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Stop Trump's murderous racism

BUILD THE RESISTANCE



Protestors at Los Angeles International Airport: solidarity has the power to win.

Photo: Wilson Pumpnickel

The election of Trump is unleashing both barbarity and unprecedented resistance. It has not taken long for him to wreak havoc and to attack everyone from Muslims to women to LGBTQ people to Indigenous land defenders. But with each successive executive order, he is being met with masses of people mobilizing and resisting.

The racist killings at the Islamic Cultural Centre in Québec City are the culmination of a decades-long demonization of Muslims. It is the product of the Islamophobia pedaled

by politicians in Canada and amplified by the corporate media. But again, the response has been huge. Within hours of the horrific attacks, dozens of rallies and vigils were organized across Canada and Quebec.

Trump's overt misogyny in the election campaign disgusted people around the world. But a day after he was sworn in, massive women's marches took place, with millions participating around the world and a colossal 300+ actions in the US. Thousands more held an LGBTQ dance party at the home of bigot vice-president Mike Pence's home.

Thousands joined spontaneous demonstrations at airports in the US when the Muslim travel ban was imposed, as lawyers donated their time to help detained travelers enter the country. Taxi drivers in New York struck in opposition to the ban, and people from all walks of life came into the streets to call for an end to the racist law.

The Obama administration was forced to veto the Keystone XL pipeline and pull back from the attack on the Standing Rock Sioux, who were defending their land from the Dakota Access pipeline. Now, Trump is going on the

offensive, resurrecting the two pipelines that will accelerate the drive to climate crisis. Shamefully, both the Trudeau and Notley governments support Trump's plan.

Within the week, Idle No More activists mobilized and calls have gone out for a mass marches for Jobs, Justice and the Climate on April 29.

Everyone reading this paper needs to find out where the next rally is taking place and bring family, friends, classmates or co-workers. The events of the last few weeks show that as bad as it may seem, resistance can and must be built.

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A neoliberal 'solution' to the climate crisis

by Eric Lescarbeau

The National Climate Strategy announced by Justin Trudeau in December absolves both the fossil fuel corporations and the Federal government of responsibility for reducing carbon emissions and places it squarely on the shoulders of working class consumers. By setting a national price on carbon Trudeau has set up an unjust transition that leaves it up to the market to solve the crisis without touching the profits of the major fossil fuel companies and without hindering a second the expansion of the Tar Sands.

Much to their shame, broad sections of the liberal left have embraced free market solutions to the climate crisis and abandoned any serious push for solutions that redistribute wealth to pay for a just transition.

Not only have carbon taxes proven to be ineffective in reducing emissions, they have also undermined the struggle for climate justice. In Alberta, the Notley government has introduced carbon taxes this year after cutting royalties for the oil companies by \$1 billion and giving them billions more in subsidies. Effectively this means working class families are being taxed, in the middle of a major unemployment crisis, so the oil companies can get bailed out.

Not surprisingly, the Alberta NDP's support has plummeted as they delay promised spending on healthcare and education in favour of helping the oil companies. This has opened the door to Trump-style politics and a growing right wing backlash.

For years BC's carbon tax has been held up by "experts" left and right as proof that carbon taxes work. However, a Food and Water Watch report, "The BC Carbon Tax: A failed experiment in Market-based Solutions to Climate Change," released last October has thoroughly debunked this and shown that the tax was and continues to be ineffective.

It is certainly true that emissions did fall significantly in 2008, the year the tax was introduced, but this was also the year of the global financial crisis, which caused carbon emissions to fall in provinces across Canada. Emissions in BC have continued to rise since then in spite of annual increases to the tax.

Carbon taxes are flat consumption taxes that are based on the idea that everyone should pay an equal share according to what they consume, ignoring the fact that exploitation of the earth and exploitation of working people goes hand in hand. Most workers live paycheque to paycheque and barely have the means to consume their basic needs while the rich who live off their backs have endless means to consume.

A worker's climate plan

To build a force powerful enough to beat the oil lobby the climate justice movement must raise demands for reforms that working class people are prepared to fight for: demands that redistribute the wealth of the fossil fuel economy to end inequality.

Instead of taxes on consumption we should demand that fossil fuel company profits and the wealth of the 1% be taxed heavily to pay for a green transition. We should demand direct and strict regulation of fossil fuel companies and a hard cap on emissions at current levels coupled with a schedule of annual reductions that will keep us on target to reach near zero emissions by 2050.



Supporters of the Fight for \$15 and Fairness campaign march in the Women's March on Washington in Toronto on January 21, 2017.

Paid sick days key in the Fight for \$15

by Jesse McLaren

Precarious work is a threat to your health. Poverty wages undermine access to the social determinants of health—like food, shelter, clothing, education, which is why there's a clear correlation between wealth and health. Poverty wages also undermine access to healthcare, preventing those with the greatest health needs from filling their prescription and accessing dental, physiotherapy and other health services. By combining low income with unstable and stressful conditions, precarious work is a threat to health.

As World Health Organization explains, "A number of employment-related conditions are associated with poorer health status, including unemployment and precarious work ... Mortality is significantly higher among temporary workers compared to permanent workers. Poor mental health outcomes are associated with precarious employment (eg informal work, temporary contracts, and part-time work). Workers who perceive work insecurity experience significant adverse effects on their physical and mental health... Stress at work is associated with a 50% excess risk of coronary heart disease, and there is consistent evidence that high job demand, low-control, and effort-reward imbalance are risk factors for mental and physical health problems"

Sick days and sick notes

To add insult to injury, many precarious workers do not get any paid sick days or even job protection for unpaid personal emergency leaves. Too often they are required to get sick notes to prove to their employers that they are sick. These policies also undermine health.

As the World Health Organization's explains, "if you feel unwell, have a fever, cough or sore throat, stay at home and keep away from work, school or crowds." But that's exactly what workers cannot do if they do not

have paid sick days or if they are required to get a sick note.

Not only does this prolong their illnesses by preventing them from recuperating at home, but it also puts others at risk—especially in food service or healthcare. A Study by Centre for Disease Control found that more than half of food service workers had gone to work sick, the most common reason being that the restaurant did not offer paid sick days. Half of these

“ The Fight for \$15 and Fairness is making work healthier, by raising wages and gaining sick days

workers went to work sick to avoid loss of pay and a quarter went to work sick because of fear of losing their job.

The requirement for sick notes compounds the problem—by unnecessarily sending sick workers to clinics and hospitals just to get notes, taking away their time for recovery, taking up healthcare resources and putting others at risk of infection.

Fight for \$15 and Fairness

The Fight for \$15 and Fairness is making work healthier, by raising wages and gaining sick days. In 2016 sick day laws were passed across the US—in the states of Arizona, Vermont and Washington, and the cities and counties of Spo-

kane, Minneapolis, St. Paul, Chicago, Cook County, Santa Monica, Los Angeles, Berkeley, Morristown and Plainfield. As Los Angeles McDonald's worker Rosangela Bañuelos explained, "LA city council voted to double our paid sick days from 3 to 6. This didn't happen by luck, but because workers and the community made our voices heard."

In Ontario, workers and communities doing the same, uniting for decent work, including paid sick days, fairer scheduling, respect at work and an end to racism and Islamophobia in the workplace.

In the next few months the government will release the final recommendations for the Changing Workplace Review, a rare chance to improve the *Employment Standards Act* and *Labour Relations Act* that affects millions of workers. While the bosses are pushing to maintain the precarious status quo, the Fight for \$15 and Fairness is raising demands that improve work, all of which would improve health: decent hours, universal standards and respect at work would reduce stress; the right to organize and unionize would allow workers to push for healthier workplaces; and paid sick days would allow workers to recover while keeping the community safe.

Pressure from the campaign has already pushed the Ontario NDP to call for a \$15 minimum wage and a recent CBC news report shows that the Liberals are now considering including a \$15 minimum wage in their election platform for June 2018—tacking left as they did the last election. 2017 will be a key year to fight for \$15 and fairness, and the health benefits it brings.

Health providers have come together to make decent work a priority in 2017.

● For more information visit decentworkandhealth.org.

● To join the Fight for \$15 and Fairness visit 15andFairness.org.



Protests erupt around the US after Trump bans travel from some Muslim majority countries. Tens of thousands blockaded airports and demonstrated to end the ban and to challenge Islamophobia. Legal teams also assembled to provide services for those caught up in the sweeping dragnet. The action at JFK airport was one of many in New York on the same day.

Credit: Rhododendrites

Millions worldwide reject Trump's sexism and bigotry

Over five million people globally marched for women's rights and against Donald Trump on January 21, 2017, according to the official Women's March organizers.

The Women's March on Washington sparked a global solidarity movement, with over 670 protests across seven continents.

Trump has talked about his previous sexual assaults with pride, has encouraged racism and is gearing up to attack LGBT+ people.

Australia was the first to join the global day of action, with 5,000 marching in Sydney and 10,000 in Melbourne.

Crowds chanted, "Women united will never be defeated".

Fighting

Fighting attacks on women, migrants and LGBT+ people were at the core of these protests. Claire Kelly, a pro-choice campaigner in Ireland said, "What Trump represents is very scary."

Some 5,000 protesters were at a women's march in Dublin, Ireland, where the fight for a woman's right to choose continues.

Building stronger campaigns against racism, war and neoliberal attacks against working class people were strong parts of the protest.

Protests took place in Malawi and Ghana as well as Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa.

Germany saw marches across seven different cities, including Berlin, Frankfurt and Munich.

In Austrian capital Vienna, at least 2,000 attended the protest.

March organiser Karin Wilflingseder, a leading member of the revolutionary socialist Neue Linkswende group, spoke to Socialist Worker. "Even the statue of famous composer Johann Strauss got a pink hood," she said. Student Lisa came from neighbouring Slovakia to join the march.

"I am here against Trump, but right-wing populist parties are on the rise everywhere—we need left alternatives," she said.

Movement

Hundreds marched in the Polish capital Warsaw from the prime minister's office to the US embassy.

Girl holding an anti-Trump protest sign at the Women's March on London, UK January 21, 2017.



Photo: Sam [Flickr (CC by 2.0)]

A mass movement stopped the right wing government in Poland pushing through a total ban on abortions last year.

The protest was not only against Trump, but focused on the racism and sexism of the government. These international women's protests spread as far as Antarctica, on an expedition ship.

Their placards read "save the planet" and "women's rights are human rights".

Organizers in many countries are building for further action, especially the anti-racism protests on Saturday, March 18, 2017.

In Athens hundreds of people joined a demonstration called by anti-racist organisation Keerfa.

It was one of several across Greece. In Amsterdam in the Netherlands over 4,000 took to the street. The demonstration was called by a coalition of anti-racists, feminists and refugees.

Targeting

The mood was militant with slogans not only against Trump but targeting Geert Wilders' racist Freedom Party.

Meanwhile in Berlin, chants of "No hate,



no fear, immigrants are welcome here" rang out as hundreds of people protested.

There were also protests in the Middle East and Asia. In Beirut, Lebanon, people compared Trump to the country's former dictators. A US flag was burned at a protest in Manila in the Philippines outside the US embassy. People also called for an end to the presence of US troops in the country.

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Stop victimizing students, scrap new campus plan

by Workers Solidarity

Students in Seoul National University (SNU), South Korea, have been occupying SNU's main building for over 100 days since October 10, 2016, against a plan to build a campus extension in the city of Siheung.

SNU is a national university regarded as the most elite institution of higher education in Korea. Although a public university, SNU has been run more and more on the principle of profitability ever since its transition to a corporate entity in 2011. Such degradation on the part of an institution considered to be South Korea's 'top university' is in fact representative of the (neoliberal) state of Korean higher education in general.

Neoliberal agenda

All of this has been fueled by South Korean president Park Geun-hye's relentless push for neoliberal restructuring of higher education, but now Park is on the verge of impeachment as the result of a popular revolt against her undemocratic, iron-fisted rule. Seong Nak-in, who had been appointed president of SNU with Park's support, has been no less undemocratic in running the university.

The Siheung campus plan is part of a speculative property development project associated with Siheung City's urban expansion. The university has partnered with local politicians and construction firms to participate in a KRW 1.8 trillion (approx. USD 1.6 billion) project. Huge sums of money have been exchanged in the process. In essence, SNU is leveraging its brand name to grow its physical assets on the cheap.

To this end democratic procedures were simply ignored. The SNU administration did the utmost to keep the Siheung campus plan a secret from students and staff, until SNU president Seong Nak-in, swiftly and without warning, signed an implementation agreement for the new campus behind closed doors.

The plan involves building dormitories in Siheung, located hours away from Seoul, and sending thousands of students from Seoul to populate the new campus. Moreover, the cost of building and maintaining a new, 160-acre campus will in all likelihood be borne by students and staff in the form of increased tuition and poorer working conditions.

The SNU administration claims it can sustain the new campus financially by strengthening ties with industry and through commercial ventures, but this would only tighten the grip of the profit motive over education and research. All this goes to show how the new Siheung campus would magnify the harmful effects of neoliberal policies pursued by universities. The sit-in by SNU students is thus part of the wider struggle to halt neoliberal restructuring of higher education.

The SNU administration is threatening 29 of the students participating in the occupation with disciplinary action including 'permanent expulsion' which completely deletes their school records and deprives any possibility of future re-admittance. The administration has also cut off power, heating, and water in the main building while the weather is now as cold as -10 oC (14 in fahrenheit).

The students of SNU, however, are engaged in a just struggle to stop a neoliberal policy that puts profits before their education. Occupying students have spoken at the mass weekend protest demanding Presidential resignation and called for wider solidarity. Many Koreans are responding to their call including the leader MP of Justice Party. Campaign for international solidarity is also taking place.

For more information, contact mail@workersolidarity.org.

HUMANITY AGAINST TRUMP

Since Trump's election, many politicians and media have belittled protests, demanding that people "give him a chance". This ignores his bigotry, and the group of reactionary millionaires he's chosen as his cabinet. But people have raised their opposition anyway, and in the process reduced his popularity to the lowest of any incoming president in US history. The January 20-21 protests worldwide were just the start of this upsurge.

JANUARY 20

by Kevin Taghabon

Dark skies appropriately dressed the morning in a city preparing to usher in the era of Donald Trump on January 20. Despite the best-laid post-election plans of the recounts and the Hamilton Electors, the day had come and gone smoothly into the military fortress that codled the future president and his enablers.

But on the streets, an entirely different narrative presented itself.

The exercise in radical democracy that is occupying public spaces began at the crack of dawn. Participants in the labour contingent of the #DisruptJ20 group staged a physical blockade of an inauguration route point at 7am. Black Lives Matter activists similarly blocked a portion of the route early on, and organized protests in the city. There were elderly people, students, and people in wheelchairs at all of the marches. There were people of all races and genders.

Repression

In the enclosed safety of thousands of banners and flags at McPherson Square park, I interviewed Danni, an experienced organizer with Black Lives Matter. She sought refuge in the park, as only three blocks away, the police had attacked the march she was part of. "There were police in riot gear," she said, wiping tears from her eyes as we spoke. The rain poncho was coated in tear gas and she could not touch her person for fear of re-contaminating her eyes. "They threw five flash grenades, tear gas at us, and maced us," she went on. "I saw the ball at my feet and someone yelled 'run!' It went off right under me." Her voice was filled not with fear, but rather determined, controlled anger. The scene was typical of the day.

During one of the many marches which involved thousands of people, I heard the sound of explosions a block away from us. With each blast, the energetic chants would die down for a few moments.

Internal security flexed their muscles several times through the day in DC. In late afternoon, a limousine was engulfed in massive flames that could be seen from blocks away. The limo was parked directly in front of the Washington Post building, the public park in front filled with thousands of demonstrators. Poetic symbolism aside, the scene was not pleasant. Police fired several concussion grenades at people close to the limousine and Post building, with new squads of police with riot gear emerging from the surrounding blocks. The majority of the streets near the building were cordoned off.

Trump supporters were all over the city as well, albeit in far smaller numbers outdoors and never in mass groups.

The "Anti-Inauguration" event that evening acted as a counterweight to the suited criminal class that now eats at the Trump trough. The Lincoln Theatre hosted the event, organized by Verso Books, Haymarket and Jacobin Magazine. The distinguished speakers included Keeanga-Yamahata-Taylor, Naomi Klein, Jeremy Seahill, Owen Jones, and Anand Gopal. There was a line stretching around the building hours in advance.

Labour under attack

I met an analyst from the Department of Labor during my hour in line. He chose to be



Occupying public spaces: exercise in radical democracy

Photo: Kevin Taghabon

identified here as "John" to avoid putting his job at risk. He described the mood inside the Department was one of anxiety and "tough times." "Senior civil servants tend to not be, ideologically, Republicans," he said. Because many of the mid-level vacancies in the Department may never be filled, the lower level employees, and hence the entire agency, may still be susceptible to the extreme-right whims of a Trump-appointed Labor Secretary. "We're anticipating budgets to be cut 5 per cent across the board."

Still, being radically anti-labour may hurt Trump's administration. "Prevailing Wages", under the Davis-Bacon act, is part of John's area of expertise. Under this policy, workers on federal infrastructure projects get a wage comparable to the market median (with many complex caveats). Trump's Labor Secretary will likely repeal this, despite the fact that the tradespeople in these unions largely voted for Trump and benefit from the program.

John finds no solace in the Democrats and

JANUARY 21 Atlanta

by Valerie Lannon

Before I attended the rally, I asked someone if such events were big in Atlanta. I was given a sideways glance and a reminder that "This is the home of Martin Luther King. We know-marches."

About 60,000 people converged outside Atlanta's Civil and Human Rights Museum to loudly voice their opposition to all things Trump.

When I asked two young boys and a girl, ages 8, 11 and 13, why they attended, they said they were protesting because of Trump's racism and sexism. An older African-American man said, "This is my home town. When I saw a crowd I could see that it was against Trump. I am against hate and racism as I have been a victim of it all my life. For today I would just like to live another day and then have peace every day."

A Latino family came by. The teenage daughter said, "We hate Trump because he is a racist and sexist. He's a bigot, that says it all.

their allies either. "The current AFGE-12 president has been in since 1998 under [Bill] Clinton. They are structurally, and fundamentally, and ideologically unprepared for an assault on workers in America." They are a largely dormant non-organizing union.

Union opposition?

Hope lies in the unions, still. "Yeah, they have 7 per cent private sector penetration, but if they are activated..." John trailed off and nodded, intimating their influence could be big. The feeling of betrayal from Trump supporters who are tradespeople, those who will be working on these projects, could be massive. "The federalist system in America is just 50 chances to get it wrong," John said. Thankfully, the states and cities have most of the say in what goes on infrastructure projects, and unions can exert a lot of power here. This requires organization at the ground level and membership involvement, but it is easily within the realm of possibility.

He supports conversion therapy and he opposes immigrants. He tries to divide us."

While there were few organizational banners, there were numerous individual placards. One read "Raising my daughter to tear down your wall."

Another common placard said "Protect each other."

And a young African-American woman was repeatedly photographed by people in the crowd for her placard which read "We're watching your EVERY move and we will FIGHT!"

The crowd's most common chant was shouted in English and Spanish simultaneously: "The people united will never be defeated."

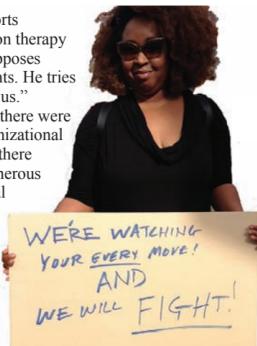


Photo: Valerie Lannon



Inauguration Day, January 20: Hitting the streets in Washington, DC

Photo: Kevin Taghabon

One placard read "Raising my daughter to tear down your wall."

Toronto

by Sid Lacombe

The Women's March on Washington – Toronto was one of the biggest demonstrations the city has seen in years. The rally started at Queen's Park and filled the grounds, before spilling out onto University Avenue. Tens of thousands then marched past the US consulate, to end at Nathan Phillips Square.

At the rally, speakers from Idle No More Toronto and many other groups highlighted the need for us to be vigilant in Canada to stop Trump-style hate from growing in this country. Numerous speakers highlighted the hate fest that has become the Conservative party leadership race as a key forum to spread racism. Councillor Kristen Wong-Tam and School board trustee Ausma Malik spoke of the sexism and racism that they had to endure on the campaign trail.

Although there were some union flags and organized contingents from left groups and campaigns like Fight for \$15, it was obvious from the huge number of homemade signs that this was a spontaneous outburst of anger against Trump. It can plant the seeds of further radicalization and push against the right in Canada.

Ottawa

by Chantal Sundaram

By 11am, more than 1,000 people had gathered at the Human Rights Monument for the solidarity rally. The crowd continued to grow over the next half hour, and by the time it moved north on Elgin Street to march across town, the rally had swelled to 6,000 to 8,000 people.

Marchers filled Laurier Ave. from curb to curb, boisterously chanting "Love Trumps Hate" and "Hey hey, ho ho, misogyny has got to go" as they headed through downtown for an indoor rally. Indigenous women led the way for speeches both inside and outside, which were bilingual throughout, in English and French. When the Centre filled up, a crowd blocked the intersection, not wanting to leave.

In the Bronson Centre, the introductory speech posed Canadian opposition to Trump's message in terms of the Tory leadership race – especially Kellie Leitch's "Values test": "Anyone who doesn't respect Indigenous rights, women, people of colour, people with disabilities, LGBTQ2S doesn't pass our Canadian values test." The message from the rally to Trudeau's "feminism": time to walk the talk.



Thousands protested in Vancouver

Photo: Bradley Hughes

Montreal

by Michelle Robidoux

Thousands of people gathered on the steps of Place des Arts in a show of solidarity with the Women's March on Washington. The rally, which drew an estimated 10,000 people, spilled into the surrounding streets.

The Mohawk Nation Buffalo Hat Singers opened the rally. Placards and speeches, in French and English, spoke of the urgent need to build solidarity in action, in defense of those who will be immediately affected by Trump's policies: immigrants and refugees, the LGBTQ community, Muslims, Indigenous peoples, and women.

One speaker got huge applause when she said, "Trump is just a symptom of a much larger problem that we're facing not only in the United States, but around the world."

As reports came in of other marches in cities around the world, there were cheers and a growing sense that this day marks the beginning of a new movement of resistance, which must tackle Trumpism as it manifests here, in our governments' own neoliberal and divisive policies.

Building confidence for the fights ahead

by Carolyn Egan

As the Steelworker bus loaded up for the 12 hour drive to Washington, DC for the Women's March it was clear to anyone observing that the riders reflected the diversity of our city.

Union members from workplaces across Toronto were excited about the trip, joining with American sisters, brothers and comrades in pushing back against the right wing policies of the Trump administration. The response was immediate when the call went out and there were many brothers who were also eager to go.

We had no trouble crossing the border and viewed the film "Bread and Roses" on the trip down which started great conversations about the situation in the US and what we were facing in Canada. No country is immune from the racist, misogynist politics that Trump personifies and we have our homegrown ideologues of the right. Everyone's anticipation was growing as we noticed that all the rest stops were full of others traveling to Washington. You could sense a popular movement building with people from all walks of life and backgrounds coming together to fight back against the reactionaries who have come to power in the US.

Camaraderie

We stayed in Virginia outside of Washington the first night and at dinner the waitress wished us luck and said, "stay safe". On the ride in the next morning our bus dropped us at a subway station that was packed with thousands of protestors from all over the east coast. We were told that every bus in Connecticut and New Jersey was booked for this day. People were thrilled that we had come from Canada and that we were trade unionists. The camaraderie was wonderful.

After the long line wound itself through the parking lot into the station we packed into the trains and we were on our way to the centre of the city. People were singing and chanting, and whatever differences they may have had, there was a strong sense that this was a day that would go down in history and they were making it happen.

As we came up out of the subway we were met by masses of people. There were so many that the planned march could not take place and the demonstrators just took to the streets, every street. No one wanted to leave after the speeches ended. They want to feel the power of being among hundreds of thousands of others who would not be bowed by the victory of Donald Trump and everything that he represents.

In conversation with so many they talked about the depression that had set in after the election. Even if they weren't Clinton supporters (Bernie pins were everywhere) they were overwhelmed by a sense of powerlessness and fear about what was to come. But it all started to change that day in Washington. They were beginning to feel an incredible strength and sense of renewal marching along side so many. The feeling of isolation was lifting and a sense of their collective power was building. Exhilaration was the word so many used.

Resistance

The number of hand made placards was incredible dealing with all kinds of issues: reproductive justice, racism and Islamophobia, Black Lives Matter, healthcare, stop the deportations, Standing Rock, homophobia/transphobia, disability rights, Planned Parenthood and many more.

The knowledge that millions of people were marching with them around the world meant a tremendous amount, and brought a confidence that they could take on the inevitable fights that were to come. There was a real sense that as important as this day was, it was going to be the grassroots work being done in their home states, cities and towns that would make the difference.

So the road ahead demands that a movement be built, and the potential is there to do it. The demonstrations the following week at airports across the country against Trump's closing of the border to Muslims from so many countries shows that the will is there to do it. The injunction blocking the deportation and detention of green card and visa holders was a concrete victory greeted by hundreds outside the courtroom. The resistance will continue.

Vancouver

by Bradley Hughes & Robyn Karina

Thousands of people gathered on the steps of Place des Arts in a show of solidarity with the Women's March on Washington. The rally, which drew an estimated 10,000 people, spilled into the surrounding streets.

Located in the unceded territories of the Musqueam, Tsleil-Waututh, and Squamish Nations, Vancouver was one of the last times zones to start the Women's March. Women woke up to huge rally reports from around the world. By 8:30am, Sea buses, Skytrain and buses were filled to capacity with pink hatted women heading to the march.

The crowd of 15,000 to 20,000 was full of hand made signs, knitted pussyhats, and union

Kelowna

by Norah Bowman

In Kelowna, a small city in the interior of BC on the unceded land of the Syilx nation, over 500 people attended the largest rally in recent memory.

The introduction to the rally was by Chief Lindley of the Westbank First Nation. Chief Lindley is the first woman chief of her First Nation. The crowd was also addressed by Susana Caxaj from Radical Action with Migrants in Agriculture, who spoke about migrant worker's rights.

When Russian women shook the world

The dead-end of capitalism

The capitalist system is based on violence, oppression and brutal exploitation. It creates hunger beside plenty, it threatens our sustenance through unsafe and unsustainable farming, and kills the earth itself with pollution and unsustainable extraction of oil, minerals, animals, trees, and water. Capitalism leads to imperialism and war. Saving ourselves and the planet depends on finding an alternative.

A system that is killing the planet

Capitalist profits depend on extracting the world's blood and bone. The devastating impact of capital's assault on the planet affect the world's most vulnerable populations and threaten the long-term meaningful existence of humanity. Capitalism cannot regulate the catastrophic effects of climate change. We stand for climate justice, including the concept of "just transition" for affected workers.

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 capitalism 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 collectively 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.

Oppression

Within capitalist society different groups suffer from specific forms of oppression. Attacks on oppressed groups are used to divide workers 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 discrimination and homophobia against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.

We oppose environmental racism. We oppose discrimination on the basis of religion, ability and age.

Canada, Quebec, Indigenous 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 Indigenous peoples and the people of Quebec.

We support the struggles for self-determination of Quebec and Indigenous peoples up to and including the right to independence. In particular, we recognize Indigenous peoples' original and primary right to decide their fate and that of their lands, heritage, and traditions. Socialists in Quebec, and in all oppressed nations, work to give the struggle against national oppression an internationalist and working class content.

Internationalism

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose everything that 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.

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, police and judiciary 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 democracy, and that requires an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates.

Reform and revolution

Every day, there are battles between exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, to reform the system—to improve living conditions. 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 the NDP and many trade union leaders say. Nor can the system regulate itself to prevent environmental destruction and climate injustice. It has to be overthrown. That will require the mass action of workers themselves.

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 democratic. We are an organization of activists committed to helping in the construction of such a party through ongoing activity in the mass organizations 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.

by Chantal Sundaram

When thousands of women workers in Petrograd, Russia marked International Women's Day of 1917 with a strike to demand bread, little did they know they would spark a revolution.

By the old Russian calendar, March 8 fell in February. Food was in short supply due to World War I. February 23, 1917 became the first day of the Russian Revolution, when women textile workers took to the factories, streets, and public trolleys, calling on others to join them.

They were soon joined by other factory workers, including men, and then by women in their homes. It was a groundswell that even caught revolutionary activists in the Bolshevik Party by surprise; in fact, by deciding to strike and march the women were ignoring the advice of party leaders to "keep cool" to avoid repression.

But instead of keeping cool, Russian women went up to the soldiers' lines, took hold of their rifles and called on them to "Put down your bayonets - join us!"

Bolshevik leader Leon Trotsky would later write, "Women's Day passed successfully, with enthusiasm and without victims. But what it concealed in itself no one had guessed even by nightfall."

An editorial in the Bolshevik paper Pravda a week later proclaimed "The women were the first to come out on the streets of Petrograd on their Women's day. The women in Moscow in many cases determined the mood of the military; they went to the barracks and convinced the soldiers to come over to the side of the Revolution. Hail the



Hail the women!

women!"

In raising the cry for bread, Russian women set in motion a mass demand for three things both simple and revolutionary: peace, bread, and land. These became the three demands of the Russian revolution that echo a hundred years later: an end to war and oppression, an end to austerity, and an end to the destruction of the earth.

By October workers had taken power and began to enact legislation on women's rights still unmatched by any government today: free abortion on demand, divorce on demand, paid maternity leave, free government-funded childcare, the decriminalization of homosexuality and prostitution. The first few years of the revolutionary government saw the beginning of communal nurseries, dining rooms and socialized laundries.

It was a huge project for a fledgling state facing economic collapse, starvation and a devastating civil war

after 1917, which threatened the very survival of the revolution. But the Bolsheviks did not see combating women's oppression as something that could wait for more stable times. They believed that the very success of the revolution depended on women playing an equal role.

All of this was reversed with the rise of Stalin in the late twenties and thirties. The very unity between men and women workers upon which the revolution had relied became a threat to the counter-revolution led by Stalin and the new ruling class that emerged out of the economic devastation of the Soviet Union. Women's newly-won rights were repealed—though not without a fight by both men and women resisting the rise of Stalinism.

Defeat was not inevitable, and the short years of revolution showed that resistance by women is key to resistance by all workers to the forces stacked against them.

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Hundreds protest Nazis outside New Westminster City Hall

New Westminster: 1 Nazis: 0

Organizers in New Westminster, BC have shown how to build community against Nazis. With just four days notice, on a chilly Thursday evening, over 200 people rallied at City Hall and marched to a church that had been defaced with Nazi posters.

Every little racist is crawling out from under their rocks now that Trump has been elected, and over the weekend of January 21 one or two crawled around New Westminster and put up a few Nazi posters near the Queen Street United Church.

One poster showed soldiers with swastikas on their arms confronting armed men or women wearing head scarves. The other showed a key shaped like a swastika promoting “National Socialism” entitled the key to a new Canada.

Two local organizers sprang into action, Brynn Bourke and Local NDP MLA Judy Darcy. Within hours of the news breaking of the Nazi posters they organized a rally for Thursday, January 26. The Facebook event and posters called for a New West United for equality, diversity and community.

Organizing community

Any serious opposition to fascists must involve the people of the community that the fascists are targeting. The organizers were able to bring in representatives of many communities in New West.

The speakers at the rally included Jagdeep Sall from Gurdwara Sahib Sukh Sagar, Rhonda Larrabee Chief of the Qayqayt First Nation, Imam Yahya Momla from the Burnaby Mosque, Rabbi David Mivasair, Reverend Emilie Smith from St. Barnabas Church, Imtiaz Popat from New West Pride, New Westminster - Burnaby MP Peter Julian, Jonathon Cote Mayor of New Westminster, and Judy Darcy, MLA.

Even a half dozen members of the New Westminster home brew club, Brew West, joined

the rally to defend their city from racism.

Bridges

Imam Yahya Momla from the Burnaby Mosque told the crowd about how his grandfather told him stories of how the Jewish community was targeted in Canada. He continued, “We learn from past mistakes. Now we build bridges, even when some are building walls.”

Imam Momla and Reverend Smith, along with the other faith leaders at the rally, are not intimidated by the Nazis, they all invited whoever put up the posters into their office to talk things over.

Reverend Emilie Smith from St. Barnabas Church referred to the slogan on one of the Nazi posters, which read “us versus them,” she said, “there is no them, only us.”

Peter Julian, MP for New Westminster – Burnaby, “Hundreds of people have come together with only a few days notice because we know what we have to do. We speak out whether it’s against racists skulking around in the dark, or the new President of the United States in broad daylight.”

Militant readiness

Rabbi David Mivasair was the final speaker. He ended his remarks by introducing the crowd to the ancient Jewish instrument of the Shofar, a ram’s horn bugle. He said that it was used to wake people up and in an emergency to “bring people to a state of militant readiness.” The haunting tones of the horn echoed off the surrounding high rises over the sound of traffic.

The New West Community Choir ended the rally, involving the crowd in song and Judy Darcy wrapped it all up, “We will come back together whenever and wherever we need to.”

As the rally dispersed after the short march up to the church, everyone was left with the joy of solidarity against hatred. New West is well organized for when next the Nazis try to slither out from

From #BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation

by **Faline Bobier**

Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor’s book *#From BlackLivesMatter to Black Liberation* is a story of going from moment to movement. It’s a book that demonstrates clearly the way that American capitalism and racism have gone hand in hand from the very beginning:

“Capitalism used racism to justify plunder, conquest, and slavery, but as Karl Marx pointed out, it would also come to use racism to divide and rule—to pit one section of the working class against another and, in so doing, blunt the class consciousness of all. To claim, then, as Marxists do, that racism is a product of capitalism is not to deny or diminish its centrality to or impact on American society. It is simply to explain its origins and persistence. Nor is this reducing racism to just a function of capitalism; it is locating the dynamic relationship between class exploitation and racial oppression in the functioning of American capitalism.”

Taylor builds her book by examining the latest moment of Black fight-back, organized around the hashtag #BlackLivesMatter and galvanized by a string of murders of mostly young Black men at the hands of racist police forces across the US. Although she argues it’s impossible to predict when Black anger against the daily injustices of racism will break through, she lays the groundwork for the current moment of Black activism by looking at the aftermath of the civil rights movement and the way gains that were made during that period were pushed back under successive Republican and Democratic administrations alike.

Hope

Taylor describes the election of Obama as something Blacks and other minorities looked to as a beacon of

hope for real change. But after eight years in power those hopes were truly and soundly dashed, particularly as racist police murders continued unabated, and largely ignored by Barack Obama: “The Black political establishment, led by President Barack Obama, had shown over and over again that it was not capable of the most basic task: keeping Black children alive. The young people would have to do it themselves.”

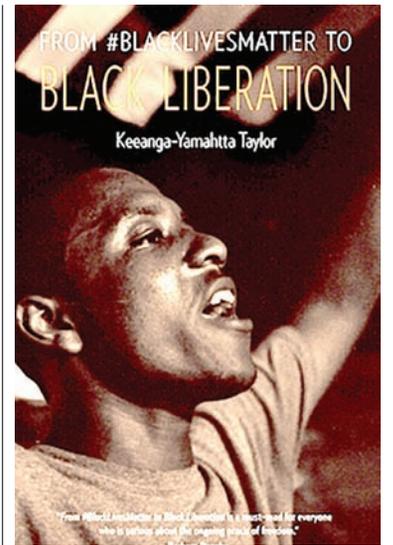
She argues that “the long-term strength of the movement will depend on its ability to reach large numbers of people by connecting the issue of police violence to the other ways that Black people are oppressed.”

So, she sees natural allies for Black Lives Matter activists in movements such as the Fight for \$15 & Fairness, since a large percentage of low-income workers will be Black and Latino, or the fight for educational justice in Black communities, such as the Chicago teachers’ strikes of recent years, which are about better wages and working conditions for teachers, but also about the quality of education for their students.

System

The final chapter in Taylor’s book puts forward a vision for the future and it’s certainly one we need, given the recent election of Trump and the way he has moved so quickly to attack on all fronts in the first few days of his presidency: immigrants, Indigenous people, women’s reproductive rights. Taylor argues that Black liberation cannot ultimately be achieved without challenging the system which structures and underpins all oppression and exploitation:

“The aspiration for Black liberation cannot be separated from what happens in the United States as a whole. Black life cannot be transformed while the rest of the country burns. The



fires consuming the United States are stoked by the widespread alienation of low-wage and meaningless work, unaffordable rents, suffocating debt, and poverty. The essence of economic inequality is borne out in a simple fact: there are 400 billionaires in the United States and 45 million people living in poverty. These are not parallel facts; they are intersecting facts. There are 400 billionaires because there are 45 million people living in poverty.

“Profit comes at the expense of the living wage. The struggle for Black liberation, then, is not an abstract idea molded in isolation from the wider phenomenon of economic exploitation and inequality that pervades all of American society; it is intimately bound up with them...While it is true that when Black people get free, everyone gets free, Black people in America cannot ‘get free’ alone. In that sense, Black liberation is bound up with the project of human liberation and social transformation.”

● This is an excerpt of a longer review. Read the full review at socialist.ca.

Run the Jewels: music for the struggle

by **Kevin Taghabon**

Political rap supergroup Run the Jewels gifted the world a musical sledgehammer to rebut a toxic year in the closing weeks of 2016. Run the Jewels 3, their third eponymous studio album, features even more of their socially conscious lyrics grafted on top of El-P’s powerful beats. On the direction of the album, Killer Mike has said he and El-P set out to make the project “meaner, darker, harder... even f***** angrier” than their previous work. They have thoroughly succeeded.

The album’s production is unrelentingly muscular and punchy from the first to the last track, an accomplishment that puts it beyond their first two records. The beats are thick with dark synthesizers and heavy bass, matching the tone of the whole work. The delivery of the lyrics is equally aggressive, yet clean. There are no milquetoast faux-singing attempts by the emcees or wimpy autotune laden choruses which are so popular among big-name corporate rappers. “Legend Has It” for example, instead features crowd

chants of “R-T-J!” that sound more like a mass protest than a concert.

A glance at the track listing gives one an idea of what to anticipate: “Don’t Get Captured”, “Thieves!”, “A Report to the Shareholders/Kill Your Masters.” This last track, the album closer, features a ferocious uncredited verse by Zack De La Rocha of Rage Against the Machine fame, who has collaborated with Run the Jewels before.

Activist poetry

Killer Mike and El-P’s poetry leaves little to be misinterpreted. Notable lines include: “The evening news givin’ you views/Telling you to pick your master for president/Then behind the curtain, seen the devil workin’”, “The majority of the album tackles themes of police brutality, the drug war, as well as the hardships associated with living in poverty.”

Run The Jewels have used their skyrocketing popularity for good causes. “Meow The Jewels” for example was a joke project proposed on their site for \$40,000. When a fan in Arizona actually managed to organize and

raise the money, the duo decided to remix their entire second album with cat sounds, with the proceeds going to the families of unarmed black men slain by police officers. Surplus funds then went to help cover the legal fees of incarcerated political protesters. They too have their finger on the pulse of the realities of the music industry, releasing all their albums online for free, with Mike asserting that fans will buy merchandise or tickets if they truly love the music.

Run the Jewels provide a template for musicians with a political conscience. To them it is more important to deliver a message than to dodge the pressing issues of the day in the name of alienating no one.

Every moment of the album reflects the genuine passion of these musicians. Their sharp production and lyrical skills are commendable. What sets Run The Jewels apart from their peers is their studio, stage, and street dedication to the pressing issues we face today.

● This is an excerpt of a longer review. Read the full review at socialist.ca.

ANGER DERAILS TRUDEAU TOUR

by John Bell

It was just a year ago that newly-minted Prime Minister Justin Trudeau took to the stage at Davos, Switzerland, to declare himself a feminist. He was the toast of the town, and by town I mean a tiny, elitist, winter holiday enclave.

The World Economic Forum at Davos is the annual cocktail party cum handwringing session, where the 1% and their retainers get together to tut-tut over the world's ills on the public stage and do deals in the back rooms. It is the best, current exhibition of "noblesse oblige" going.

According to Wikipedia: "'Noblesse oblige' is generally used to imply that with wealth, power, and prestige come responsibilities... to refer to public responsibilities of the rich, famous and powerful, notably to provide good examples of behaviour or to exceed minimal standards of decency."

Davos is sort of like Batman, hanging by his heels at night, brooding about how to use his fabulous wealth and power to keep the Bane of revolution out of Gotham. The Batman comparison is particularly apt for Trudeau – photogenic, happy-go-lucky patrician by day; grim corporate vigilante by night.

Well, this year Justin Trudeau turned down his trip to Davos. And it is a good thing. On the agenda is the very continued existence of "globalization" in the face of such upsets as the Brexit vote and the election of Trump. China's Xi Jinping modestly offered his services as new champion of globe-trotting capitalism. Will Canada try to salvage the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal now that our new neighbour has withdrawn? Stay tuned.

What could have kept Justin Trudeau from witnessing the baton being passed? It wasn't because he had a full schedule of cash-for-access fundraisers lined up. Those were so 2016. It wasn't because he wanted to attend Trump's inauguration. That would have been the last nail in the coffin for his progressive veneer. It sure wasn't because the self-appointed feminist planned to attend any one of the great Women's Marches that protested Trump and his policies, although he did send a nice, after-the-fact tweet



Protestors in Winnipeg unmask Trudeau hypocrisy

when he saw how successful they were. Thanks for not explaining why you and your Status of Women Minister both missed it, Justin.

Condescending dynasty

Instead, Trudeau decided to come down from his Hill and walk among the little people (see "noblesse oblige", above). Kate Purchase, his unfortunately named spokesperson explained: "The prime minister wants to hear from them how they are feeling at the start of 2017, what their concerns and anxieties are and what we can do to help alleviate that."

So, how are we feeling? We're pissed. And we're growing mighty tired of this condescending dynasty.

In Halifax, he tried to identify with new immigrants with this gibberish: "I'm a 10th- or 11th-generation Canadian on one of my sides but my maternal grandfather was born in Scotland so I do have some idea of the challenges it takes to come to Canada and has took over the sweep of history of Canada." What Syrian

refugee couldn't identify with that?

Then the selfie-loving plutocrat posed with two young women for a photo, only to be asked by student Kathleen Olds if he plans to stand behind the United Nations Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which he signed with great fanfare and which states that government requires consent before approving resource extraction projects on First Nations lands. His reaction, caught on video, was reminiscent of a scalded cat.

Olds told the media: "I wanted to see whether he would be honest and accountable to his campaign promises or try to deflect, again. I guess now we know!"

In Peterborough, a single mother with disabilities accused Trudeau of failing her. She told a town hall meeting that high hydro rates were breaking her, and now a federal carbon tax would make things worse. The best Trudeau could muster was: "We haven't brought in any carbon tax yet ma'am. It doesn't start kicking in for another few years."

(What did you expect him to say: that while the Canadian state subsidizes the fossil fuel industry to the tune of \$3.3 billion per year, imposing a carbon tax is criminal? Or that his provincial cousins have to gouge us on hydro to bail out the nuclear industry?)

It was in Calgary that Trudeau made his biggest gaffe. Pressed on the dismal gap between his environmental rhetoric and pipeline approving performance, he spoke about "phasing out" the tar sands. Shock and horror abounded, not least from the Quisling NDP government of Rachel Notley.

Liar, or confused?

Luckily he got to clarify things back in Calgary, where his cabinet was meeting at a retreat in the wake of Davos, Trump's endorsement of pipelines, and Trudeau's less than stellar tour. He claims to have "misspoke". "I have repeatedly said that yes, the responsibility of any Canadian prime minister is to get our resources to market and yes, that includes our oilsands fossil fuels," he said. "I've also said that we need to do that in a responsible, sustainable way — that you cannot separate what's good for the environment and what's good for the economy."

Trudeau's tour tried to present him as all things to all people: the colonialist who understands the pain of First Nations people and new immigrants; the champion of tar sands and pipelines who just wants to make a better world out of petro-profits. As one Alberta onlooker told him: "You are either a liar or you're confused. I'm beginning to think it's both."

Sadly that accurate assessment came from a man wearing a Donald Trump hat and an "I love oil sands" T-shirt. There, in a nutshell lies the secret to Trump's success, and the failure of the small-L liberal left.

Justin Trudeau has made a spectacle of himself in the brief time Trump has been in office, sucking up in order to curry favour. Harper-lite has become Trump-lite. His ill-fated tour shows Trudeau can indeed learn from Donald Trump. When venturing out in public it is always best to bring your own well-rehearsed audience, complete with "applause" signs.

Black Lives Matter–Toronto wins key victory

by Maureen Aslin

At Pride Toronto's Annual GM on January 17, two members introduced a motion to meet all the demands of Black Lives Matter Toronto, including continued support for Black Queer Youth, self-determination for all community space, doubling funding for Blockorama, reinstating the South Asian stage, prioritizing hiring from vulnerable communities, more black sign language interpreters, removal of police floats in marches and parades, and a town hall to follow up on these demands.

The motion was voted on and approved. This is a significant victory, and shows that protest matters.

Let's be clear: Black Lives Matter Toronto's protest at last year's Pride Parade was not bullying or "hijacking" – it was an act of civil disobedience to bring widespread attention to

the fact that Pride was not representing Black LGBTQ people – a fact that the board of Pride eventually admitted in their statement of September 2016:

"Pride Toronto wants to begin by apologizing emphatically and unreservedly for its role in deepening the divisions in our community, for a history of anti-blackness and repeated marginalization of the marginalized within our community that our organization has continued".

BLMTO's primary demand is that the police stop killing black people. It is well documented that racialized people are more likely to be stopped by police and the risk of that encounter being fatal is highlighted by the deaths of Andrew Loku and Jermaine Carby. Despite these facts, BLMTO's protest at the Pride Parade brought a swift, vitriolic, and racist backlash.

The notion that the relationship with the police is getting better or can be healed is based on the idea of mutual relationship, which does not exist. There is an inherent and intentional imbalance of power. The police are armed agents of the state who are sanctioned to use violence against the public.

But many are painting the police as victims. Conservative MP Kelly Leitch says that Pride "should not succumb to the bullies at BLM".

But as Janaya Khan of BLMTO points out, "A bully uses superior strength or influence to intimidate or harm those with less power. Calling for an end to police brutality and needless death by police is not bullying. That our appeals are seen as an attack on police is absurd. What could be a clearer indication of anti-Black racism?"

Not allowing police to march is not unique to the Pride Parade. The Labour Day Parade

has honoured workers' struggles for 145 years, without the police marching. Unions know that the police are the means by which workers are threatened when they stand up for their rights.

The Gay liberation movement was born of the 1969 Stonewall riots. Pride Toronto is the result of protests to the 1981 Bathhouse raids. Toronto Police Services is, and will continue to be, the mechanism by which LGBT people will be threatened as we stand up for our rights.

The real question is why are so many people not aware of the dangers that racialized queers face when they are interacting with the police?

Homophobia, misogyny, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia all seek to divide LGBTQI2S people. When racialized queers are systematically targeted and we don't stand in solidarity, we are aligning with the bigots. White LGBTQ people need to step-up now and push back against police brutality.