



Mass protests return in Sudan

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Challenging the CAQ's racist Bill 21

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System change not climate change

When former California governor and 2020 presidential candidate John Hickenlooper addressed the convention of California Democrats, he was in for a rude awakening. As one of the many centrist democrats, he is worried about the shift to the left happening at the base of the party.

When he told the assembled delegates that socialism was not the answer, he was loudly booed.

A radicalization has been taking place over the past 15 years, and it is especially pronounced amongst youth, students and young workers. The multiple crises faced by “millennials” and the generation coming up behind them are fueling this. Housing costs, lack of permanent employment, student debt, a massive climate crisis, mixed with the growing disgust at racism, attacks on LGBTQ rights, abortion rights and a

general growth of awareness around oppression and colonialism amongst young people creates a beautifully volatile mixture.

Latest data show that 48% of Canadians are just \$200 away from insolvency and 26% are broke at the end of each month.

The ideological bonds that have tied generations to the idea that capitalism is the best on offer are increasingly weak amongst large layers of young people.

In 2015, according to the Canadian Millennials Report conducted by Abacus Data, “Among those aged 18 to 29, support for capitalism has plunged 12 percentage points in just two years. Among that age group, 51% say they have positive feelings about socialism, compared to just 45% for capitalism.”

The same report found young people are more comfortable with interventionist government action, believing that corporations should pay

more taxes and that the government should be more responsible for redistributing wealth. In general, they prioritize spending over balancing the budget in order to alleviate systemic issues like income inequality, and are skeptical of free market fundamentalism.

When asked to choose, 54 per cent suggest that Canada would benefit from a more socialist system.

This reflects similar polling in the US. The decades long shadow that the crimes of the USSR and Stalinism cast over the idea of socialism is a thing of the past.

This pro-socialist sentiment isn't going to go away, it is deepening as the crisis continues.

But the sentiment needs to be organized. It can move off in many different directions unless there is a strategy to push for radical ideas in a way that can gain traction and build a mass movement. In Canada – and in other parts of the

world – the Green New Deal is becoming a focal point for this new radicalism.

The GND is designed to boost employment and push towards a zero emission future. It will take massive pressure to be implemented, but it is a starting point for the drive towards a brighter future. The ruling classes of the world will oppose it. But if millions can be brought into the streets to fight for the plan, it can boost the confidence of workers to fight for real change.

We need to fight for a strong class analysis in the GND. The dead end of saving the planet with different consumer choices or the “market solutions” which are on offer by the 1% will not work.

Students are planning a World Climate Strike for September 27. We can unite the energy of young activists with the social power of workers by pushing for support for the climate strike in every workplace and school.

GLOBAL CLIMATE STRIKE SEPT 27

Liberal hypocrisy on climate emergency

by John Bell

Just days after declaring a “climate emergency”, PM Justin Trudeau announced his government was approving construction of the Trans-Mountain pipeline. The move raises the bar for government hypocrisy to new heights.

The pipe will carry Alberta’s diluted bitumen from the tar sands to ports on the Pacific. The move will invigorate tar sands development that has been declining because the price of bitumen oil is too high. The tar sands are widely described as one of the most environmentally destructive megaprojects on earth.

Although Trudeau was hedging his bets, the pipeline approval has been a fait accompli for over a year, since his government bought out the corporation Kinder Morgan’s existing pipeline for \$4.5 billion of the taxpayers’ money. Building the new pipe will cost at least \$7 billion more.

Double-talk

Trudeau has argued that the only way for Canada to meet its climate change reduction targets is to increase tar sands oil production and sales. This is a variation on the old “we have to destroy the village in order to save it” argument.

While the Liberals campaigned and won in part as having a better environmental record than the Harper

Tories, Canada has only fallen further behind reaching the targets set in the Paris Accord. The year 2016-17 alone saw a 12 million tonne

Union of BC Indian Chiefs exposed that lie.

“Our lands are burning and flooding. Our fish are dying and



PM Justin Trudeau and Finance Minister Bill Morneau: doublespeak

increase in greenhouse gas emissions. Even before adding in the increased pollution from more tar sands development, this means that Canada is 200 years behind schedule to meet its targets set for 2030.

In order to justify his environmental hypocrisy, Trudeau had to double down on a parallel line of double-speak around Indigenous rights. He announcement was heavy on rhetoric about consulting, and having the support of, First Nations for the pipeline project. The reaction of the

our people are suffering,” Grand Chief Stewart Phillip said in the statement. “Now is not the time to recklessly pursue environmentally devastating projects while our territories suffer.”

Legal challenges are being mounted, but direct action is also being planned to stop the pipe from being built. First Nations along the route are building houses to reinforce their land claims and stop pipeline construction. Trudeau claims that his government has met its obligations by

“consulting” with Indigenous groups. But the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) to which Canada is a signatory requires full consent from Indigenous people before such projects can proceed. Clearly no such consent exists.

Greta Thunberg, the teen who is inspiring an international wave of environmental activism, responded to Trudeau’s hypocrisy: “One second they declare a #ClimateEmergency and the next second they say yes to expand a pipeline. This is shameful. But of course this is not only in Canada, we can unfortunately see the same pattern everywhere...”

Activists here have a responsibility to expose and oppose Trudeau’s planet-destroying policies. That means building solidarity with Indigenous people on the front lines stopping construction. It means exposing the hollow arguments for “strategic” voting that portray the Liberals as better than the Tories. Most of all it means building support for the International Strike Against Climate Change being planned for the week of September 20.

The climate emergency is no joke, no empty slogan and no fig leaf for governments dragging their heels as capitalism destroys the planet before our eyes. Our children know this is the fight of their lives. Let’s all support them.

The names have been changed to protect the guilty

by John Bell

Not content to grant themselves a 5 month holiday, the Doug Ford Conservatives insist on keeping in the public eye. Closing the legislature doesn’t mean they can’t make our lives miserable, it just means there is no chance to hold them accountable.

At least 2 million or so Torontonians got to tell him what they think of him when he had the nerve to crash the Raptors’ victory party. According to the Orwellian spin doctors at the Premier’s office, the deafening chorus of boos and chants of “Fuck Ford” were a tongue in cheek sign of affection, while the relatively kind reception for Justin Trudeau was “sarcastic”.

University and college students have received their assessments from OSAP, the Ontario Student Assistance Program, only to discover the amount of their support cut by half. Around 400 special needs workers providing support for families dealing with autism received their pink slips. Ford’s spokesperson assures us that “the market will right itself”. Since when are vulnerable young people grist for the market? And who is the real victim here – why, Doug Ford, of course: “We’re helping them, and they’re protesting? ... I question that.”

There is no questioning Ford’s falling approval rating. The federal Conservatives want him out of sight, hence the parliamentary holiday. But Ford isn’t the shy and retiring type.

He can no more stop bullying the people of Ontario than he could keep away from the Raptors’ parade. And since whatever goes wrong is always someone else’s fault, it’s time to blame the supporting cast and shuffle the cabinet.

MPP Monte McNaughton is moved from Infrastructure Minister to Labour Minister. McNaughton was



labour critic during Wynne’s government, and is a fan of “Right to Work” legislation like that passed in some US states. There are strong rumbles that Ford is just waiting for the federal election to pass before launching his assault on organized labour, and McNaughton would be an enthusiastic hatchetman.

Vic Fidelli is out as finance minister, booted down to the Economic Development portfolio. Ford’s former far-right hand man takes the fall for April’s massively unpopular “Open for Business” budget that overflowed with austerity cuts and layoffs for

medical workers and teachers. He is replaced by Rod Phillips, who has been Environment Minister and leading the charge against the “Carbon Tax”.

The Lisas, both MacLeod and Thompson, were only following orders but they’ve both been scapegoated for the chaos created in their portfolios, (Children, Community

and Social Services; and Education). MacLeod takes over at Tourism, Culture and Sport, while Thompson gets Consumer Services, whatever that is.

Carolyn Mulroney is out as Attorney General and is now in charge of traffic gridlock and subways, subways, subways as Minister of Transportation. Christine Elliott’s portfolio as Health Minister is being broken up: Merrilee Fullerton will assist as Minister of Long Term Care, and Michael Tibollo is added as associate minister of mental health and addictions. It is interesting that while health services are being lumped under a single

“super agency”, it takes three hacks to usher in privatization through the back door. Fullerton campaigned by re-tweeting Islamophobic conspiracy theories and posts from neo-Nazi organizations, and Tibollo has been deemed a rising star for the enthusiasm with which he has kissed Ford’s ass at every turn.

The premier who campaigned against Liberal “gravy train” appointments seems hell-bent on surpassing the old regime. The list of Tory insiders doling out high-paying jobs to family and friends grows longer each day.

The latest is Etobicoke MPP Kinga Surma whose father Miroslaw has been hired as a policy advisor to Ford. His main qualification seems to be that he is a prominent anti-communist with deep roots in the Tory party. Readers may recall a minor scandal during the election campaign when Ford himself was caught signing up new Tory members in her riding while waiving the membership fee, a violation of election law.

The Ford government is in such disarray that he had to fire Dean French, his closest advisor who cracked the whip for the trained seals of the Tory caucus. Firing French, a major cabinet shuffle and a \$16K raise for 31 MPPs - I suspect that’s what it took to put down a major caucus revolt. A government in disarray, so afraid of being publicly ridiculed they cancel Canada Day. Now is the time to increase the pressure.

Rain Forest Café workers win first contract



After 3 months on the picket line, workers at Niagara Falls Rain Forest Café have won their first contract. The contract was ordered by the Ontario Labour Review Board arbitrator.

The member of Workers United Local 2347 had been fighting for a first contract since they organized over a year ago.

Their picket lines drew solidarity from organized workers all over the region, like the delegation of bus drivers from Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) local 1582 in St. Catharines who joined in just days before the settlement.

Tourists were encouraged not to spend their holiday money at a place where the employer steals workers’ tips, condones sexual harassment and takes the tourist tax and puts it in his own pocket.

A number of the bus drivers passing by continued to support the workers by beeping their horn. The actions of ATU and other unions by cross-picketing is part a new and welcome development of cross-union solidarity activity in Niagara.

The workers claimed bad faith bargaining by the owner/management of the Rain Forest Café. Union rep Mike Ward told the press that concerns over tips and sexual harassment had been addressed in the new contract: “Both sides left a little happy and a little disappointed. You don’t get everything you wanted but it’s something that works.”

Strikers told supporters they go back to work fully expect management to make life for them very difficult. They do have plans in place to train all picketers on how to remain calm, do their job and file grievances.

Huge protests in Sudan defy police attacks and call for an end to military rule

by **Charlie Kimber**

Huge demonstrations swept Sudan on June 30, demanding an end to military rule. By 6.30pm Sudanese time protesters had reached the presidential police in the capital Khartoum, braving repeated police assaults and shots being fired in the air.

A spokesperson for an opposition group told *Socialist Worker*, “Nothing on Earth stops the Sudanese people from their demand for human dignity, freedom, peace and justice.

“No bullets, no teargas canisters, no violence whatsoever breaks their will and determination.”

The Central Committee of Sudan Doctors said four people were killed in Khartoum’s twin city of Omdurman while one protester died after being hit by a bullet in the chest in the town of Atbara. Regime forces also opened fire on protesters in the eastern city of Kassala. Around 200 people were injured, some very seriously.

The opposition to Sudan’s military rulers had called a “march of millions” in an effort to step up the pressure on the Transitional Military Council (TMC). Sudanese police fired tear gas in an effort to disperse protesters in Khartoum. Tens of thousands of protesters were chanting, “Civilian rule,” when police attacked crowds in the northern Khartoum district of Bahri. They also attacked protests in Mamura and Arkweit in the capital’s east.

Protesters flashing victory signs and carrying Sudanese flags had flooded the streets of the Al-Sahafa neighbourhood of Khartoum. “We



No to military rule: Sudanese revolution demands a civilian government

are here for the martyrs of the 3 June sit-in,” said protester Zeinab. “We want a civilian state that guarantees our freedom. We want to get rid of military dictatorship.”

“No one gave a mandate to the military council, all the people are against the council,” said another protester who shouted out, “I’m the next martyr.”

Blood

Others chanting, “Blood for blood” took to the streets of the Jabra

district, witnesses said, while rallies were also underway in other neighbourhoods of the capital. On the road to the airport, security forces moved to block off crowds of demonstrators, an AFP agency correspondent reported. Security forces used tear gas against demonstrators in the capital’s twin city of Omdurman and the eastern town of Gadaref, witnesses said.

Huge marches also took place in Elobeid city, the capital of north Kordofan, El Daein, the capital of

the state of East Darfur and Alqadarif city, capital of the state of Qadarif. Sunday is the first day of the working week in Sudan, and there were some strikes to join the protests.

These strikes, if they are spread and generalized, can break the military.

The TMC has very little popular support. It relies for its survival on the brute force of the murderous Rapid Support Forces and other units, and the backing of regional powers Saudi Arabia, Egypt and

the United Arab Emirates. These are supplied and armed by Western powers, including Canada, and then hand on these weapons to Sudan’s killer regime.

The courage and determination of the Sudanese people can overcome the regime if they use all their strength. That means breaking from outside arbitration and talks with the military, and building on the power of strikes and mass mobilizations.

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US cancels war on Iran – for now

by **Alistair Farrow and John Bell**

US president Donald Trump pushed the button for air strikes on Iran. He then cancelled 13 minutes before the missiles launched—and that’s according to Trump.

The move came in response to the Iranian military shooting down a US drone which it claims was in its airspace.

Trump later said his decision to back down was because he had considered the civilian death toll. The US isn’t known for its record over concern for civilian life. More likely is Trump was encouraged to consider the political and military consequences of such a decision in the light of his re-election campaign.

Both US secretary of state Mike Pompeo and national security adviser John Bolton reportedly opposed the climb down. “If it was up to him he’d take on the whole world at one time, OK?” said Trump of Bolton.

Despite backing down, Trump was at great pains to demonstrate he is still up for a fight. US military sources announced it had carried out a cyber attack on Iranian armed



Trudeau in lockstep with Trump’s rhetoric on Iran

forces. And last Saturday Trump declared vicious new economic sanctions on Iran would be implemented on Monday.

“Look, you can’t have nuclear weapons. And if you want to talk about it, good. Otherwise you can live in a shattered economy for a long time to come,” he said. New sanctions will hit ordinary Irani-

ans the hardest. And Trump’s wild veering increases the likelihood he could yet pitch the US, Iran and the whole Middle East into a catastrophic conflagration.

Trudeau: Trump’s junior partner

During his June 20 meeting with Trump, PM Justin Trudeau was in

lockstep with Trump’s rhetoric. “We are very concerned about the escalation by Iran recently. We have a presence in the area through leading in the NATO mission in Baghdad and Iraq.” He was explicit in his support for Trump, “our closest ally.”

This comes on the heels of an incident in the East China Sea, where a Canadian warship, the HMCS

Regina was “buzzed” by Chinese fighter planes. According to Ottawa the Canadian naval presence was in the region “fighting North Korean smuggling”. Canadian Forces activity in the Asia-Pacific region have been increasing as tensions between Ottawa and China increase.

The military budget allocated to build new Canadian warships has just gone up by \$8 billion, to \$70 billion. The contract for the 15 ships went to New Brunswick’s billionaire Irving family. No doubt the price tag will continue to soar before the supposed final delivery date in the 2040s.

Meanwhile, Canada continues to sell armoured vehicles and arms to Saudi Arabia. Despite rising popular opposition, the Liberals continue selling record amounts of small arms and ammunition, and tanks worth \$15 billion, that are used against civilians in Yemen. Saudi Arabia is also arming and supporting the brutal Sudanese military.

In Britain courts have ruled that these arms deals are illegal, as they are being used to commit war crimes in Yemen. The 2019 election is a chance to hold the Liberals accountable and stop Canada’s arms sales.

Fighting hate from the street to the state

The CAQ's racist laws: the struggle continues

by Chantal Sundaram & Deborah Murray

In the latest travesty of justice represented by the governing CAQ's move to ban religious symbols in many parts of the public sector, Bill 21 was forced into law by invoking a Parliamentary measure called "legislative closure" to shut down opposition debate.

Quebec's new law bans the wearing of religious symbols by civil servants such as police, judges and crown prosecutors, and also public school teachers. In addition to stoking racism and Islamophobia in society generally, it threatens the employment and career aspirations of thousands. Teachers already on the job will be exempt under a grandfather clause, but they will lose it if they move to another school or accept a promotion to the principal's office.

On the same weekend, the CAQ used closure to pass a law restricting Quebec's immigration system, Bill 9. It lays the groundwork for a racist Quebec values test that immigrants will need to pass in order to become permanent residents. Although imposing this test requires the go-ahead from the federal government, just passing such a law contributes to stoking a climate of fear and hate. The new law is about moving towards a merit-based application system and deepens the false narrative about "good" and "bad" immigrants.

Both of these laws fly in the face of human rights and have nothing to do with secularism or the needs of the job market. They are about stoking racism to deflect anger over austerity and the climate crisis, by appealing to a politics of "identity" which has nothing to do with Quebec's legitimate right to self-determination as a nation.

From protest to defiance

Despite outrage over the immigration law, and despite rallies and human chains around schools that showed the lack of consensus in Quebec society for the religious symbols ban



Demonstration against Bill 21, passed into law by Quebec's CAQ government
Photo: Deborah Murray

—and despite objections from both the Liberals and Quebec solidaire in the National Assembly—the CAQ pushed through its divide-and-conquer agenda in a single weekend.

Rallies and sit-ins took place in front of the National Assembly in Quebec City, with hundreds of Montreal protesters joining in on June 17 to protest the religious symbols law which will target above all Muslim women. The next day, a week-long hunger strike began against the religious symbols law. Those participating expressed their desire to demonstrate the human cost of the ban and the resolve to resist it.

Even though it violates both the Canadian and Quebec Charters of Rights and Freedoms, the religious symbols law was introduced by invoking the notwithstanding clause, intended to shut down any challenge

cut the number of new immigrants for 2019 by 20 per cent last December.

Popular resistance will be crucial to challenging both laws in the courts. And when it comes to applying the religious symbols ban, a willingness to defy the law will be critical as well. It would not be the first time people in Quebec have openly defied an unjust law — and not only in the riots that refused conscription in two World Wars, but much more recently.

In the 2012 Maple Spring, thousands of students defied the restrictions on legal protest imposed by Bill 78 by refusing to obey its requirement to provide march routes to police in advance of demonstrations and by refusing to stop marching at night. Thousands of non-student supporters demonstrated their defiance by coming out in front of their homes every night to bang on pots and pans ("casseroles"). Bill 78 was repealed along with the tuition hike the students were fighting, and it demonstrated the impact mass defiance of the law can have.

Since 2012, a climate of racism has been deliberately stoked by the PQ, the CAQ, and also the Quebec Liberals, which poses a serious challenge to the kind of solidarity and civil disobedience that will be required to resist this law. But a movement against the religious symbols ban must be built. What will happen now is a kind of guerilla warfare, to make it as unenforceable as possible in practice.

Guerilla warfare

In the lead-up to the adoption of the religious symbols ban, a number of municipalities and school boards declared their opposition, with some pledging to defy it.

In April, two independent school trustees, Violaine Cousineau and Jean-Denis Dufort of the Montreal school board (CSDM) published an open letter in *Le Devoir* calling on their board to join the English school boards in actively defying the law

through civil disobedience. In June, the CSDM adopted a motion to put off the law's application until fall 2020 and to consult with parents, school councils and unions before making changes to its own regulations. However, the Quebec school board federation (FCSQ) announced its intention to apply the law throughout the rest of Quebec in fall 2019.

In April, the Montreal Municipal Council unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the law. Montreal mayor Valérie Plante had said previously that police targeted by the law would be subject to the rules determined by the police force, and emphasized municipal autonomy. Before the bill was tabled Plante said that Montreal would be going ahead with its plan to allow police to wear religious symbols, including the hijab. Now Plante says she will obey the law, though raising concerns about its application. How far she as mayor will be willing to go in taking on the CAQ by asserting municipal autonomy will depend on popular resistance.

While other Quebec mayors have shamefully come out in favour, efforts are ongoing to lobby councillors to oppose the law, as in the municipality of Gatineau. There are also many behind-the-scenes efforts to provide direct assistance to those affected.

Open defiance will be an uphill battle: the CAQ amended Bill 21 at the very last minute, giving the government power to ensure that institutions such as school boards must comply and imposing sanctions if they do not, prompting many to predict this could result in a "secularism police."

False consensus, false mandate

The CAQ claims it has a mandate for all this because it promised throughout

Taking on bigots and police



The far right is getting bolder and has started openly attacking LGBTQ+ activists and their allies.

This is particularly significant since this year marks the 50th anniversary since the Stonewall uprising. The Stonewall riots were a series of spontaneous, militant demonstrations by members of the gay community against a police raid that began in the early morning hours of June 28, 1969, at the Stonewall Inn in the Greenwich Village neighborhood of New York City.

The police raid at Stonewall was part of a pattern of regular harassment by police of LGBTQ+ individuals in that period. Stonewall is widely considered the most important event leading to the gay liberation movement and the modern fight for LGBTQ+ rights in the US.

Nazis attack Detroit Pride

The Detroit Pride parade this year was interrupted by a group of white nationalists carrying weapons and performing Nazi salutes. Video posted on social media shows one small group of neo-Nazis marching while someone yells "fuck you, faggots" into a bullhorn.

They were members of the National Socialist Movement (NSM), which the Southern Poverty Law Center classifies as one of the largest neo-Nazi organizations in the US. This attack sparked outrage at the annual march, which drew 40,000 people and is the largest Pride event in Michigan.

its election campaign to pass a law on secularism and to cut immigration. But like the Ford government in Ontario, the CAQ only has a Parliamentary majority, not a popular one.

Polls do show a disturbing increase in support for laws that restrict immigration and target Muslims, and not only in Quebec. A May poll conducted for Global News reported that almost half of Canadians surveyed said that having racist thoughts was normal and acceptable.

Within Quebec, there is a huge generational divide. A Leger poll in *Le Devoir* during the lead-up to the law reported that 59% of Québécois support a ban on religious symbols

Police were no help. "Where was Detroit Police when armed Nazis were marching with their NAZI FLAG shouting Homophobic slurs, anti-black racism, and white nationalism you ask? Serving and Protecting THE NAZIS," one activist wrote on Twitter. "It's 2019 and cops are escorting Nazis through a pride celebration. Disgusting," another wrote.

The links between Nazi attacks on the LGBTQ+ community and on racialized people were made explicit by the actions of the neo-Nazis. Detroit police chief James Craig said that the neo-Nazis who showed up at the city's Pride parade also made chimpanzee noises directed at African Americans as part of an attempt to incite violence, hoping to recreate the events of the infamous Charlottesville hate rally in 2017.

Hate in Hamilton

The Pride event in Hamilton on June 15 was also attacked by far-right hate groups. These groups have been very active in the city, holding near-weekly vigils, and Pride organizers had been warning that something could happen.

The police response was to lay parole violation charges against anti-fascists including Cedar Hoperton who, supporters say, was not at the Pride event. It took over a week for them to charge Christopher Vanderweide with assault with a weapon in spite of the fact that there was video footage of his attacks circulating immediately after the event.

for teachers. However, the newspaper clarified that the results "hide a deep division between younger and older Québécois." Those in the age group of 18-24 support teachers having the right to wear religious symbols while those over 65 are radically against.

But when people are asked whether they support banning religious symbols they are not asked whether they support people losing their jobs because of their racialized background or religion. The actions that unions are willing to take will be critical to exposing this false consensus.

Sylvain Malette, president of the Fédération autonome de l'enseignement (FAE, a teachers'

Hate contained in Toronto

In Toronto, supporters of PEGIDA, a racist and Islamophobic organization, held a rally near City Hall, a short distance from the scheduled Dyke March. They were prevented from marching by a large counter-protest (see next article).

The rise of far-right violence is also escalating in Europe. Reported homophobic hate crimes in London, UK have increased by more than 50% between 2014 to 2018.

In a recent incident a woman and her girlfriend were attacked and beaten on a London bus. Five young men taunted the couple, demanding that they kiss. When they refused they were physically attacked, leaving both women bloodied.

Melania Geymonat and her girlfriend Chris said they would not be intimidated into hiding their sexuality. Chris said, "A lot of people's rights and basic safety are at risk. I want people to feel emboldened to stand up to the same people who feel emboldened by the right wing populism that is responsible for the escalation in hate crimes."

All who oppose racism, Islamophobia and anti-gay bigotry must stand together and oppose the far right attacks. These events, and history stretching back to the Stonewall riot, show that we can put no faith in the police to defend us against neo-Nazi attacks. We must organize in our own defence and confront the bigots whenever they try and raise their ugly heads.

union independent of the major teacher federations) called the ban a "witch-hunt against the hijab." Other unions that oppose the law include: the CSN, the CSQ, the Conseil régional FTQ Montréal métropolitain, the FNEEQ, and the FPEP. Collective agreements and the right to grieve discrimination in the workplace under human rights legislation will be an important line of defence against the law.

The CAQ is dead wrong when it says this has "settled the secularism issue." The first battle against the law may have been lost, but the struggle continues. And the struggle against it can build confidence to turn back the attack on immigration.



Reclaiming the legacy of Stonewall in New York City

None of us are free until all of us are free

by Carolyn Egan

This is the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall uprising, often said to be the birth of the gay liberation movement in North America. Things change when they can no longer stay the same, and that night in a small bar in New York City history was made when members of an oppressed minority, led by transvestites and people of colour, fought back.

The NYPD, like police in most of the country, would often enter "gay bars" to harass, humiliate, assault and arrest those that they felt to be living outside the social norms of the time. But that night was different, suddenly someone threw a rock from Sheridan Park at the police on Christopher Street, another called out for help when they were being arrested, and then it happened, everyone started fighting back. For those involved it was an exhilarating experience, standing up to the repression they had been subjected to for years.

It was an era of tremendous social change: the Black Power movement, the women's movement, the movement against the Viet Nam war were radicalizing people of all ages, but particularly the young. The system was being questioned

The bigots were outnumbered and their message drowned out

This gave confidence to those who previously felt that they were alone, isolated and marginalized. Homophobia and heterosexism were rampant in society, and many were closeted for fear of losing their jobs and their families.

A slogan that was used at the time, "none of us are free until all of us are free" spoke to the solidarity that was building among movements. Those that stood up the night of June 28th, 1969 became part of the history that everyday people make when they take on the exploitation and oppression that capitalism maintains.

Today, with the rise of the right worldwide we are seeing an increase in Islamophobia, anti-

Black racism, and, bigotry of all sorts including attacks on LGBTQ communities. There are horrific examples in countries like Brazil but we are seeing it in Canada as well. The statistics show that hate crimes are increasing, including violence. The extremist groups of the right want to turn back the clock and once again have oppressed people living in fear.

Governments encouraging bigots

Governments are working hand in hand with them as we saw when the Progressive Conservatives in Ontario tried to reverse the new sex education curriculum which was teaching tolerance and respect in our schools. This gives encouragement to homophobes to unleash their hate and their violence.

We saw this violence exhibited recently at Pride events. In Hamilton, Ontario homophobic "street preachers" were joined by far right groups and attacked participants, assaulting those standing up to them. This bigotry and violence is being seen more and more, in an attempt to reverse the gains that people have made through struggle over the past decades.

In Toronto on Pride weekend, which was celebrating Stonewall, a right wing group PEGIDA – which

holds strong anti-immigrant and homophobic views – held a rally near City Hall spewing hate. Over three hundred people came out to oppose it. They included members of faith communities, trade unionists from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, the United Steelworkers, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, a contingent from the Dyke March, and many young people.

The bigots were greatly outnumbered, and their message was drowned out by the strong voices of those who stood up together against oppression. This solidarity is a concrete example of what was meant by the decades old slogan, "none of us are free until all of us are free". It was a fitting action for the anniversary of Stonewall.

Inter-imperial rivalry

by Tom Leonard

Third in a three-part series, on the 70th anniversary of NATO. Previous installments have examined the alliance from its founding through to the end of the Cold War; and how the ensuing “peace” saw NATO’s rapid expansion and increasingly war-like actions.

This policy of enlargement is not an accident, but rather a reflection of the wider dynamic of competition in the international state system.

In a capitalist economy, individual firms compete with each other for greater shares of a given market, and thus greater profits. The dynamic of competition in the economy compels individual firms – units of capital – to constantly seek technological innovations so as to produce their goods more cheaply and undercut their competitors. Those firms that fail to innovate go bankrupt, with their assets bought up by other firms.

So there is a tendency in a competitive economy for individual firms to become smaller in number but greater in size over time. Eventually, a given market becomes dominated by a small number of very large firms.

Think about internet search, for instance – after proliferation of different search engines in the 1990s, a very small number of firms dominate today, with one of them, Google, being preponderant.

This market ‘maturation’ compels firms to seek out new markets elsewhere as they can no longer grow their profits in their home market. So successful firms tend to grow beyond the borders of the state in which they’re based. This brings them into competition with firms (capitals) based in other states, internationalizing the economic competition between units of capital and compelling national states to compete with each other, each defending the interests, markets and profits of their ‘own’ firms.

So, the economic competition between capitalist firms tends to become political competition between capitalist states. This political aspect of capitalist competition is conducted with all the means at a state’s disposal – trade deals and regulations, tariffs, alliances both economic and military, and the threat of or actual use of military force.

The expansion of NATO is best understood through this lens. Russia and China are capitalist societies, just as are the United States and its allies, including Canada, and the other states mentioned here, such as Saudi Arabia and India. All of them are locked in a system of competitive rivalry as each tries to out-manoeuvre the other to gain a strategic advantage.

There may very well be differences of approach between this or that state, different conceptions of what the ‘national interest’ is and how best to pursue it at a given moment, and different conceptions of the ideal end-state to which they all strive. But all of them are locked in a competitive system of imperialism, ultimately driven by the dynamics of capitalist



Protesting NATO in Chicago, May 2012

Photo: Debra Sweet, Flickr CC BY 2.0

competition.

In some respects, the system is similar to a yard of school children dominated by a small number of very big kids. Smaller, weaker states frequently see their own interests as being served through alliance with one of the bigger states, just as smaller, weaker children often ally with one of the schoolyard bullies for protection from the others and the opportunity to enjoy some share of the spoils of their own bully’s behaviour. This was exactly the impetus that first drove the founding members of NATO, as Lord Ismay alluded to when he stressed the necessity of ‘keeping the United States in.’

So, far from being an alliance the primary purpose of which was to defend democracy, NATO can be better understood as an expression of the competitive dynamics of a capitalist economy and imperialist global state system.

Donald Trump and What Next for NATO?

Which brings this discussion back to the United States and President Trump. The anniversary of NATO’s founding occurs at a time when Trump has openly demanded NATO members contribute more resources to the alliance and bear more of the direct costs of their own defence. This has been interpreted in some quarters as yet another indication of

the malfeasance of the U.S. President and his unfitness for office. However, seen through the lens above, there is a logic to Trump’s argument.

Russia is not a peer competitor of NATO or the United States, nor will it be, likely for generations to come. The same cannot be said of China, which may not yet be a peer competitor of the U.S. but could grow to become one.

According to the World Bank, the Chinese economy is now considered the largest single economy in the world by some measures, and was growing at three times the rate of the U.S. economy until 2016. Where economic competition occurs, military competition tends to follow, and the Chinese state is already extending the reach of its military well beyond its own borders.

China has built artificial islands in the Spratly archipelago in the South China Sea, on which aircraft facilities and runways are being constructed. These have the potential to give the Chinese state the capacity to project military power deep into the Southeast Asian region and Indonesia, which is bringing it into increasing conflict with the United States.

The Trump administration (and many other observers) considers China the main threat to American dominance. Given that U.S. resources are not infinite, and that

Russia is no substantial threat to the United States or Europe, the logic of inter-imperial competition dictates Trump’s desire to disengage from Europe and NATO, to allow a focus of U.S. resources and effort on containing China.

In all this, ordinary people in China, the United States and the rest of the world are the losers, as vast resources are diverted from useful ends like housing, healthcare and education into a wasteful and dangerous game of chicken played between rival ruling classes. What all this means for the future of NATO is currently unclear, but nobody should bet on the alliance lasting another seventy years.

Territorial acknowledgment

As settlers, we acknowledge our occupation of lands that are the Indigenous territories of Turtle Island. Furthermore, we support all struggles for Indigenous sovereignty in whatever forms they take by the hundreds of First Nations and Inuit communities that have resided here for many thousands of years, and by Métis communities that have developed in the last hundreds of years.

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WHERE WE STAND socialist.ca/ourstand

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. Capitalism cannot regulate the catastrophic effects of climate change. We stand for climate justice, including the

concept of “just transition” for affected workers.

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 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.

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Doom Patrol

The superhero antidote to Trump's America

by John Bell

I tuned in to *Doom Patrol* (Space Channel) with low expectations. Another superhero show, yawn. And this one from the DC universe, so full of angst-ridden billionaire vigilantes, uber-men and world saving princesses.

So imagine my surprise when Narrator/Super Villain Mr. Nobody (Alan Tudyk) agrees. As he gleefully teases the audience: “More TV superheroes, just what the world needs. Have you hung yourself yet?” Mr. Nobody is the product of post-war Nazi experiments, fiendishly adept at manipulating the minds of his opponents, using their fears and insecurities against them as individuals and as a group. He is also the only character to regularly break the “fourth wall” and directly address the audience with comments on the proceedings. Is he manipulating us?

And what a group our “heroes” are: Jane/Crazy Jane (Dianne Guerrero), a woman with 64 personalities, each with their own power and/or liability; Cliff Steele/Robot Man (Brendan Fraser), a misogynistic NASCAR champion whose brain is all that survives a crash, only to be implanted into a clunky, retro robot body; Rita Farr (April Bowlby), a narcissistic 1950s film star who ingests a mysterious fungus while on a South American location shoot, and turns to an elastic ooze whether she likes it or not; Vic/Cyborg (Joivan Wade), a troubled teenager whose father (who has shady dealings with the military-industrial complex) has turned him into a part machine following an accident; and Larry Trainor/Negative Man (Matt Bomer), a closeted “right stuff” sort of test pilot whose body becomes inhabited by a mute being made up of electrical charge, but whose actual body is horribly disfigured by fire and nuclear radiation after a plane crash, and who appears – except in flashbacks, of which there are plenty – wrapped head to toe in bandages reminiscent of the Invisible Man.

All of them find themselves in the man-



sion of Niles Calder/The Chief (Timothy Dalton), physician, psychologist, inventor and implacable opponent of Mr. Nobody. Is The Chief a part of the shadowy government intelligence agency, the Bureau of Normalcy, or is he trying to create a sort of super team to bring it down? Before we can figure it out he is kidnapped. Out of personal loyalty and affection, each of our protagonists agree to band together, sort of, and rescue him.

If all this seems weird, it is. The writing is an amalgam of scatological humour, pathos and absurdist satire. The characters exist out of time, with a visual style that evokes multiple decades. Robot Man is right out of

a cheesy drive-in movie, while Cyborg is state of the art. Crucial supporting characters include Flex Mentalo, the jut-jaw muscle man from the ads in the comic books; a farting donkey that is actually a portal to another dimension; and Danny the Street, a gay-positive road that hosts gender fluid, cross-dressing entertainment, but constantly has to move its location to evade the Bureau of Normalcy.

Is this the America of Donald trump's MAGA fantasy? One thing that is clear, *Doom Patrol* is anti-fascist to the core, presents its LGBTQ subplot in a wonderfully subversive way, and avoids the sexist tropes that

weaken so much of the genre. I suspect that the usual fanboys who complain about too many women heroes or POC in their favourite sci-fi franchises really dislike *Doom Patrol*.

It is hard to go further without spoiling the inventive, funny and genuinely touching plot that unfolds as this group of “loveable losers” (Mr. Nobody's words) unites. The heroes are all disabled in one way or another (even The Chief is in a wheel chair) – physically, mentally or spiritually scarred. But rather than fall into the cliché of “overcoming” their handicaps the *Doom Patrol* learns to accept and fight on. Maybe we aren't doomed after all.

The Avengers: End Game

by Toshi X. Tomori

The Avengers: End Game was just re-released with additional footages a little over a month after it hit the theater. The film grossed over \$2.7 billion worldwide and has been seen by over 100 million people. These numbers are enviable for those of us are trying to build mass social movements. As such, in a film about genocide, it's worth examining what type of people are notably absent or discarded since their very lack of representation signals that they are the primary victims of the erasure.

It's a film teeming with surprise reappearances; in fact, the casting and cameos makes it a rather overcrowded film which is a bit ironic since the movie's universe's population has been wiped out by half. Which means there is an oversupply of a certain group of people while an underrepresentation or stark absence of another.

The film plays off the genocide ambiguously. It may be a good thing since, based upon a passing but by no means understated remark, the environment has improved. Let's push this dismissed line just a bit further and connect it with the racially underrepresented people in the movie: the film seems to say, rather daringly, that by cutting human (though it's all living creatures in the movie but whatever) population by half, we may escape or delay the inevitable environmental catastrophe.

But who should be eliminated? It would seem Thanos just eliminated people at random,

but, to follow the racial logic of the film, the ones who are not on screen are the ones who are the ideal candidates for genocide: Asians,



Latinos, and Middle Easterners. Which brings me to the very odd killing of the only (signifying) Asian in the film. He is supposed to be a Japanese yakuza and his murder is justified by the fact that he's not a good man. It's a throwaway role but they've cast a recognizable Japanese actor for what? a fifteen second part? He's also wielding a samurai sword in what is probably Tokyo, although I must say the whole scene looks like a set dressed as Tokyo. In other words, inauthentic.

Has anyone seen yakuza walking around with samurai swords in Tokyo? It's such an inconvenient weapon of choice. It is more iconic than practical, hence another layer of inauthenticity with this character and scenario. It's what *gaijins* imagine what yakuza look like. His death is connected to Mexican narcos since the killer is actually one of our dear Avengers turned vigilante. His motivation is that how could these evil people survive the genocide when his family was killed off. OK, fair enough, but interestingly the bad guys worthy of vigilante justice and death are conveniently located outside the US. It's a faint, faint signal in a system of signs and signification, but I think this is where the film locates its ideal demographic

for genocide.

If these groups of people didn't exist in our world (Asians, Latinos, and others) or if they can be eliminated immediately, we can cut down on pollution and stave off the “inevitable”—Thanos' signature term of endearment for himself.

The film doesn't portray this idea as embodied by Thanos as a completely evil plan. Not the stereotypical triumphant villain, Thanos is shown living peacefully and in harmony with his environment. He's a hippie. It's benevolent genocide that he was advocating for. Even his much abused daughter vouches for him. It's a perverted idea, but it's one being pushed by the film; that perhaps it's not so bad at all to sacrifice entire groups of people so that the other half can live and it's not such a farfetched notion either (which should be the scary part) as this will be the likely scenario in the inevitable decades to come.

The final image. It's nostalgic. It almost counters the time machine logic than is set up in the film which it also violates. It's a mournful image of an America that can longer be, whether because of degraded environment, precarious economy, MAGA, or whatever else one can think of. The film thinks it's showing a romantic image instead of a romanticized one and this is the one true inauthentic point the film makes: America is in decline. There will be no “to be continued” as usually concludes a Marvel film but a long deep slide into darkness.

Green New Democratic Deal: only a good start

by Brian Champ

The Ontario NDP has unveiled their *Green New Democratic Deal*. Subtitled “Climate, Jobs, Hope,” it was passed at their convention in June. This is a positive response to the student climate strikes, Extinction Rebellion’s (XR) mass direct action and the movement for a Green New Deal.

These movements embrace inclusion and diversity. They link climate action with Indigenous allies struggling against ongoing colonization and genocide; with refugees and migrants forced to leave their home countries; with the struggle for decent wages and job security, particularly in racialized communities; and with workers in “dirty” industries facing job loss.

This new turn of the ONDP is refreshing compared to the hypocrisy of the Liberal government approving the TMX pipeline the day after declaring a “climate emergency.”

But reacting is not enough: the proposals have to address the crisis on the appropriate scale. So how does the ONDP’s new plan stack up?

First steps

It is a step forward for the party, but not a fully worked out policy. According to Peter Tabuns, the ONDP energy and climate change critic: “The point of a Green New Deal is to have a serious conversation that leads to effective climate action.”

The IPCC report last year set a goal of only a 1.5°C rise in global average temperature. To achieve this, global carbon emissions have to be reduced by at least 45% below 2010 emissions by the year 2030. This is drastic, but still likely



sions by 2025. And given that those are global emissions reductions, the share of reductions for a carbon intensive economy like Ontario should be much greater.

The new ONDP target is “at least 50% below 2005 levels by 2030, and achieving net-zero emissions by 2050.” These targets exceed the IPCC targets, but are likely to become outdated soon. Ontario’s GHG emissions have declined

out and development of renewable energy production. There is still a long way to go.

A good chunk of this fall is due to the decline of manufacturing. This kind of incidental emissions reduction does nothing for people who lost their jobs, nor does it imply a permanent solution, as a new boom could see emissions rise again.

Wrongly, the plan considers nuclear power to

be zero carbon. The nuclear fuel cycle is carbon intensive and new plant construction releases huge amounts of carbon – not to mention that nuclear waste will remain dangerous for tens of thousands of years.

Jobs

The document states, “Transitioning to net-zero emissions can add over a million new jobs” by implementing “the world’s largest retrofit program” (5% or more of all Ontario buildings per year), declaring support for low carbon “emerging industries” and by providing three guarantees: for Job Training, Community Support and Existing Industry Support.

There are good ideas in this section: the retrofit program and skilled job training for women, Indigenous, Black and racialized people are good starting points. But “supporting” industry to become carbon neutral is a weakness.

The latest IPCC report states that achieving net zero emissions “would require large-scale transformations of the global energy–agriculture–land–economy system, affecting the way in which energy is produced, agricultural systems are organized, and food, energy and materials are consumed.” This is a monumental task, which requires more than just “support” for industry efforts. Carbon intensive sectors of the economy need to be nationalized to rapidly lower carbon emissions on the scale that is required.

The ONDP has been pushed to make a few steps along the path to a climate friendly economy. The end of that path is socialism and it’s up to the rest of us to build the strikes and mass movements that can get us there.

VANCOUVER

Solidarity with hospitality workers

by Michael Y.C. Tseng

Outside the prestigious Rosewood Hotel Georgia, signs with the words “One Job Should Be Enough” fluttered among over 300 primarily hospitality staff protesting working conditions at the 5-star establishment.

Members of UNITE HERE 40 from Rosewood, Four Seasons, Hyatt, Westin Bayshore and Pinnacle Habbourfront in Vancouver are in contract negotiations, calling for an end to the rampant cuts to workers’ hours, and a commitment to “address specific concerns about discrimination and harassment in an effort to improve the working environment.”

One Rosewood Hotel worker explained that due to the progressive cuts, they must work a second job to make ends meet. Another worker pointed out a glaring irony that while Rosewood has been rated the best hotel in Canada, its staff often lack the supplies to complete their jobs and are concerned for their safety.

“5-star hotel, 1-star jobs”

A cook at the Rosewood, James Sugden said, “We provide a very high level of service at our hotel and have been consistently recognized for our quality. We need jobs and wages that match the excellent service we provide to our guests every day.”

According to Destination BC Research and Analytics, the value created by the tourism



End rampant cuts to workers’ hours in hospitality sector

Photo: Michael YC Tseng

industry represented \$9 billion added to the GDP of British Columbia in 2017. The industry generated more GDP than any other primary resource industry. Mining came in second at \$4.9 billion. The B.C. government reported that “the tourism industry contributed nearly \$1.2 billion in provincial taxes in 2017, an

increase of 40.3% from 2007.”

It is worth noting that this rapidly growing industry depends on the service area of overnight visitation, accommodation and food. This specific service area made it possible for the 10.3 million tourists to visit the 19,243 small to mid-size tourism related businesses

in operation in B.C. in 2017.

Truly, the backbone of the industry.

Despite generating a steady flux of prestige and value, the hospitality workers in this service area find themselves faced with job precarity, unsafe working conditions, and instances of harassment toward female staff.

The hotel industry in B.C. has been adopting a practice of classifying workers as full-time staff and routinely assigning them less than 40 hours of work per week. The workers have to be available on-call, creating a catch-22 where a second or third job is needed to make ends meet, but the time to perform the labour has already been stolen in the first place.

“One recent summer, over 20 of my co-workers were on WCB (WorkSafeBC) because of injuries caused by the high workload in only two months. Even though my hotel is making tons of money, I don’t even have stable 40 hours of work,” said Nym Calvez, Executive Board member of UNITE HERE 40.

The picket line wound through the affluent hotel block of Vancouver and there was clear enthusiasm from the on-lookers and the workers alike. Members of ILWU 400, CUPE BC, BCGED and Hospital Employees Union, the Health Science Association, COPE, Tuition Freeze Now and councillor Jean Swanson joined in solidarity.

“We will be back,” the protesters chanted, vowing a continuous class solidarity until the workers receive the high job standards they have been providing in their services.