and within QuAIA, are appalled by Israel’s cruel and inhuman treatment of Palestinians.

It is an old and tired tactic of the Zionist lobby to accuse anyone who criticizes Israel of being anti-Semitic. How ironic that these same apologists and ferocious defenders of Israel argue that Israel is the only democracy in the Middle East, but when it comes to our democratic rights to free speech and the absolute right and duty to speak out against

any government that is engaging in illegal practices, suddenly these defenders of Israel are all about silencing dissent.

Why is “apartheid” an accurate description of Israel’s policies?

The term “Israeli apartheid” is not a rhetorical slogan. It is a fact on the ground confirmed in a major study by South Africa’s national Human Sciences Research Council.

When you have rights and privileges for one group of people only and these rights and privileges are based on race, ethnicity and religion, this is apartheid.

Israel’s apartheid policies are exemplified by the apartheid wall, the illegal settlements, the checkpoints, the illegal occupation and the terrible abuses that Palestinians are subjected to every day.

Why did QuAIA decide to march in the Pride parade this year, but not last year?

Last year the Toronto city manager vindicated QuAIA with his report that clearly admitted QuAIA had never been in violation of the city’s anti-discrimination policy and the term Israeli apartheid is not hate speech.

Mayor Ford threatened to withhold funding to Pride Toronto if QuAIA marched. We refused to be a scapegoat for Ford’s homophobic agenda, so we publicly declared we would not march.

This year, having clearly won the battle at City Hall, we will march in the parade. We are a legitimate, queer, human rights group, and the community wants us to participate.

What’s next for QuAIA?

We are allied with Queers for Social Justice to bring politics to the forefront at Pride. Celebrate! Demonstrate! Agitate!! The queer community is re-politicizing and QuAIA is proud to be a part of that.

QuAIA will continue its work in solidarity with Palestinian queers, taking our lead from Palestinian queer groups like Aswat and Al Qaws. We continue to support the call for an international queer boycott of Israel, and we will keep working in our community so that everyone can understand why the name Queers Against Israeli Apartheid is not only accurate, but also morally and ethically paramount. Apartheid, wherever it exists, is a crime against humanity. And queer is our Humanity.

Challenging the criminalization of people with HIV

HIV+ disclosure is a complex, emotional and moral issue to which there are no easy answers. Canadian law regarding disclosure of HIV+ status is used as a political force and form of social control. The misuse of Canadian criminal law to regulate our sexual lives is one of the greatest human rights challenges we face. Amelia Murphy-Beaudoin from Socialist Worker talked to Jordan Bond-Gorr from Aids Action Now! (AAN!) about the ways this law gives false notions of protecting society, and threatens freedom, self-determination and human rights.

What is the law in Canada regarding disclosure of HIV+ status?

In 1998, in the Cuerrier case, the Supreme Court of Canada stated that a person living with HIV has a criminal law obligation to disclose HIV+ status before engaging in sex that exposes another person to “significant risk” of serious bodily harm. The Court reasoned, without looking at any evidence of the health effects of HIV infection, that HIV infection amounted to “serious bodily harm.”

Yet the Court did not define precisely what “significant risk” means. So, to this day, it is nearly impossible for people living with

HIV to know the circumstances in which they have a criminal law duty to disclose their HIV+ status to a sexual partner.

Is this law being applied consistently and fairly?

No. HIV disclosure cases have inconsistent and unpredictable outcomes resulting in a great deal of unfairness for those who have been charged, and fear and uncertainty amongst people living with HIV.

AIDS-phobia and ignorance from police and Crown prosecutors exacerbate the problem of legal uncertainty. Many police, Crown prosecutors and judges have seriously overestimated the risk of HIV being passed on during sex. Contrary to uninformed popular opinion, HIV is not easy to sexually transmit.

Also, institutional prejudices and biases in the criminal justice system and society at large—like institutionalized racism against black men of African and Caribbean descent—have resulted in far too many charges.

Do criminal charges promote the public health goals of reducing HIV transmission?

We don’t think so. Criminal charges and prosecutions are not a prevention tool. There is no evidence that the criminal law is leading

more HIV-positive people to disclose their status. Most people do not look to the criminal law for guidance with respect to their sexual behaviours, especially in the heat of the moment. It defies reason that a blunt tool like the criminal law can overcome the complex personal, social and structural factors that figure into a person’s willingness and ability to disclose HIV status. HIV is a disease of poverty and marginalization, of people who often do not have a lot of freedom or choices in many aspects of their lives. Criminalizing already marginalized groups of people only serves to put their health at greater risk.

What happens to people who are charged and convicted under this law?

Most people who are prosecuted must defend themselves against aggravated sexual assault charges—one of the most serious charges in Canadian law carrying a maximum sentence of life imprisonment without parole for 25 years. This is the same charge used against people who commit violent rapes—in circumstances that bear no resemblance to not disclosing one’s HIV status. And remember, HIV transmission does not have to take place—people can be charged for allegedly exposing another person to a significant risk of HIV transmission. In 40 per cent of con-

victions there was no HIV transmission. We have also seen murder convictions for transmitting HIV, and attempted murder charges. Since 1989, over 140 people living with HIV have been charged.

The vast majority of people who have been convicted for not disclosing their HIV status have been sentenced to prison. People who are convicted must register as sex offenders.

How can the community join the fight against the overly-broad use of criminal law for HIV non-disclosure cases?

At AIDS Action Now! we militate under the slogan “Action=Life”.

Follow AAN! on our website, Twitter and Facebook, stay informed about the issue, and join us in our marches and protests.

Support the Ontario campaign to get the Attorney General to pass rules to restrict use of the criminal law. That campaign is part of the long-term advocacy strategy of a group of community organizations, community legal clinics, engaged university professors, and people living with HIV. Sign on to the campaign at <http://ontarioaidsnetwork.on.ca/clhe/>

For the full text of this interview, visit www.socialist.ca.



Fight for gay-straight alliances continues

by **PAM JOHNSON**

AFTER PRESSURE from queer youth and their allies, the Ontario government passed new anti-bullying legislation—Bill 13, the Accepting Schools Act—on June 5. Its purpose is to give clear guidelines to schools about what constitutes bullying and how it can be dealt with. One provision calls for the creation of gay-straight alliances (GSAs).

The new legislation passed without support from the Ontario Tories. It was criticized by the Catholic Archbishop of Toronto, Thomas Collins, for including amendments calling for GSAs, saying it gives particular emphasis to members of the LGBT community.

However, the emphasis on LGBT students is supported by statistics about who gets bullied in school. LGBT students are twice as likely to face bullying as heterosexual students. It is the number two reason, after appearance, why

students say they are bullied, and one in three gay teens has attempted suicide—more than twice the rate of heterosexual teens.

Although the Catholic school board allows GSAs to exist, they cannot be named “gay-straight.” School boards have proposed and, in some cases, imposed names such as “Open Arms” or “Accepting Difference.” But students who wish to form these alliances say that it is critical that the focus of the group is clear from the name, and part of the purpose is to name homosexuality in school without shame.

The Accepting Schools Act is a legislative step forward that would not have come about without pressure from below. But opposition to its implementation continues—not only from the Catholic school board but also from the Liberal government cuts—to education assistants, teachers, and other resources—that deprive this legislation of real teeth. The fight continues for both accepting and well-funded schools, against homophobia and austerity.

Bill C-31: a danger to queer refugees

by **AMELIA MURPHY-BEAUDOIN**

QUEER REFUGEES already face homophobia and transphobia in the refugee claim process, and if Bill C-31 passes through the Senate, this will be compounded by increasing the likelihood that queer asylum seekers will be rejected.

Bill C-31 passed through the House in June. It aims to fast-track refugee claims from countries deemed to be “safe,” with no chance of appeal. This will result in queers being sent back to countries where they will face unjust incarceration and violence.

Sharalyn Jordan, of the Rainbow Refugee Committee, explains the impact of Bill C-31’s safe country list: “A list cannot accommodate the current complexity and flux in protection and persecution for LGBTQ people,” she says. “For example, the Ukraine has an elected parliament, an independent judiciary, and civil society organizations. Based on Bill C-31, it could be designated safe, and yet

its parliament is considering a law banning speech or writing that promotes homosexuality, and neo-Nazis are attacking LGBTQ people in the streets of Kiev.”

The system under Bill C-31 will demand that queer refugees have documentation to make their claim as a queer asylum seeker. This kind of documentation is difficult to compile, especially in the short timelines imposed.

Immigration Minister Jason Kenney insists that this bill will curb human smuggling and make the system more efficient, but we know this bill at its centre is a disastrously racist statement of the new Canadian values under the reign of Harper, and refugees—queer and otherwise—will suffer because of it.

The Harper government’s appalling record on refugee rights is also apparent in the drastic cuts to the Interim Federal Health Program, which take effect June 30. The changes to the program will be deadly—severely restricting access for refugees to medicine and healthcare.

Egypt: the revolution continues

By Judith Orr, SWP (UK)

THE ANNOUNCEMENT that Mohamed Mursi from the Muslim Brotherhood had won Egypt’s presidential election was met with relief and celebrations across the country.

Mursi won 51.7 per cent of the vote while his opponent, the regime’s Ahmed Shafiq, won 48 per cent. Shafiq was prime minister in dictator Hosni Mubarak’s last cabinet.

Mursi has now moved into Mubarak’s presidential palace. For decades, this was the base of a regime that outlawed, imprisoned and tortured the Brotherhood.

From Cairo, Revolutionary Socialist Hisham Fouad told *Socialist Worker* that Mursi’s victory had dealt the counter-revolution “a serious blow.”

Shafiq is responsible for the murder of hundreds of political protesters—and people know it.

“Shafiq’s defeat has given a boost to the revolution,” Hisham added. “There is a mood of celebration like the mood after Mubarak fell. Now the struggle will continue in the streets to defeat the rest of the military’s recent attacks.”

These include the dissolution of parliament, giving military police new powers to arrest civilians and allowing the military government (SCAF) to shape the new constitution.

The military enacted these new powers only days before the presidential election results were announced.

This “soft” coup looked like it might be the precursor to a full military takeover. The fact that SCAF stepped back from installing its man as president shows that it fears the revolutionary movement.

The leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood has collaborated with the military since the fall of Mubarak. Yet even it was threatened by the coup and had to take to the streets to defend the revolution.

Further repression is still a danger. But Mursi’s presidency opens up the possibility of the revolution deepening.

He faces raised expectations from all those who risked their lives and took to the streets to topple Mubarak and win freedom and democracy.

People want to see decent jobs and an end to poverty. Youth unemployment is running at around 25 per cent—a devastating figure when 60 per cent of the population is under 30 years old.

They also want to see corruption cleared out from all the institutions in Egyptian society. And they want the new president to stand up to Israel and the Western powers—and support the Palestinians.

Mursi will be unable or unwilling to meet these aspirations. The Egyptian economy is in deep crisis, with foreign currency reserves severely depleted.

Mursi is the president, but the military still holds the power. “This will lead to new battles and confrontations with the army,” says Hisham.

“We will also see an upsurge in social demands on the new president and clashes as he attempts to implement his neoliberal economic programme on the people of Egypt.”

Workers have the power to win this revolution

By Sameh Naguib, *Egyptian Revolutionary Socialists*
THE PRESIDENT of the republic, Mohamed Mursi, won’t be allowed to go to bathroom without Field Marshal Tantawi’s permission. SCAF will remain political leader.

The consciousness of the masses meant that the old regime could not win the elections. So the revolutionary possibilities are much bigger than anyone could have imagined.

Some people think there is no difference between the rule of the Muslim Brotherhood and that of the generals. From a class perspective, if we look at their programmes, there isn’t a difference there.

But there is an extremely important difference. The Brotherhood has a mass base—an ability to mobilize. The regime depends completely on its security apparatus and on creating terror.

But the vacillating forces of the Brotherhood are under pressure from above and from below. We must make use of that contradiction.

The Brotherhood’s own rank and file, and the masses who support them, are the audience for the left in Egypt. They are the audience for the revolution.

The Revolutionary Socialists don’t “support” the Brotherhood. But in the battle between the Brotherhood and the military, we are on the barricades with the Islamists.

We are there with our own independent propaganda and without dropping our criticism.

There is a huge audience looking for a revolutionary alternative that doesn’t support the Brotherhood or the military. This is especially true among the working class.

The youth can fill the squares to overflowing. But the working class can paralyse the state. A general strike would bring Egypt to a halt.

We have to tell Egyptian workers and the masses that if the military wins it will smash workers’ organizations.

SCAF will try to defeat the revolution. We must have confidence that the masses can stop that from happening.

The above articles originally appeared in Socialist Worker (UK) on June 30, 2012.

Are You Mad? There’s a Pride for That!

Paul Denison *looks at the roots of psychiatric oppression and the long history of resistance, including Mad Pride.*

Mad Pride celebrations are coming to Toronto again this year, July 10 to 15. Mad Pride is an arts, culture, and heritage festival created by psychiatric survivors, mad people, folks the world has labelled “mentally ill” and those in solidarity with them.

Celebrated all over the world from Ghana to Ireland, Mad Pride had its origins in Toronto. The first known event that was specifically organized as a Pride event by psychiatric survivors “Psychiatric Survivor Pride Day” was held in the Parkdale neighbourhood of Toronto on September 18, 1993—in response to discrimination from local residents against psychiatric survivors living in boarding homes.

In 2000 the Toronto Mad Pride was moved to July 14, the same date as the International Mad Pride Day—which coincides with Bastille day, the celebration of the storming of the Bastille during the French Revolution, in which prisoners including those detained for being “mad” where freed. It was during the course of the revolution that Jean Baptiste Pussin, a recovered ex-inmate of the Bicetere asylum who later served as the governor of the asylum, worked along with his wife Marguerite and Phillipe Pinel, the director of Bicetere, to unshackle the inmates and innovate humane, compassionate, non-coercive treatments.

Psychiatric survivor movement

Mad Pride is a part of the psychiatric survivor movement, a civil rights movement that fights discrimination against people living with mental illness, fights for adequate social assistance rates and the right to employment with accommodations as needed, for the right to adequate, peer-driven, non-coercive services, the right for service users to define what treatments work for them, to question what normality is and what it is to be human. The use of the word “Mad” is a deliberate attempt to reclaim oppressive language in much the same way as LGBTQ communities are reclaiming the word “queer.”

Origins

Although advocacy by individuals and various patient rights groups has existed for centuries, the modern psychiatric survivor movement had its origins in the early seventies. Ex-patients formed groups like the Insane Liberation Front and the Network Against Psychiatric Assault to campaign for patient’s rights, and against discrimination and forced treatment. Some of these groups also developed peer-run services as an alternative to a mental health system they saw as inherently coercive. Through the 1970s and 1980s these alternative services developed to the extent that they are now seen as not only a viable alternative but are the current leading edge of service development in the mainstream

difference between these organizations and their conventional equivalents is that it is a discrimination-free environment where survivors can safely disclose, be themselves and get accommodation as needed. In my opinion, the movement’s success in establishing peer-run services and Consumer Survivor Initiatives (CSIs) is where it begins to challenge capitalist social relations. Simply by asking for an accommodation in work hours as a right, and to have services defined by the workers and the community that uses them is an attempt to make production serve the needs of the individual worker and the community rather than the solely the needs of capital.

Mental health under capitalism

Capitalism requires conformity to aid the smooth integration of individuals into the labour/consumption process. The oppression of psych survivors is integrated into capitalism via the psychiatric system which gets to decide what is normal behaviour and what is not. For example up until the 1970s homosexuality was defined as a mental illness; The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) expands every year creating new diagnostic labels which in turn creates new markets for the pharmaceutical companies and service providers. Mad pride questions “normality” and celebrates the different ways of being human; it celebrates the troublemakers, the round pegs who insist on inhabiting the square holes of capitalist society.

If you would like to participate, please consider attending some of the events during Mad Pride Week. There will be workshops, panel discussions, theatre, music and the culminating event is the Annual Bed Push march—where participants dressed in pyjamas push a hospital gurney from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) site at Queen and Ossington to the Parkdale Activity & Recreation Centre in Parkdale, the scene of much psych survivor history. For more info on Mad Pride and a schedule of events see www.madpridetoronto.com.



mental health system.

In the 1980s and 1990s other “consumer/survivor initiatives” organizations run by and for psych survivors also grew; these include survivor run businesses, social service agencies and housing complexes. Often the only

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REVIEWS



FILM

Snow White revisited

Snow White and the Huntsman
Directed by Rupert Sanders
Reviewed by Fava Zaharuk

SNOW WHITE and the Huntsman is not the classic Brothers Grimm fairy tale. This modern interpretation depicts the protagonist as an active participant in her own liberation. This is not the classic “damsel-in-distress tale that the Brothers Grimm left us; rather this piece takes the old story and gives it a modern and, some might even say feminist, twist.

Well, lets not get carried away... First of all, we cannot ignore the classic tale of envy: the wicked Queen Raveena (Charlize Theron) is a woman scorned by love, her heart has been broken which has left

her believing her only value is her beauty. This sexist tale of older women envying younger women is portrayed by the evil Queen actually consuming the beauty of youth from young women, leaving them dead or older looking when she is finished with them. This type of competition for the power that youthful beauty brings devours the Queen’s attention; she is so obsessed with the way she looks that she lets her entire kingdom die of starvation around her. Juxtaposed to this evil-death loving Queen is the life-giving Snow White (Kristen Stewart), portrayed as life itself/the healer of the land. Snow White is a change agent in this version of the story; at no point in the film does a man save her.

Her first escape depicts her fighting off the Queen’s evil brother and jumping into a sewer to escape the kingdom! When she is captured by the dwarves, at no point does she become their domestic servant (as in the Grimm version); rather, they become united in the fight against the evil Queen when she learns of their struggle as unemployed miners. I think this new version of Snow White is important to see with a critical eye because it is significant that what some have classified as the classic tale of a “damsel-in-distress” is being told at this moment in history in an entirely new light. Despite its flaws and the apparent celebration of the cult of youthful beauty as a form of actual power, this piece could be archived as a bench mark of how far we have come.

BOOK

Is another media possible?

Will the Revolution be Televised?
Written by John Molyneux
Reviewed by Melissa Graham

JOHN MOLYNEUX’S short book, Will the revolution be televised? A Marxist Analysis of the Media, sets out to answer a number of questions that radicals often pose about the media. Molyneaux begins by looking at the irrationality of capitalism, and the media within it as a powerful tool of the ruling class, maintaining the status quo. For those of us who have already radicalized, this statement may seem obvious. The media is not neutral, but is part of a system that protects itself from criticism, and where “common sense” ideas are those of the status quo. Molyneux sets out to examine how this takes place. One of the key issues he examines is neutrality. Despite its claims to show all sides of an issue, the media tends to portray a particular view of the world: one where capitalist ideas are the norm and everything else is framed as radical. Molyneux uses examples from the 2011 London riots to show this, but here in Canada we have examples of

our own. During the G20, police were framed as heroes while they treated protestors like cattle. We can also see it in the length of time it took for the English media to mention the Quebec student strike, waiting until they could silence it no longer. According to the mainstream media, there is no system but capitalism, and every person under capitalism should be striving for the same things. Molyneux also looks at who runs the media, and how that affects what makes the news. His examples are based in the UK, but it’s not difficult to find similar sources elsewhere. He argues that wherever you look in capitalist society, media is a tool of the ruling class developed by the ruling class. This isn’t limited to the news—game shows, for instance, encourage the idea of competitiveness. Prizes are awarded to a lucky few for outdoing their opponents. Molyneux also examines reality TV, how it has developed and how it promotes a particular view of society. While I am not sure I entirely agree with his conclusion that “in watching the programmes and, importantly, in discussing them with family, friends, workmates etc, viewers are able to use them as a sounding board by which

to judge standards of conduct, norms of behaviour, in times when these are changing rapidly,” it is certainly an interesting point. What’s more interesting here is the notion that anyone can be a celebrity; yet another attempt by the ruling class to camouflage class boundaries. Finally, Molyneux argues that, rather than the media giving consumers “what they want,” they create a market for what they offer. In times when millions of people question the world around them, and when they are engaged in collectively changing the status quo, Molyneux shows how “what people want” from the media changes dramatically. If the media were really giving people what they were looking for, then there would be no need for articles like these. In fact, Molyneux leaves radical media out of the discussion for the most part. It would have been interesting to learn more about those impacts. Most of the contents of this short book will not be new to those who have studied the topic, but it serves as an easy-to-read analysis of the mainstream press. Anyone who’s questioning why the media reports the way it does should read this book.

LEFT JAB
John Bell

The selective outrage of Ezra Levant

THE RIGHT wing faces an intolerable censorship in this country, gagged by the left-wing consensus that rules the mainstream media. How do I know? Ezra Levant says so.

Levant has been the subject of a Canadian Broadcast Standards Council review, resulting from his use of personal attacks and foul language. Last December, he used his televised bully pulpit to denounce a decision by Chiquita Brands International to avoid using Alberta’s Tar Sands syncrude. Levant, lead propagandist for Alberta’s “ethical oil,” called Chiquita “anti-Canadian bigots.” This is all standard operating procedure for Levant, illogical propaganda but still within the not particularly stringent rules governing broadcasters. But then he went too far. He singled out one Chiquita executive with an Hispanic sounding name for personal abuse, using a particularly offensive Spanish insult. An astute viewer, blogger David Climenhaga, complained to the CBSC.

The CBSC review decided that this personal attack clearly violated its code, and ordered Sun TV to twice broadcast the following announcement, once during Ezra Levant’s time slot and once during any prime time slot:

“The Canadian Broadcast Standards Council has found that Sun News Network breached the Canadian Association of Broadcasters’ Code of Ethics in its broadcast of *The Source* on December 22, 2011. The program contained a coarse insult directed at a specific named person. This violated Clause 6 of the Code.” This punishment doesn’t even constitute a slap on the wrist. Yet Levant has done all in his power to use the ruling as proof that socialist bullies are out to censor the voice of right-wing truth. He read the passage, braying that it was a “false confession” demanded by a “kangaroo court.” He then singled out all the individuals on the CBSC by name and directed the same foul insult at them.

In theory, this violation should call into question Sun TV’s broadcast license renewal. The CBSC has now referred the matter to the Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC), which has the power to pull the plug at Sun TV. More likely, it will reveal that the CBSC and CRTC are paper tigers, and that Stephen Harper’s favourite “news” network can safely ignore the few rules that regulate television journalism.

I hesitate to give the clown prince of punditry this much attention, but the case got me thinking about censorship, who is being stifled and who isn’t.

Censorship

There is a big difference between regulation of industry under capitalism and censorship. Levant raises the bogus issue of “censorship” because he and his ilk are fundamentally opposed to regulation. His crusade is not for civil rights but for unfettered corporate rights, not for free speech but for free markets. Cut red tape, get rid of the gravy train bureaucrats, let industry regulate itself, let me hurl any profane insult I wish at anyone

who disagrees: this is the same old neoliberal agenda. If Ezra Levant were really a champion for freedom from censorship, he wouldn’t have to look far to find it.

In Edmonton, advertising giant Pattison Outdoor refused to rent a billboard to Greenpeace; the plain text sign would have read: “When there is a huge solar energy spill it’s just called a nice day. Green jobs, not more oil spills.” Pattison Outdoor controls a huge share of the advertising market through billboards, transit ads and the like. Owner Jim Pattison is Canada’s third richest man, with strong connections to the Conservative Party. In my city, Pattison bus shelter ads regularly feature campaigns extolling the virtues of the Tar Sands. Pattison spokespeople refuse to explain why Greenpeace’s whimsical slogan was rejected.

Would Ezra speak out to denounce the obvious censorship at work here? Life is too short to waste time actually suffering through his program, but I find no evidence that he acknowledged the event.

How about this one? For more than a year, Ottawa’s Carleton University has refused to divulge the strings attached to a \$15 million gift from billionaire Clayton Riddell. Riddell is Canada’s twelfth richest man and past chair of the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. His “gift” endowed the Clayton H. Riddell Graduate Program in Political Management, cheered by Reform Party founder Preston Manning.

Academics at other universities have protested corporate gifts that give business control over academic content. Carleton refuses to fess up; after a Freedom of Information demand, it released a document with all the relevant text blacked out. One of the redacted pages was headed: “An invitation to transform Canadian politics.”

Levant is too busy creating the myth of his own victimization to be concerned about this censorship. If he noticed, I would bet he’d loudly defend Carleton’s right to keep the details of the deal “confidential.” Otherwise, other billionaires who want to create schools to churn out graduates in their own image might be scared off.

Artist and environmentalist Franke James discovered that financial support for a European tour of her work was suddenly revoked on orders of the Conservative government. Jeremy Wallace, Deputy Director for Climate Change at Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, wrote that the message in James’ artwork would “in fact run counter to Canada’s interests.”

Parks Canada employees have been ordered to stay silent about massive layoffs and cuts that threaten our publicly owned lands. A letter sent to 4,800 member of the Public Service Alliance of Canada told them: “as employees of the public sector, our duty is to support the elected government.”

Would Ezra speak up for these real victims of censorship and attack? Environmental extremists and union thugs? You know the answer.

Too bad the real victims of the war against our right to know don’t have their own daily, nationally-televised talk shows like poor, censored Ezra.

WHERE WE STAND

The dead-end of capitalism
The capitalist system is based on violence, oppression and brutal exploitation. It creates hunger beside plenty. It kills the earth itself with pollution and unsustainable extraction of natural resources. Capitalism leads to imperialism and war. Saving ourselves and the planet depends on finding an alternative.

Socialism and workers' power
Any alternative to capitalism must involve replacing the system from the bottom up through radical collective action. Central to that struggle is the workplace, where capital-ism reaps its profits off our backs.
Capitalist monopolies control the earth's resources, but workers everywhere actually create the wealth. A new socialist society can only be constructed when workers collect-ively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution to satisfy human needs, not corporate profits—to respect the environment, not pollute and destroy it.

Reform and revolution
Every day, there are battles between exploited and exploiter, oppressor and oppressed, to reform the system—to improve living condi-tions. These struggles are crucial in the fight for a new world. To further these struggles, we work within the trade unions and orient to building a rank and file movement that strengthens workers' unity and solidarity.
But the fight for reforms will not, in itself, bring about fundamental social change. The present system cannot be fixed or reformed as NDP and many trade union leaders say. It has to be overthrown. That will require the mass action of workers themselves.

Elections and democracy
Elections can be an opportunity to give voice to the struggle for social change. But under capitalism, they can't change the system. The structures of the present parliament, army, po-lice and judiciary developed under capitalism and are designed to protect the ruling class against the workers. These structures cannot be simply taken over and used by the working class. The working class needs real democ-racy, and that requires an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates.

Internationalism
The struggle for socialism is part of a world-wide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose everything which turns workers from one country against those from other countries. We support all genuine national liberation movements.
The 1917 revolution in Russia was an inspiration for the oppressed everywhere. But it was defeated when workers' revolutions elsewhere were defeated. A Stalinist counter-revolution which killed millions created a new form of capitalist exploitation based on state ownership and control. In Eastern Europe, China and other countries a similar system was later established by Stalinist, not socialist parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

Canada, Quebec, Aboriginal Peoples
Canada is not a “colony” of the United States, but an imperialist country in its own right that participates in the exploitation of much of the world. The Canadian state was founded through the repression of the Aboriginal peoples and the people of Quebec.
We support the struggles for self-determin-ation of Quebec and Aboriginal peoples up to and including the right to independence. Socialists in Quebec, and in all oppressed nations, work towards giving the struggle against national oppression an internationalist and working class content.

Oppression
Within capitalist society different groups suffer from specific forms of oppression. Attacks on oppressed groups are used to divide work-ers and weaken solidarity. We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls. We support the right of people of colour and other oppressed groups to organize in their own defence. We are for real social, economic and political equality for women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimina-tion and homophobia against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered people. We oppose discrimination on the basis of religion, ability and age.

The Revolutionary Party
To achieve socialism the leading activists in the working class have to be organized into a revolutionary socialist party. The party must be a party of action, and it must be demo-cratic. We are an organization of activists committed to helping in the construction of such a party through ongoing activity in the mass orga-nizations of the working class and in the daily struggles of workers and the oppressed.
If these ideas make sense to you, help us in this project, and join the International Socialists.



Iran 2009: precursor to the Arab Spring

by PAUL KELLOGG

IN THE 1970s, under the brutal Shah of Iran, Iran was one of the chief allies of the US. The Shah was overthrown by revolution in 1979, but hopes for change were dashed when social forces, represented by the Ayatollah Khomeini, hijacked the revolution. There was a brutal crackdown on the left and the social movements.

In 2009, however, we caught a glimpse of the ferment that has been developing beneath the surface of Iranian society, a ferment that exploded in a massive pro-democracy movement, anticipating the great Middle East democracy movements of 2011, and giving notice that developing inside Iranian society are the forces which can rekindle the hopes of 1979.
June 12, 2009, was election day, and it was widely expected that the results would indicate trouble for President Ahmadinejad. In office since 2005, he had presided over a militarization of Iranian society, embedding the dreaded Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps (IGRC) throughout the national state and in all 30 provinces. The IGRC is part of a network of repressive apparatuses in Iran, which are important both politically and economically. The IGRC, by 2009, had acquired “a vast economic empire, from oil and construction to cellphone technology,” according to one observer.
The campaign against Ahmadinejad coalesced around Mir-Hossein Moussavi. Deeply embedded in the elite which ran Iran in the 1980s, he had been involved in disputes and splits in that elite, but never as a “revolutionary.” In 1997, he emerged as a key adviser to then president Khatami, a presidency that sought a tentative “modernizing” of the Iranian Revolution.
Ahmadinejad’s 2005 presidency represented a conservative reaction against this “modernizing” trend.
But behind the scenes, Iran was, in fact, modernizing.
The 1979 revolution took place in the context of very steep economic

crisis. Recovery from that crisis became impossible in the 1980s, after Iraq—egged on by the US—launched a terrible war against Iran. One million died, countless were maimed, and the economy went into a tailspin.
But with the war finally over, Iran’s economy began to steadily grow in the 1990s. By 2006, GDP per capita had been growing very fast for a decade, and was finally significantly greater than before the revolution. The country’s principal city, Tehran, had emerged as a massive urban centre of some eight million people. The millions of young people in the new urban centres felt little affinity with the conservative clerics who were the ideological backers of the president. When growth came to a halt in 2007, and the economy began to stagnate and slowly decline, a new movement erupted.
That movement was not visible in the 2008 parliamentary elections, which proceeded in the familiar dull pattern of previous years. But 2009 was completely different.
Moussavi, in a June 3 televised debate, called Ahmadinejad a liar and a dictator. This was unprecedented. The next day, thousands took to the streets chanting “death to the liar.”
Green Movement
The crowds wore green. A young man named Mostafa Hassani had come up with the idea that those who wanted change should use green—on ribbons, armbands, headbands, scarves—and the sign of the breadth of the movement was the spread of the colour throughout the country.
The election campaign in Tehran was electric. Into the wee hours, tens of thousands campaigned in a city-wide free-for-all. Every morning, Tehran was abuzz with the latest election news. Men crowded around newsstands to read the headlines and to discuss the previous night’s candidate debate. Just inside the main gate to Tehran University, two days before the election, a middle-aged guard who had lost a leg in the war with Iraq in the 1980s marveled at the thousands of students marching

past, flying green banners in support of Moussavi’s reformist movement. “Enghelab!” he said, nodding. ‘It’s a revolution!’”
Tens of millions of votes were cast (Iran is a large country with some 73 million people). But miraculously, those tens of millions of votes were “counted” in just two hours. Ahmadinejad was declared the victor, ostensibly winning two-thirds of the votes from a record turnout.
In protest, hundreds of thousands of people took to the streets. The IGRC was already there. While people were still voting, trucks full of IGRC troops had taken up strategic positions in the major cities. Officially, 37 people were killed in the crackdown that followed. The real figure is likely twice as high. In the first wave of arrests, 2,000 went to jail. By August, that figure had grown to 4,000. The movement continued into the winter, but the pressure of the regime was unrelenting. The 2009 movement was not able to sustain itself.
Like all movements at their beginning, the one in 2009 was a confusing mixture. At the top were old conservatives like Moussavi, reminted as a reformist. Behind the scenes were sections of big capital, who were (and are) seeking an end to the sanctions which are making economic life in the country so difficult. But on the streets were ordinary students and workers, who jumped into the breach created by a split at the top of society, to demonstrate for an end to repression, and for meaningful reforms in the way in which politics and economics are structured in their country.
The response of those outside Iran was, in many cases, not helpful. There were many who dismissed the Green Movement as a tool of the US. But there is no future with a left that uncritically backs repressive figures like Ahmadinejad.
Real solidarity needs to operate on two fronts: against threats from the US and Israel to bomb Iran, and in solidarity with the social movements which are taking shape, in very difficult circumstances, to fight for democracy.

international socialist events

- TORONTO**
Chile 1972-73
Tues, July 10, 6pm
OISE, 252 Bloor St W
Speaker: Tobí René Wilczek
Info: torontosocialists@gmail.com
- Portugal 1974-75**
Tues, July 24, 6pm
OISE, 252 Bloor St W
Speaker: TBA
Info: torontosocialists@gmail.com
- Iran 1979**
Tues, August 7, 6pm
OISE, 252 Bloor St W
Speaker: Yusur Al Bahrani
Info: torontosocialists@gmail.com
- Poland 1980-81**
Tues, August 21, 6pm
OISE, 252 Bloor St W
Speaker: Melissa Graham
Info: torontosocialists@gmail.com
- OTTAWA**
IS organizing meetings
Mondays at University of Ottawa
Info: gosocialists@yahoo.ca

VANCOUVER
IS organizing meetings
Wednesdays at Langara Collge
Info: vancouver.socialists@gmail.com

peace & justice events

- TORONTO**
Solidarity is hot: fundraiser for Rio Tinto workers
Friday, July 20, 7pm
With special musical guests, Swamperella
\$10-20 sliding scale
United Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street
For Tickets: council@labourcouncil.ca
- Rally against Bill 78 in Montreal**
Sunday, July 22
For a bus going from Toronto, contact: torontosocialists@gmail.com
- Workers' struggles amidst neoliberal globalization**
August 11-12
United Steelworkers Hall
25 Cecil Street
For registration and info: www.magkaisacentre.org
- MONTREAL**
Rally against Bill 78
Sunday, July 22
For a bus going from Toronto, contact: torontosocialists@gmail.com

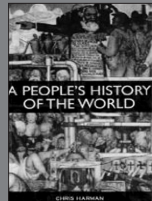


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NO TRANSIT, NO BRIDGE

by ANNA ROIK

OVER 100 adults and kids rallied in the Sapperton area of New Westminster, BC, outside of TransLink's Open House, to show their opposition to a proposed six-lane replacement for the aging Pattullo Bridge.

On Saturday, June 23, people gathered at a nearby park, making the short walk over to the Open House with the kids blowing noisemaker horns and everyone carrying signs with slogans such as “No 6-lane Bridge” and “Give Surrey More Transit Now.”

Residents of both New Westminster and Surrey—the two cities to be most directly affected by traffic flow across the new Pattullo Bridge—were there to voice their opinions against the TransLink transit authority's plans to replace the aging 4-lane Pattullo Bridge with a 6-lane span.

Upon arriving at the Open House, the rally was met by Vincent Gonsalves, TransLink's Community Relations Co-ordinator, and other staff. Demonstrators were welcomed inside to read the posted information, add comments using a sticky note system, and complete a three-page questionnaire.

As the replacement Pattullo Bridge is still in the Project Definition Stage (which culminates in choosing the concept that best meets objectives), it is imperative that TransLink re-evaluate all options. As one TransLink representative said today, “traffic volumes in the region have been decreasing due to increased fuel costs, and sustainability is a concern for TransLink.” Jonina Campbell, a New Westminster city councillor, pointed out that a new elementary school has just received building approval on one of the roads targeted for increased truck traffic under the 6-lane bridge option.

These points, coupled with strong resident opposition, seem to imply a need for less bridge, not more.

QUEBEC SOLIDARITY

by PETER HOGARTH

NEIGHBOURHOOD GATHERINGS in which people come together and bang pots and pans, called Casseroles, have been going on from Victoria and Vancouver all the way to Newfoundland and Labrador.

There have been solidarity demonstrations as far away as Australia, Chile and Mexico. In Toronto, crowds have numbered as many as 2,000, taking to the streets and spreading the message of revolt to supportive neighbours.

After more than 100 days on strike, the imposition of the repressive anti-protest Law 78 and the incredible determination of the Quebec students, the movement is no longer a student movement, but a social movement against austerity.

Most importantly, it is a spark and inspiration. The Quebec student movement has shown to workers across Canada that you can vote down a bad deal and you can defy injunctions.



GRASSY NARROWS: JUSTICE DELAYED IS JUSTICE DENIED

by JOHN BELL

EARLY IN June, several bus-loads of people from the Asubpeeschoseewagong First Nation (also known as Grassy Narrows) travelled to Toronto to confront the provincial government with their concerns.

The Grassy Narrows are fighting for their treaty rights to control and protect their land in Northern Ontario.

In the past, the logging industry contaminated their

waters, and the fish that are central to their diet, with massive amounts of mercury. Even now, economic constraints force many to rely on a food source they know is harmful.

They highlighted the issue on June 7 by hosting a fish fry, featuring mercury-tainted fish, on the lawn of the Ontario Legislature. Most invitees like Premier Dalton McGuinty were no-shows.

“Every day mothers in Grassy Narrows must choose between hunger and feeding their families our traditional

fish diet,” said Judy Da Silva, Grassy Narrows mother and activist.

Despite their treaty, various Ontario governments have allowed over 50 per cent of the Asubpeeschoseewagong land to be logged, without consulting or compensating the people.

Two days later, several hundred allies joined the Grassy Narrows people for a rally and march to Queen's Park, called River Run to highlight their right to stewardship of their land and water.

DUNCAN SCHOOL BOARD RISKS GETTING FIRED TO FIGHT AUSTERITY

by VALERIE LANNON

SCHOOL TRUSTEES from Duncan, BC, just north of Victoria, make up the Cowichan District School Board and have taken a strong stand against the provincial government's austerity measures.

The trustees have submitted a “restoration” budget that would see the return of \$10.8 million that has been stripped from their district over the years. From the government's point of view, this would result in a deficit

budget for the district and trustees are not “legally” allowed to submit deficit budgets.

The Education Minister, George Abbott, has threatened to fire the board for not fulfilling its legal obligations. The board responds that its legal obligation to meet the educational needs of its students is paramount.

The board has attracted plenty of support from parents and teachers.

There have been solidarity rallies in Duncan and

Victoria. The July 20 rally in Victoria featured participants wearing red squares for Quebec students, and solidarity greetings from two teacher union locals, Victoria school trustees (whose own restoration budget was narrowly defeated by the Victoria board as a whole), Victoria Labour Council, and a local City of Victoria Council member.

For more information and updates, follow the Facebook page The Budget Begins With You.

CONFERENCE: WORKERS' STRUGGLES AMIDST NEOLIBERAL GLOBALIZATION

THE CONGRESS of Progressive Filipino Canadians (CPFC) and its allies welcome and invite all to participate in “Workers' Struggles Amidst Neoliberal Globalization,” a North American conference which will be held from August 11 to 12 at the United Steelworkers Hall in Toronto.

The conference aims to put forth a critical and dynamic dialogue amongst progressive organizations,

groups and individuals about our struggles and conditions as workers under the present crisis of capitalism.

Throughout history, we have witnessed and felt imperialism's assaults on the working class. Now more than ever, workers' lives are becoming more insecure and unstable as the neoliberal agenda of globalization intensifies its attacks on workers' employment, wages and standard of living.

This conference will provide an opportunity for all to discuss and deepen our understanding of workers' realities and struggles under neoliberal globalization.

Through this gathering, we hope to further understand the historic role of the working class in building a movement for social change.

For more info, visit bit.ly/workersconference or the facebook event page, Workers Struggles Amidst Neoliberal Globalization

STICKING WITH THE UNION

Carolyn Egan

Ontario teachers take political action against austerity

ONTARIO GOVERNMENT attacks on the public sector have provoked a strong response from teachers. The Elementary Teachers Federation of Ontario received a huge mandate from its members for a political day of action in the fall, if the government of Ontario attempts to force a settlement on them.

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation is having meetings with its members, discussing using the same tactic. Teachers would not go to work for one day as a political protest. Under the Harris government, teachers stayed off the job in a similar protest for two weeks and had strong support from the public.

The Liberal government recently passed a draconian budget with significant attacks on jobs and services. The neoliberal agenda has been embraced with gusto by Premier Dalton McGuinty. Privatization and contracting out are seen as the way forward for the province, as well as public sector wage freezes.

Profits

The budget included sections that would allow for the privatization of public services if the government chooses to do so. Affected areas include health care, education, water services, municipal and provincial services. As the Ontario Health Coalition stated, this could be the largest privatization in Ontario's history. It essentially allows the sale of these services to for-profit companies. Profit would then become the primary motivator in the delivery of services. “Profits before people” is the mantra of the austerity agenda.

The Ontario Federation of Labour has initiated a Common Front of trade unions and community groups to develop strategies and move together to counter these assaults. Groups like the Ontario Health Coalition has been organizing in towns and cities against cuts back to hospitals and the gutting of services. Local coalitions have been garnering significant public support.

At the same time, the Canadian Federation of Students-Ontario has con-

vened meetings of student unions of local universities and colleges, developing strategies to organize campus by campus against rising tuition fees and cut-backs to post-secondary education.

The magnificent strike by Quebec students has been an inspiration to others in English Canada. The student federations have been calling for a broadening of the protests to take on the wider neoliberal attacks and are asking the trade unions in Quebec to take up the call and jointly move against the Liberal government. On the 22nd of every month, students and their supporters are going into the streets in Quebec. The “casseroles,” at which people bang pots and pans in protest, have taken off across the country.

The attacks are relentless and progressive forces have to organize at the base in unions on campuses and in the community to push back against these attacks. In the city of Toronto, the municipal unions backed down and accepted concession agreements, but at the same time, we have seen the tide beginning to turn where the worst of the attacks on services were stopped and the jobs of 1,000 cleaners (which were to be contracted out) have been saved. There is a growing understanding of the effects of the austerity agenda and we have to continue the on-the-ground organizing to push back the cutback agenda. The teachers' withdrawing their labour for one day will hopefully be the spark to a more militant union response.



Join the International Socialists

Mail: P.O. Box 339, Station E, Toronto, ON M6H 4E3
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E-mail: _____

Summer of resistance continues in Quebec

by JESSICA SQUIRES

NOW ENTERING its fifth month, the student strike in Quebec has survived—despite repression, bullying and worse, the draconian bill 78.

The bill is aimed at dividing the movement, undermining the right to protest, and undermining the student right to strike. Bill 78 lays bare the goals and interests of the government—quashing protest at all costs.

The casserole demonstrations, a magnificent upsurge of public anger against Charest, his government and all of its excesses, are an outpouring of exuberant energy aimed at denouncing Bill 78.

In the past month, aside from the casserole events, which multiplied and peaked, and have now settled into a steady rhythm, there have been a few key moments—some going largely unnoticed by the mainstream media and even the left, and others highlighted in various ways by the media in and outside Quebec.

Neighbourhood assemblies

The most important recent development in the movement has been the commencement of regular public assemblies in neighbourhoods, often weekly, either before or after casseroles. In these neighbourhood assemblies can be seen the influence of the student movement, with its emphasis on direct democracy in stark contrast to the dictatorial approach taken by Charest and his ministers. Clearly the influence of the Occupy movement has been strong as well.

Assemblies have been taking place in, at least, Ahuntsic, Centre-Sud, Côte-des-neiges, Hochelaga-Maisonneuve, Notre-Dame-de-Grâce, Plateau-Est, Pointe



St-Charles, Rosemont-Petite-Patrie, St-Henri, Verdun, Villeray, and Vieux-Longueuil. In many cases these assemblies are places for people to voice their reasons for joining the protests. While small and relatively unfocused as yet, these meetings could eventually become centres of organizing as the movement progresses.

Grand Prix

The highest profile event in the last month centred around protests against the Grand Prix in Montreal. The student federations stated clearly they had no intention of preventing people from attending, only to deliver a message to the masses of people converging for the event. Despite this, police organized extremely re-

pressive measures to control the flow of people through the subway system, establishing bases and posting dozens of offices at various metro stations.

Reports are still coming in, but in one example a young woman trying to visit her parents was refused entry and badly treated; in another, a woman was arrested and held in prison for a day for reading George Orwell's *1984* on the subway. Remarks by privileged rich-boy and race driver Jacques Villeneuve that students should "go back to school" backfired across the

board, drawing criticism from protesters and mainstream media alike.

Debates

At the same time, two significant debates are raging among the left, progressives and people new to the movement.

First, discussion of a social strike—until recently, only a peripheral phenomenon—has begun to gather momentum. CLASSE has championed a social strike from the beginning, and so have some others, but the labour movement—and not just the high

leadership—is pessimistic about being able to mobilize. Careful consideration will be needed to find ways to get that ball rolling, and roll it must, if the movement is to have staying power.

That's because the other big question for everyone is the possible fall election. Renewed calls for a united strategy for anyone-but-Charest have received endorsement from over 5,000 people, among them some well-known figures from the environmental justice and labour movements, as well as artists. Others, among

them Québec solidaire (QS), are clearly ranged against what they see as a passive and pessimistic response to a real concern: that Charest will be re-elected.

The fact is that Charest's Liberals could be re-elected, even with an electoral pact or strategic voting. The question for the left and for the movement is whether it makes sense in the long run to ally with the PQ in order to try to defeat them.

The PQ is a neoliberal ruling-class party. An alliance with them, solely in order to defeat bill 78, is a deal with the devil.

But mobilizing is also a big challenge.

Next steps

Inside Quebec, activists will need to continue to take seriously the significant challenge of getting labour to move.

Working through QS and from within unions and community groups, there is an opening, and those of us who can, need to take it.

Outside Quebec, activists in the rest of Canada should continue to fight their own governments against austerity. And, as much as possible, the call for donations to the CLASSE fund to oppose the bill should continue.

A sustained struggle can end the bill—maybe not via an election this fall, and maybe not through the courts, but in the long run, in the best way possible: one that will see an ongoing transformation of the consciousness of Quebecers towards building a better Quebec and a better world.

Greek elections offer no escape from euro crisis

THE NEW government faces serious opposition to its austerity plans, writes Panos Garganas in Athens.

Greece's parliamentary election results will not resolve the political and economic crisis that is tearing through the country.

The conservative New Democracy party managed to squeeze into first place by a tight margin, overtaking the radical left Syriza by a mere 170,000 votes. But it will not be able to form a government on its own.

During the election, New Democracy's leader Antonis Samaras promised he would "renegotiate" the bailout agreement with the European Union (EU) and secure a "softening" of austerity.

He repeatedly stated that only "responsible" and "experienced" parties could do that, and not the "demagogues" of the far left. And yet in his victory speech, this was the first election promise that he dropped.

Samaras's real agenda is a new wave of privatizations coupled with a tougher stance against strikes and demonstrations.

But his government will be weaker than its immediate predecessors—who found they could not pass austerity measures because of working-class resistance.

Sparks will fly in Greece in the coming months. Any attempt to privatize the electricity or water supply will involve confrontation with some of the best organized sections of the Greek working class.

Syriza

Syriza received 26.9 per cent of the vote, up from 16.8 per cent in May. The Communists and other left parties opposed to austerity polled 4.8 per cent, down from 9.7 per cent.

But the total left anti-austerity vote has risen to just under a third of the electorate. In the working-class constituencies around Athens and Piraeus

this figure rises as high as 43 per cent.

This powerful radicalization to the left is the result of a wave of resistance including 17 general strikes in two years and mass occupations in squares and workplaces.

It comes despite a massive blackmail campaign orchestrated by EU leaders designed to scare the Greek people into accepting austerity.

Angela Merkel of Germany, François Hollande of France and even US president Barack Obama made statements warning that Greeks must accept more austerity in return for the EU bailout.

We were told that voting for the left against the bailout deal would mean expulsion from the eurozone and being plunged into an even deeper economic catastrophe.

But in reality the economic crisis is still getting worse across Europe. Spain is now caught in a banking crisis. The "contagion" is threatening to spread to Italy and further.

Under these circumstance there is no chance that the EU deal will offer any respite to Greece.

Samaras and the EU leaders have every reason to be worried. A marginal election victory for their side will not be enough to stop workers fighting back in Greece.

Antarsya, the anti-capitalist left coalition, saw its vote squeezed back to its 2009 level of 0.3 per cent. Many militant workers voted for Syriza to keep New Democracy out.

Now the Syriza leadership is under heavy pressure from the ruling class to be "responsible" and "loyal" in opposition.

On election, night almost every TV commentator advised Syriza MPs to distance themselves from movements on the ground.

Many leading figures in Syriza have been adapting to this pressure during the election campaign.

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