

DEFUND DISARM DISBAND

Abolish the racist police



The people of Minneapolis burned the local police precinct to the ground to protest of the killing of George Floyd

Jason Kenney vs. the future of Alberta

by **Vic Rozon**

Jason Kenney, Premier of Alberta under the United Conservative Party has put all of his political effort to get Alberta workers back to the workplace whether it's safe or not. Kenney's Government continues to put pressure on the province to support the energy sector.



Kenney is using the pandemic as a tool to weaken decades of important environmental legislation and to slacken the rules on environmental testing within the energy sector. His government plans on closing and moving provincial parks to the private sector, and putting the focus and money in the oil and gas industry. Over one third of the sites in Alberta's park system, 184 sites, will be eliminated or privatized.

Colonialism

Alberta has a legacy of conservatism from the foundation of this province. Starting with the farmers who were incentivized to take over indigenous land, Alberta was built upon the foundation of colonization.

The Premier along with Minister of Energy, Sonya Savage have publicly stated that it's the 'perfect time' for present energy projects as the pandemic has stopped environmental activists from acting, due to the fact that protesters cannot organize in large groups.

In his attempts to paralyze environmental activism in Alberta, Jason Kenney has been at the forefront in stopping activism in its tracks. This UCP government has passed corrupt legislation, making it illegal for individuals to protest against energy projects, with this new policy an individual could be fined up to \$25,000.

The Alberta government has not only tried to slow down protesters, they have also been responsible for cutting funding on crucial public sectors like education, and health-care (during a pandemic no less!), using the typical Kenney excuse by claiming that the energy sector is the only way for the province to survive this 21st century economic depression. This exposes the truth behind the present conservative government, that they will continue to fund their unethical energy projects at the cost of Alberta workers.

Privatization agenda

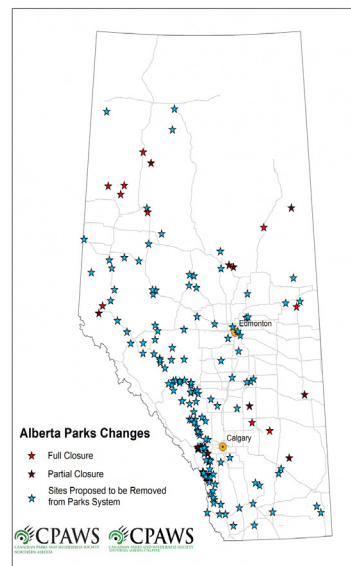
Jason Kenney along with his Ministers have used the Coronavirus to push their agenda. This is a perfect time for environmental activism to revolutionize as the world changes through this pandemic. We use online platforms to organize and share these issues with our fellow comrades, through online meetings and live events. Through this collective struggle we have more individuals using online platforms, creating a larger audience and therefore a larger opportunity to educate workers on these environmental issues and the impacts that the cuts of the public sector will have for the future of Albertans.

Albertan governments of all political stripes have manipulated the province into believing that the energy sector is a part of the identity of all Albertans. That it's the only way for us to survive, but based on many recent reports the energy sector has become an abusive power, with no long term gain attached to it. The lack of environmental testing in the energy sector, prevents us from understanding the health of the soil, water, and air. These things are crucial not just for wildlife, but any life. What does this mean for

the health of the communities that live in areas where the oil and gas sector is the economic centre? What is our government doing to move to greener energy, when it has been clear that there is no future for the oil and gas sector? There are many questions, many concerns that the province avoids answering, and we have seen this type of issue in all levels of government, and across all parties.

System change

I ask you, fellow comrades to



continue to speak the truth, use social platforms to reach out to your community. The Alberta government will continue under this parasitic system. Politicians are ignoring the hard work, and looking for an easy way out to expand, without consideration of the health of its citizens. We see this not only in Alberta, but around the world. This is the breaking point, a time to expose the intentions and the way our system has failed us, continue to organize and continue to show the state that we are watching and that their actions will not go unnoticed, nor allowed. This is more than just politics, this is about life and death, about the future generations that deserve better, a world where you can breathe in clean air, water, and earth.

Message to Ford: No covid evictions!

by **Brian Champ**

Hundreds of tenants descended on Queen's Park in the afternoon on Tuesday, June 9 for the No Covid Evictions Rally and March organized by Keep Your Rent Toronto protesting the actions (and inactions) of their landlords in the midst of the pandemic, and the inadequacy and hypocrisy of the Ford government's response. All in attendance wore masks and maintained physical distance under the trees on the east side of the south lawn. Popular chants included "Can't pay, Won't pay", "Fight fight fight housing is a right", and "The tenants united will never be defeated".

Many of the worst landlords are corporations: Metcap, Golden Equity, Starlight. These landlords neglect their properties, push for above-guideline rent increases and evict tenants illegally all to line the pockets of their shareholders.

Before the pandemic, housing was already a major crisis, with many working people struggling to afford rent in the city of Toronto, much less being able to purchase a condo or house. Many people were already one or two paychecks away from being without a home. When the pandemic hit and workplaces started to shut down, many low wage workers were suddenly unemployed and had to decide to pay rent or put food on the table. This is why the rent strike movement began, starting with keeping April rent.

Speakers shared their experiences from the struggle in their buildings. Carli from Goodwood Park in Scarborough, owned by Rane Management has been on rent strike with fellow tenants since April 1st. "When we started this rent strike we did it because we were scared. We were overwhelmed by the pandemic. We were losing our jobs and we were terrified of evictions. But as we have come together we realized that the Covid rent crisis is not our only worry: ... Rane Management is pushing through a 5.2% rent increase in the middle of this pandemic. We ask for a pause on all rent increases 'til we can get back on our feet and we demand no evictions for those who have falling behind on rent due to Covid-19".

This same company runs some of the hardest hit for profit long term care homes in the province.

Brian, a rent strike organizer from Parkdale talked successes in the past, and what is needed this time around. "The stakes to today are higher: we know that. But we also know that there are greater numbers of us today than there was three years ago. There are more of us today than there was three months ago. And there will be more of us three days from now, three weeks from now, three months from now. If landlords and the courts and the politicians move to evict our neighbours it comes to us to defend each other. An attack on any one tenant needs to be confronted by all of us. We are in this together: we will win together, or we will lose together, but no one will be left behind."

Hana, who MC'd the days events was the last speaker. She made the connection to the fact that the same



Healthcare workers support the tenants

neighbourhoods that are hit the hardest by Covid are the ones that are preyed upon by these corporate slum landlords. She sent everyone home with the following words: "Today we have two clear messages to those who dictate our lives; a demand and a warning. A demand to those at Queen's Park: we did not create this crisis and we will not be profited off of it: legislation now! - permanently ban evictions for any rent arrears during Covid. And now a warning to the LTB and those landlords who will hear of this: our neighbours and our neighbourhoods will not suffer - if you try to evict us here, or at any LTB across this city, we will be back! We will be back, not individually, but collectively. We will be back in numbers with our communities. We will flood these buildings. No Covid evictions! Not Now! Not Ever!"

Find out more about the campaign at keepyourrent.com or contact an organizer by calling 647-874-8793 or emailing torontokeepyourrent@gmail.com

Ford tries to blame unions for LTC scandal

Ontario Premier Doug Ford is under intense fire for the unnecessary deaths in Ontario's Long Term Care facilities. He is trying to deflect blame on to unionized inspectors.

But a leaked memo from management at the Ministry for Long Term Care, dated March 27, ordered inspectors to stand down. The memo said, in part: "...our work and the role we will play moving forward is not going to be one of compliance and enforcement for the time being."

This is typical of Ford's pandemic management strategy: make grand, emotional statements designed to endear him to voters, masking his plans to scapegoat

workers and defend private health care. We can't let him get away with his disgusting "straw man" diversion.

Profits vs Human needs

Investigative journalist Nora Loreto has done exceptional work tracking the death rate across Canada in LTC and other care institutions.

As of writing, according to her figures, 86.3% of COVID-19 fatalities occurred in such facilities. That is 5841 out of 6765 reported deaths.

The bulk of these deaths have occurred in Quebec and Ontario. Both jurisdictions have long been governed by austerity-minded provincial governments that have overseen the massive growth of

for-profit LTC businesses.

In Ontario successive Tory and



Liberal governments have undermined labour standards and delivered the deregulation that LTC industry lobbyists have asked for.

In 2016 then Premier Kathleen Wynne broke an election promise,

and cut back LTC inspections from annually to once every 3 years. At the same time they mandated that what inspections that were done could no longer evaluate issues of security, staffing levels, and - crucially in the present circumstances - emergency planning.

All these changes were sought by the industry, and allowed them to boost their profits.

But even these weakened regulations were too much for Doug Ford and his big business friends. Appointment of MPP Dr. Merrilee Fullerton to the position of Minister of Long Term Care in 2019 was a tip off.

She has long been a vocal advocate for privatized healthcare.

She also dropped some racist, Islamophobic social media comments which endeared her to the Tory faithful.

Fullerton also tweeted that private healthcare was "necessary" and that Canada's healthcare system compared only to North Korea.

These are the characters trying to blame inspectors from shirking their duties. These are the liars who say they weep and lose sleep when they read the damning reports of neglect from the Canadian Forces personnel called in to support LTC homes.

They caused and abetted the social murder of thousands of seniors. Don't let them dodge the bullet. It should be aimed straight at them.

History or Bust

by John Bell

Is nothing sacred?

In Bristol, England, Black Lives Matter protesters removed a statue of Edward Colston from its plinth and chucked it in the river.

Colston was a “philanthropist” whose vast fortune was founded on the buying and selling of human beings, slaves from Africa. Tens of thousands of them. Since thousands of men, women and children who died or became sick during the voyage were unceremoniously tossed off the slave ships, a watery grave for Colston seemed fitting.

In a late development, Bristol officials have resurrected the bronze bastard and removed him to a “secure location”.

Across the US southern states, statues of Confederate “heroes” are tumbling down. Some are being torn down by angry protesters, tired of symbols of white supremacy and racist oppression towering over them. More are being pre-emptively removed by local officials. Their motives are less transparent. The old expression, jumping before you’re pushed, comes to mind.

In Louisville, Kentucky, John Breckenridge Castleman bit the dust, for the second time. In Montgomery, Alabama Robert E. Lee lost again. In Nashville, Tennessee, a memorial to Edward Carmack was scrapped. Carmack was an early 20th century Senator and newspaper owner who used his bully pulpits to attack civil rights and impose Jim Crow laws in the south.

The list is long. It seems that the list of memorials to slave owners, vociferous racists and night-riding vigilantes is yet longer.

In a related move, officials overseeing NASCAR auto racing have banned display of the Stars and Bars, the Confederate flag, at any of its events. That flag is a symbol of racist violence and hate to the vast majority, comparable with the swastika.

For years NASCAR looked the other way, and allowed bullshit argument that the flag was just “heritage, not hate”, sort of like “all flags matter”. In fact, that heritage and hate are two sides of the same coin. (Did I mention that most denominations of US currency have pictures of slave-owners on them?)

Many are shocked at NASCAR’s decision—as one sports writer pointed out, either you’re amazed the symbol of hatred is still tolerated in 2020, or you’re amazed that NASCAR had the nerve to go against “good ol’ boy” culture. But multi-billion dollar businesses like NASCAR do their polling and research; they must have seen the writing on the statue.

Maybe we should have seen it coming. After all NASCAR is a sport entirely composed of turning left.

Meanwhile, in St. Paul Minnesota,

a statue of Christopher Columbus was toppled. What, I asked myself, was a statue of Columbus doing in the north mid-west? I could understand memorials to the French priests and fur traders who were the first to contact the local Indigenous peoples—



Marquette, Joliet, la Salle, Cavellier and Radisson. Their role in the local history is problematic enough, but at least they were there. But Columbus? Did he have a cottage in the Land O Lakes? Did he invent cheese?

In Massachusetts protesters did not topple their local Columbus. They decapitated it. I for one appreciate a subtle guillotine allusion.

Defenders of statues of bigots and butchers say they are just respecting history and tradition.

To prove it, in England, neo-Nazis, white nationalists and assorted lager louts rallied to defend statues and memorials. In the US south, members of the KKK and fascist groups rose up to champion Confederate losers.

They rallied in London around a statue of noted racist and war criminal Winston Churchill. No need; officials had already built a box around the bronze bigot. So they spent the afternoon spewing racist insults at

in the lake.”

So far as I can see, our movement is battling 1000. Anti-racists aren’t roaming the urban streets, looking for any random bronze to boil down. Greyfriars Bobby in Edinburgh you’re out; Columbo in Budapest,

you’re good. Manneken Pis in Brussels, piss on. But King Leopold of Belgium, author of genocide in colonial Congo—piss off!

History is chock full of stories of people tearing down monuments to the powers that oppressed them. In Germany there are no statues of Hitler to tear down, so obviously he has been completely forgotten. In Hungary in 1956, in Czechoslovakia in 1968, in Berlin in 1990 the symbols of Stalinist oppression bit the dust. Did contemporary conservatives wring their hands over the loss of heritage?

It is a little known fact that in the Roman era, many of the statues had heads that could be screwed off and replaced. Art historians theorized that this allowed fragile marble to be easily repaired. Equus stercore! The real reason was to discourage rioting plebs from totally destroying statues. For a while there, the average tenure of Roman Emperors was about 5 years; they went through demigods like shit through a goose.

If only simply replacing the head was still an option. Here near Toronto City Hall there is a bronze Churchill begging for a head replacement.

Which brings me to Sir John A. Macdonald—the more you know about our first PM, the more you want to see him melted down like the Wicked Witch of the West. He was the epitome of the scumbag politician, enriching his friends and exploiting everyone else; a legal representative of the Confederacy and so a supporter of slavery, and most infamously a chief architect of the genocide of Indigenous people.

His statue lords it over the Ontario legislature. Would removing him from a place of honour equal erasing him from history. I would argue just the opposite.

When the statues of bigots and bullies come down history is not being erased – it is being exposed.

I’ll give the final word on Edinburgh-born John A to the Scottish Government. They have removed references to the

racist old sot from their official government literature, citing “the legitimate concerns raised by Canadian indigenous communities about his legacy”. As poet and revolutionary Robbie Burns observed:

“O, wad some Power the giftie gie us

To see oursels as others see us!

It wad frae monie a blunder free us,

An’ foolish notion.”

Venerating the likes of Macdonald is a foolish notion indeed. If we must have a statue of a dead Scottie at Queen’s Park, I nominate Burns.

Trade unionists stand up against racism



Longshore workers in the US shut down all west coast ports to mark Juneteenth and stand in solidarity against racism.

by Carolyn Egan

Over the past weeks, we have seen the largest protest movement in US history which has sparked similar demonstrations around the globe. The revulsion that so many felt at the brutal murder of George Floyd could not be contained. The anger roared out of cities and towns because so many could no longer accept the systemic racism that has caused the deaths of Black people for centuries.

The colonial legacy in Canada has also allowed for the murder and abuse of Indigenous peoples by police forces, and the tragedy of missing and murdered Indigenous women. Marches in Canada stood in solidarity with Indigenous peoples and the black lives matter movement.

Multiracial marches, some organized, and others spontaneously erupting in areas that have never had anti-racist protest, have continued day after day. Courageous young people are standing up against heavily armed riot police using clubs, tear gas and stun grenades. They refuse to step back and are demanding the defunding of the police, and an entirely new system.

Workers solidarity

Rank and file trade unionists are standing with the protesters. It was a strong statement when Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) members in Minneapolis and New York City refused to allow buses to be used to transport arrested demonstrators to detention centres. This had a significant effect on the numbers that police could detain.

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) has called a shut down for June 19th in twenty-nine cities on the west coast, and previously had a work stoppage for nine minutes on June 9th. This is the same union that stood in solidarity with the Wet’suwet’en people by shutting down the Delta port in Vancouver supporting a picket line that had been put up in

solidarity.

Many individual trade unionists have been taking part in the protests. In Toronto, flags from the United Steelworkers (USW), the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), and the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU) could be seen in the marches.

A strong policy paper to confront racism has been put out by the Toronto and York Region Labour Council after a full discussion at a recent zoom delegates meeting, with over eighty taking part. The Hamilton District Labour Council passed a motion calling for the defunding of the police.

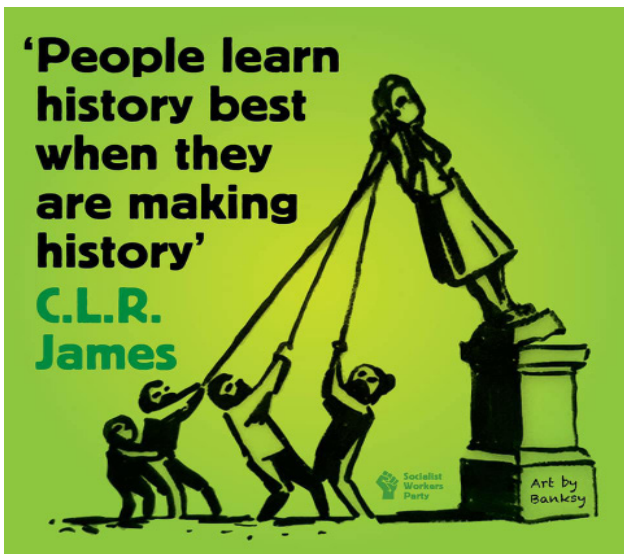
Racism and education

Teachers have been demanding the removal of the police from schools and staff at universities have called for the same. Many unions in Canada have put out statements, and discussions have to take place in workplaces and at meetings which will hopefully lead to action.

The statements are a first step – but unions have to throw their weight behind the continuing protests and mobilize their members to be an integral part of this ongoing struggle.

What is happening today is being likened to 1968, and there is no turning back. The millions who have gone into the streets are shaping a new movement. Coming during the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic crisis that has devastated the poor and the working class – with racialized people bearing the brunt – so many are seeing the starkness of the class divisions and the growing gap between the haves and the have nots.

So many are now saying, the system isn’t broken, it was built that way. Ideas change in struggle, and we are seeing this before our very eyes. Socialists have to continue to organize trade union class involvement in this movement, as we work shoulder to shoulder with others to take on racism and all the horrors of capitalism and build a new the system from the bottom up.



passers-by, and beating up a Black teenager. One beer saturated history enthusiast was photographed pissing on a memorial to a slain policeman.

In Newcastle they heroically marched to protect a statue of Earl Grey. Yeah, the tea guy. Local BLM and anti-racists were perplexed. Earl Grey was a noted abolitionist and anti-slaver. No one had any intention of retiring his memorial.

As internet satirist Randy Rainbow observed via twitter: “As someone who slept through history class, I’m mostly impressed that people know which statues to throw

Revolt against racist police

Millions around the world are marching against police brutality and racism in the wake of the killing of George Floyd. One popular slogan coming out of the protests is a call to defund or even abolish the police. Here we explore what role police pay and why police forces should be dismantled.

LEFT JAB

by John Bell

Why we say abolish the police

In Buffalo, New York, a militarized SWAT team assaulted and injured an elderly man. Police claimed the he fell on his own. Only when video surfaced on the internet, showing two cops pushing the peaceful individual down, were the cops suspended and charged with assault. They have entered a plea of “not guilty”.

Two bad apples? When they were disciplined all 57 of their colleagues quit the SWAT team—but not, unfortunately, the police force. That’s a whole rotten barrel.

In Raleigh, North Carolina, army vet Tim Lemuel, owner of an LGBT+ bar called Ruby Deluxe set up a first aid station in his parking lot. He provided water for protesters to rinse tear gas out of their eyes. After several hours he and his helpers were attacked by riot police firing gas and rubber bullets, even though he was on his own property.

A police spokesperson said the attack was justified “for riot-related crime control”.

In San Jose, California, a Black community activist named Derrick Sanderlin saw police firing rubber bullets and flash bang grenades at peaceful marchers, Sanderlin tried to approach the police to deescalate the situation, walking slowly with his hands raised.

He was shot point blank with a rubber bullet and seriously injured.

For three years Sanderlin had been conducting sensitivity training, anti-racism and procedural justice to police recruits. So much for sensitivity.

I could fill pages with anecdotes and incidents of how police, far from their stated mandate “to serve and protect”, are provoking peaceful protests with vicious, militarized violence.

They are egged on by the

unhinged rants of Donald Trump, who is determined to meet legal and justified protests and marches with calls for police and the military to “dominate the streets”.

The police are using vicious brutality to quell protests against police brutality and the whole world is witness thanks to citizens armed with cell phone cameras.

White people ask, what kind of shit did they get away with before cell phones. Black people, Indigenous people, people of colour know the answer.

It is in this context that a call is being raised to defund the police. A demand that would have been considered absurdly utopian only months ago is being seriously debated.

A couple of points need to be made here.

First, racism and police violence are not problems unique to the USA. In the last week three Canadians have died when police were called to look after their welfare. Two were Black, one was Indigenous.

In Toronto Regis Korchinski-Paquet fell, or was pushed from her high rise balcony when police were called by the woman’s mother, concerned about her emotional state. The incident is being investigated by the police in-house Special Investigation Unit. Her family have grave misgivings about the impartiality of cops investigating themselves—and the SIU track record gives them good reason—and are mobilizing community support to demand justice.

In London, a 26-year-old Black man fell or was pushed from his high rise balcony after his family called to say he was in distress. The incident is being investigated by

the SIU.

In Edmundston, New Brunswick 26-year-old Chantel Moore was shot and killed by police. Police had been called to check on her safety because she was being stalked and harassed. She answered her door holding a knife and was shot five times.

Moore, originally from BC, is the fourth Indigenous person shot and killed by Canadian police in the last two months.

As far as police violence used against peaceful protests, readers should recall the 2010 Toronto G20 summit policing where tactics of kettling protesters, violating civil rights, illegal arrests and using police agents in disguise to provoke violence were all used.

The results: the biggest mass arrest in Canadian history, followed by virtually no convictions and numerous law suits over police violence against protesters, observers and journalists.

The man in charge of this egregious violation of human rights was Toronto Police Chief Bill Blair. Today Blair is Justin Trudeau’s Minister of Public Safety.

When it comes to racist police violence, Canada is no exception.

Second general point: calls to defund the police come at a time when capitalism’s monstrous nature, prioritizing profits and a privileged few over the health and wellbeing of all, is being exposed by the COVID-19 crisis and the wretched response by governments of all stripes. The “economy” must revive, we are told, and if that requires human sacrifices, well so be it.

We are just “human capital stock”, in the words of one Trump economic advisor, raw materials for their machine. When they talk

about “herd immunity”, remember that we are the herd. Note that the first workplaces forced to reopen despite danger to underpaid workers were slaughterhouses.

Police have become militarized forces. Every town is equipped with tanks, machine guns, tasers and a full array of gases and sprays to use against us if we get out of line. A cop attending a peaceful protest is arrayed in full body armour and an arsenal of lethal and slightly less than lethal weapons. Meanwhile medical personnel risking their lives in the pandemic face shortages and rationing pf PPE.

Police budgets are always prioritized, not because they are effective in dealing with social violence and crime, but because the status quo requires a private army to protect private property.

The cities of Calgary and Edmonton together spend \$750 million per year on cops. Calgary wants to replace its two police helicopters? Hell, let’s get three. What Edmonton spends just on new cop cars each year comes to 70% of the city’s budget for housing hand homelessness.

Toronto police got \$1.026 billion in 2019. While all other programs and social services were being slashed, the cops got a \$30 million raise. And now they want a 4% raise for 2020.

Pivot Legal Services is an organization that tries to do what Canadian governments refuse to do: track and analyze police violence. “Police authorities in Canada have the capacity to collect and release this critical data to the public on an ongoing basis, but they choose not to.”

Their numbers show as police budgets increase, so do deaths resulting from police violence.

When cops get new, lethal toys they look for reasons to use them.

Out of 460 killings over 18 years, only three have resulted in criminal charges against cops, all second-degree murder. While the majority of victims are white, the numbers of Indigenous and Black people killed by police are disproportionate to their percentage of the population. Indigenous people make up 4.8% of the population but account for 15% of deaths at the hands of police. Black people account for just 3.4% of the population but 9% of cop killings.

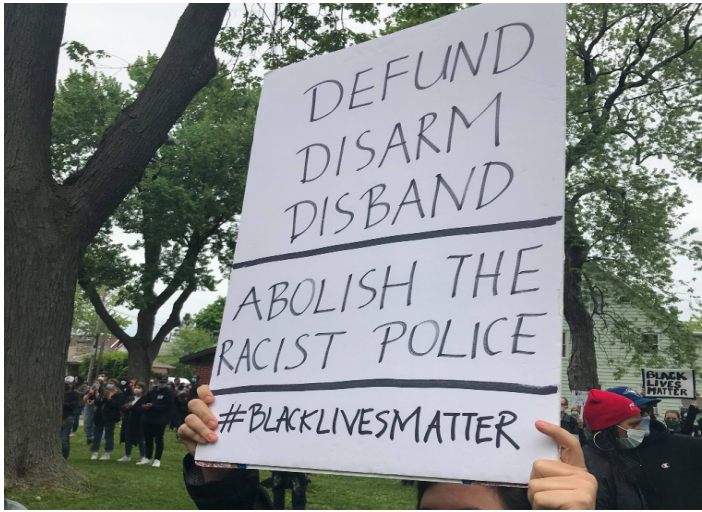
Study after study has shown that increasing funds and availability of social services and community resources reduce violence. Good jobs and secure housing mean less crime. Yet every year the budgets for those things are cut and squeezed so the cops can get their raise.

The reason is not public safety or crime solving, those markers actually get worse as police budgets climb. So the reason the cops get a blank cheque every year lies elsewhere.

The multiple crises tearing at the fabric of capitalism in 2020—COVID-19, economic collapse and rebellion of the most oppressed and exploited who are expected to take the brunt of the punishment—reveal the true nature of the police.

Police are, as Vladimir Lenin described them, “special bodies of armed men” at the service of the State, and the State apparatus serves the capitalist class. Violence is not a police failure, it is a revelation of their essential purpose. Racism is not failure of police, it is a true reflection of capitalism’s need to divide and conquer us.

Kingston



Hamilton



Bristol



New York



Disability and Police Violence in Pandemic Times

by **Melissa Graham**

At the time of writing this article at least three people have died in during a police interaction over the course of the pandemic within Canada. The first person I heard about was a 29-year-old Black woman who died after falling off of a balcony in Toronto. Her name was Regis Korchinski-Paquet. While the circumstances of her death are still unclear, we know that she passed away while Toronto Police were called to her home to escort her to the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA). This was on May 27th.

Then on June 4th, Chantel Moore, a 26 year-old Indigenous mother, was murdered by RCMP in New Brunswick during a wellness check. Eight days later, they killed Rodney Levi, a 48 year-old Indigenous man. When interviewed for Global News, Chief Bill Ward of the Metepenagiag Mi'kmaq Nation gave a particularly chilling quote, "He wasn't a violent person, so basically to me what it says is that if you're mentally ill and you have a bad day, the cops can kill you for it."

I don't normally get personal in Socialist Worker, but these situations affected me in a profoundly personal way. My partner passed away just under a year ago. He self-identified as part of the Mad community. Early on in our relationship he

made me promise never to call the police on him for a wellness check. This was so profoundly important to him that even when I was fairly certain he had passed away I was still reluctant to call the police on the off chance he might be alive.

I'm also a social worker, and I understand that many social workers rely on police in situations like this. They have authority and power to bring people to hospital that social workers do not currently possess.

Like many professional bodies, social work as a whole is still struggling with systemic racism and ableism, but I can't stop asking myself how many more people have to die before something changes.

This pandemic is affecting disabled and Mad people in many ways. We're collectively left out of most emergency plans, and social assistance rates are frighteningly low compared to CERB.

It's laying bare the inequities of poverty, and the lack of appreciation that's been paid to Personal Support Workers, who still haven't received the \$4 per hour Pandemic Pay that the Ontario government promised back in April. On more than one occasion I've looked up the number of an MPP when someone with a disability was denied access to a support person while in hospital.

All of these things are awful, and when you consider that

many disabled people are more vulnerable to COVID-19, there is a justifiable level of fear in the disability community.

Community self care

The level of organization happening within the community to confront that fear is amazing. From grassroots efforts to meet the needs of food and cleaning supplies for disabled people in Hamilton through Disability Justice Ontario, to the multitude of disability organization fighting for legislative change, the efficiency and passion behind these efforts is truly amazing.

It's not surprising though. The mainstream disability community has honed its energy for decades on getting politicians to spend money and change legislation to create more accessibility.

What we're not so great at, is confronting systemic inequity. As this pandemic continues to strain the mental health of our community, we cannot continue to overlook police killings and use COVID-19 as our excuse for inaction. Privilege has allowed some of us to look away for far too long.

While it is critically important to protect the lives of disabled people and the systems we rely on with our advocacy efforts, the lives of the dead matter too. Regis's life mattered. Chantel's life mattered. Rodney's life mattered. Police violence kills faster than COVID-19.



Race, Poverty, Class and COVID-19 in Toronto

by **Brian Champ**

The murder of George Floyd by 4 Minneapolis police officers brought widespread, large and angry protests and has starkly exposed the racial divides south of the border in the midst of this deadly pandemic.

But to claim, as Ontario Premier Doug Ford has, that Canada doesn't have the same "systemic, deep roots" of racism as the U.S. is simply to ignore the history of the Canadian state.

The Canadian state and Indigenous Genocide

The RCMP was created to push Indigenous people off their land onto tiny reserves, uprooting people from the traditional ways that had sustained communities for millennia on Turtle Island. Forced assimilation through residential schools and other provisions of the racist Indian Acts have perpetrated an ongoing genocide against Indigenous peoples. The history of police violence against Indigenous people continues to this day, whether deployed as an army to invade Wet'suwet'en territory as the RCMP did in February, or in one on one interactions. Indigenous people make up 30% of those in custody across Canada, while representing about 4% of the population.

Anti-Black racism

Anti-Black racism also has a long history in Canada including slavery, the destruction of Africville and other black communities in Nova Scotia and the erasure of the history of black settlement in towns like Collingwood. It continues to this day with police carding of black people in cities like Toronto, a city where a recent Ontario human rights commission report found that black residents were 20 times more likely to be shot by police than white residents, and that where police force was used, black people were on the receiving end 61% of the time. The death of Regis Korchinski-Paquet while in the custody of Toronto police, along with the murder of George Floyd south of the border, were the sparks for a militant rally and march through the streets of Toronto on May 30, as similar protests have mushroomed across US cities, throughout Canada and across the world.

In Toronto these sparks lit a powder keg of pent up frustrations in communities of colour where cuts to education, public housing, public health infrastructure, public healthcare, community social programs over decades have become more acute under the conditions of the pandemic.

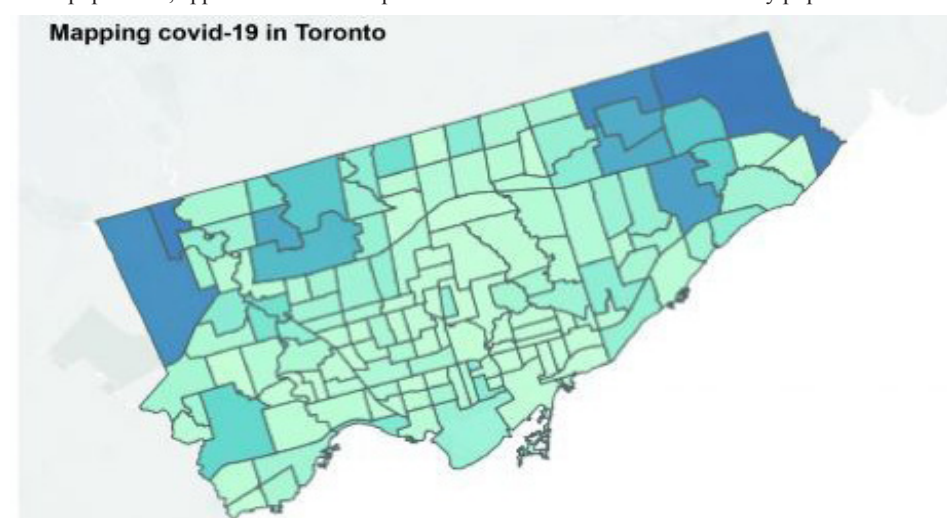
Over this same period, the police budget has skyrocketed. People of colour are more likely to work in essential services like healthcare, food service, cleaning and so during the pandemic they have often been working without adequate PPE.

Mapping covid in Toronto

While Toronto Public Health has only

recently begun gathering race-based data while contact tracing, making more comprehensive information unavailable at this time, the city of Toronto maintains an interactive neighborhood map showing the distribution of Covid-19 cases throughout the city. Since being posted late in May, it has revealed what many were already feeling: that a disproportionate number of cases are in neighbourhoods with higher percentages of visible minorities, and that socio-economic factors such as income and education level also influence infection rates.

Looking at the rate per 100,000 population measure and including all cases, at first glance the worst affected area of the city appears to be Humber Heights-Westmount at 1,580 per 100K population, appears not to fit this pattern.



According to the 2016 census, this neighborhood had 27.2% visible minority population compared to 51.5% for the city as a whole, and the median income was slightly above average. But 100 of the 172 cases here have been at one privately run long term care facility in the area, The Village of Humber Heights, and the area population is only slightly above 10,000, ballooning the infection rate. Other neighbourhoods have larger populations, and there are varying densities of population across the city so care must be taken when analyzing these statistics and there are likely other anomalies hidden elsewhere in the data. Bear in mind that the statistical significance of the different comparisons contained below will vary depending on the neighborhood population sizes.

The continuing outbreaks in long term care facilities in Toronto and across the province and country shows clearly that this sector of the public health and healthcare systems has proven to be woefully inadequate for the challenge and requires an article of it's own to do it justice.

For these reasons, disregarding infections associated with outbreaks, which have occurred in long-term care facilities and hospitals where those infected do not necessarily live in the adjacent community, may provide a clearer picture of those areas where seemingly random community spread is most dangerous.

So after looking at only "sporadic" cases, the hardest hit neighbourhood is Black Creek (795.9 per 100K), followed by Weston (794.8), Maple Leaf (791.2) and Glenfield-Jane Heights (715). These areas are mostly clustered together in the north central part of the city.

The population of Black Creek is 80.9% visible minority with a median income of \$46.5K, roughly \$20K below the median income for the city as a whole, and 12.7% are unemployed, 3.5% higher than the city average. For housing, 66.6% of the population rent, compared to 47.2% for the city as a whole. For education, 11.7% of Black Creek residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 44.1% for the city as a whole. Glenfield-Jane Heights, with a 76.6% visible minority population shows

similar demographics for education and unemployment while having a slightly higher median income, while only 48.6% rent.

While Weston is only a little above average in visible minority population (60.8%), the median income is roughly \$20K below the city average and 63.2% of residents rent. Maple Leaf is a small neighborhood of 10,000 people, with about average median income, 43.6% visible minorities and 25.3% having a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Some of the wards in the city, such as Westhumber-Clairville in the north west corner of the city, are large geographically and contain distinct parts. As a whole this ward is near the top of the list by rate of infection, with 573.4 sporadic cases per 100K. But Rexdale, in the northern part of the ward has a higher visible minority population with more renters and lower household income than the southern part of the ward. It's possible that it could be the hardest hit part of the city, but it's hard to say based solely on this data.

What about the neighborhoods that show the least community infection?

The least hit area of the city is St Andrew-Windfields, located between the 401 and York Mills Rd from Yonge St to the Don River, with 44.9 sporadic cases per 100,000. While being close to the city average in visible minority

population, it is an affluent area with a median income of \$98K where 61.4% have a Bachelor's degree or higher and only 33.3% rent.

People living in the Black Creek ward are almost 18 times more likely to be infected sporadically than those in St. Andrew-Windfields.

Elsewhere Danforth Village-Toronto has 62.1 sporadic cases per 100,000. It is white, with 25.8% visible minority population, a median income \$10K above the city average and 52.9% holding a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Forest Hill South has 158.4 sporadic cases per 100,000, a median income of \$94.5K, only 16.8% visible minorities with 69.3% holding a Bachelor's degree or higher.

These divides are stark, but none more so than the difference of outcomes between residents of Rosedale-Moore Park and North St. James Town. On opposite sides of Bloor street near Parliament these two neighborhoods illustrate the divides within Toronto. Rosedale-Moore Park is one of the richest areas of the city, with a median household income of \$107K and a below average unemployment rate (6%). With only an 18.1% visible minority population, it's one of the whitest neighbourhoods in Toronto. 72.4% of residents have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The sporadic infection rate is 62.1 cases per 100K.

Contrast this with the situation across Bloor street in North St. James Town. The median income here is just over \$41K with unemployment at 10.4%. 66.9% of residents are visible minorities and 45.9% have a Bachelor's degree or higher. The sporadic infection rate is 392.2 cases per 100K, more than 6 times the rate in Rosedale-Moore Park.

Also next door, the neighborhood of Cabbagetown-South St. James Town has a sporadic infection rate of 162.8 cases per 100K, about 41.5% of the North St. James Town rate. This area is just under the median income for the city at \$61K and has an unemployment rate of 8%. 28.9% of the population are from visible minorities and 55.9% have a Bachelor's degree or higher.

Clearly, both race and class have an impact on the likelihood of infection with Covid-19. One hopes that because Toronto Public Health is now gathering race and socio-economic data about people infected that the real picture of where the most urgent needs are can become clearer.

Territorial Acknowledgement

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 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.

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What do Bartók, Lugosi, and Kun have in common?

by Bradley Hughes

Review of Painting the Town Red: Politics and the Arts During the 1919 Hungarian Soviet Republic, by Bob Dent, Pluto Press, 2018

Bartók, Lugosi, and Kun were all Hungarians and shared the same first name, and they were also all involved in the short lived workers' republic in Hungary in 1919.

On March 20 1919, Béla Kun and the other leaders of the Hungarian Communist party were in jail, on March 21 they were released to join the government of the newly formed Republic of Councils in Hungary and by early August they were in hiding or in exile after the workers' republic fell and was replaced by a right-wing dictatorship.

At the end of the first world war, monarchies were overthrown across Europe and many nations were struggling for recognition. This was especially true in the Austro-Hungarian Empire which in addition to Austria and Hungary included parts of what are now five other nations. The empire quickly fell apart and revolutionary governments declared themselves in many places. In Hungary a progressive government took power in the October 1918 Chrysanthemum revolution.

This coalition of social democrats and liberals voluntarily abdicated in March 1919. The socialist party agreed to adopt the program of the Communist party and asked the imprisoned Communists to join them in

government.

This was the second successful revolution based on workers councils (or soviets) after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

Painting the Town Red, is history of the arts and artists that were active during the 133 days of the council republic. Despite protestations of neutrality, most academic writing on revolutions tends to be from the right. Bob Dent has produced a fairly balanced account of the Council republic. He explores the enthusiasm for the revolution and also the criticisms that artists and prominent members of the government had at the time and in hindsight.

It's fascinating to read about how the arts flourished during those few brief months. Most artistic endeavours were run by a "Directory," elected

in hastily called meetings in the first few days of the revolution. Some of the prominent artists elected to positions of leadership were not even present at the initial meetings.

Writers were encouraged to register with the government in order to receive support. Visual and performance artists literally painted the town red in the enormous celebrations of May Day in Budapest.

Through out the republic visual artists produced hundreds of propaganda posters promoting the gains of the revolutions and recruiting for the Red Army. Just like the young worker's republic in Russia, the republic of councils was

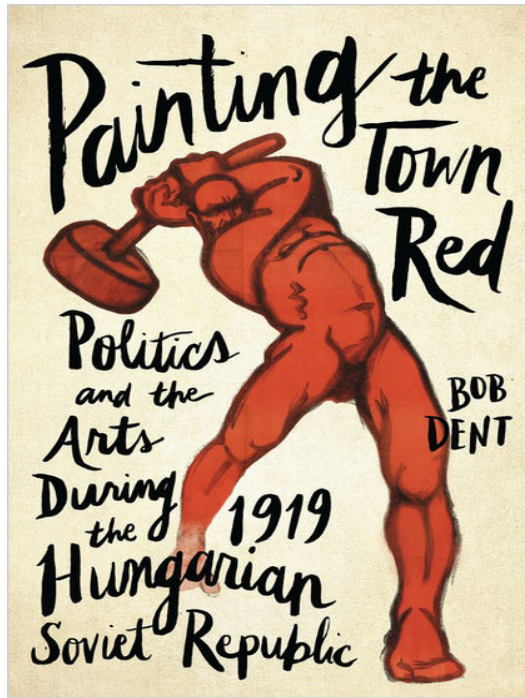
faced by invasion supported by the victors of World War I.

Even the young film industry was organized

democratically and produced films for the revolution. Plans were made, but never fulfilled, to build children's theatres thought the major cities. You can watch films of this period online. Jón az öcsém (My Brother is Coming, with English subtitles) directed by Michael Curtiz who would go on to direct Casablanca. If you search for Vörös Riport Film (Red Newsreel) on YouTube, you can watch all 20 editions that were produced. Dent points out the unintentional poignancy of the last scene of the final newsreel: children building sandcastles.

The discussion of censorship is tremendously interesting. Some works and articles critical of the regime were published and some were censored. In some cases editors were changed by the government, or publications were shut down. The government used the very real paper shortage to deny paper to papers and magazines that were deemed to be counter revolutionary. In a country being invaded by its neighbours who were backed by victors of the First World War how could it be otherwise?

Of course, the combined might of the world's capitalists states did prevail. Losses by the Red Army, a land policy that angered landless peasants, the endless shortages in a besieged country at the end of the First World War, and differences between the Communists and Social Democrats overwhelmed the council republic. On August 1st the Budapest Worker's council voted to form a new government of only members of the Social Democratic party. Within days this was overthrown; a right wing dictatorship would remain in power until 1944.



Beer before capitalism

by Bradley Hughes

Review of Historical Brewing Techniques: The lost art of farmhouse brewing, by Lars Marius Garshol, Brewers Publications, 2020



This book is meant for brewers but it also illustrates how much we lost when capitalism took over the world.

Lars Marius Garshol likes beer and in his travels he came across a number of beers that were incredibly different from any he had previously tasted. He discovered that there are farmhouse beers made using methods and ingredients that have been passed down for generations across northern Europe, especially in his home country of Norway.

He combined in person visits to traditional brewers across Norway, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Lithuania and other places with extensive research in museums and archives. The result is a little encyclopedia of lost beer brewing methods and ingredients. As such it is an invaluable aid to any brewer looking to learn new (ancient) brewing methods and how to use new (centuries old)

ingredients.

It's also a look at the fascinating history of beer outside the commercial brewing industry.

Beer on the farm

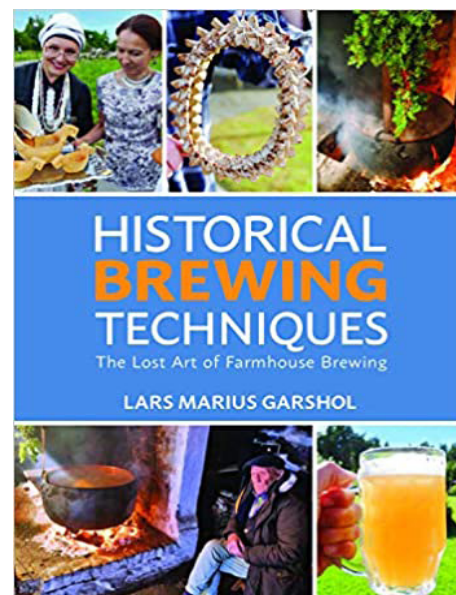
Up until the 1800's or later, most people lived on farms, and nearly everything that was needed on the farm was produced on the farm. This included beer. You would grow your own grain. Then spend the several days required to malt the grain – the heating and drying process that turns the starch in grain into sugar so that it is fermentable. And then spend another day or so making the wort – the fermentable liquid that yeast turns into beer. The yeast would be carefully harvested from each batch of beer and kept to start the next. If your beer turned out poorly, you could borrow yeast from one of the neighbouring farms.

Since grain was sown from grains kept from the previous harvest, over the generations strains of grain arose that were adapted to their own neighbourhood. This would result in local grains with their own unique colours and flavours. Nearly all of these landrace strains have been replaced by commercial mono-cultures, and so their unique properties are lost forever.

The same thing was true of yeast. Yeast from the best beers would be shared around, and those that didn't turn out so well would be abandoned. Across Norway, traditional brewers have been handing down a strain of yeast that is radically different than what became the standard commercial beer brewing yeasts elsewhere in the world. It brews much faster and hotter than other strains.

Once Garshol explains how beer was pro-

duced and consumed on a self-sufficient farm it becomes clear why these yeast characteristics were chosen over centuries of brewing. The faster the yeast grows the better chance that it can out compete the bacteria that will



sour the beer. Fermenting at higher temperatures helps speed it up, but it also means that beer stored in a cool cellar will stop fermenting. This leads to a sweeter beer, and when you bring the beer upstairs a few hours before you serve it, the yeast will start fermenting again. Fermenting yeast produces carbon dioxide, and so you get mildly carbonated beer

without needing pressurized containers.

However, with the end of self sufficiently on the farm, many brewers turned to commercial yeast. In some cases for ease of use, but also due to the perceived status and superiority of store bought versus home made products. Some of these unique varieties of yeast, with their surprising flavours survived – handed down through generations. But many, like the unique strains of grain, have disappeared forever.

The same is true of various unique brewing methods, there is a written record, but without a living brewer to show us how it was done, and some beer to taste the results, it is probably impossible to reproduce these beers.

There is no need to romanticize the back breaking work of pre-capitalist farming methods. Garshol recounts the efforts of a farmer in Norway whose crop failed and he had to walk 100 km to buy a barrel of grain to support his family. The grain was too heavy to carry, so he divided it into two sacks. After carrying one a distance, he would put it down and return to pick up the first one. Turning a 100 km trip home into a 300 km one. He also points out that the greatest technological advance for farmhouse brewing is probably the garden hose, replacing endless trips with heavy buckets to the well.

A loss of flavourful beer yeasts and unique grains may not seem like much of a price to pay in return for garden hoses and supermarkets. But this loss is widespread across all sorts of foods and production methods. And it has never been about efficiency, or raising living standards, this destruction was only ever in the interests of the profits of a few.

What would a just recovery look like?

Socialist demands for a world for people not profits

Since the beginning of the pandemic the brutality of the capitalist system has been laid bare for all to see. The rich are getting richer, front line workers are sick and dying, residents of long-term care

homes are dying, workers rights are being undermined and rolled back, environmental protections are being scrapped and public services are being cut. This response from the ruling class to the pandemic has been a disaster for work-

ing people. Government bailouts have largely gone to corporations and the bosses are already trying to make workers pay for the crisis.

The drive to open up business without a plan is about making profits at the expense of workers

health. This will not lead us to a just recovery but threatens to lead into a second wave of misery. It doesn't have to be this way. Here are immediate demands socialists should make to bring about a just and fair new world.

Make the rich pay

- Tax the rich to pay for social programs and a green new deal - 75% of Canadians want this
- End subsidies for the fossil fuel industries
- Shut down tax loopholes - repatriate money in offshore tax havens
- No cuts - no austerity
- Housing for all - It's a right!

Fairness for workers

- Raise wages to a living wage
- Enact anti-scab laws
- Expand and fund EI
- Nationalize idle plants and retool to make personal protective equipment
- Nationalize and make free all essential utilities, hydro, internet, water



Climate justice now

- implement a Green new deal
- just transition for fossil fuels workers - take the billions in oil subsidies and use them to re-train workers for renewables
- Retrofit all aging buildings and infrastructure - creates jobs and reduces emissions
- Expand public transit and make it free

Health before profit

- Free, universal pharmacare, dental care, mental health care
- End all privatization in healthcare - nationalize long term care homes

A world without racism and oppression

- Defund, disarm, disband the police - use the billions to address social needs
- Return crown lands to Indigenous people's - recognize Indigenous sovereignty
- Implement TRC recommendations
- Open the borders - welcome refugees and make migrant workers full citizens

Education and child care

- Cancel student debt
- No layoffs in the university sector - respect collective agreements
- Free universal daycare

