

FIGHT ON EVERY FRONT

- NO WAR
- NO CLIMATE CHAOS
- NO ATTACKS ON WORKERS
- EXPOSE ALL OLIGARCHS



End capitalism's destruction

The mainstream media in the west has discovered the word 'oligarch'. An oligarch is someone whose vast wealth allows them to have a significant impact on politics in a particular country.

All capitalist states have oligarchs yet the media and politicians only apply the term to wealthy Russians.

This is a convenient narrative because it glosses over the fact that politicians in Canada are just as beholden to the ultra-rich.

And those wealthy Canadian oligarchs are making a killing and driving massively destructive policies in this country.

What are Canada's oligarchs doing?

We are now 2 years into a pandemic and Canada's ruling class has given up any presence of caring for working people. Health

mandates are being abandoned while covid numbers go up and there is little appetite from the bosses to shut down to stop the spread.

The recent IPCC report stated that we are on the verge of collapsing global ecosystems and rates of destruction are accelerating.

In Canada, the war in Ukraine is giving the oil and gas industry oligarchs a new impetus to call for expanded tar sands production and new LNG operations. This will require further attacks on working people, Indigenous land defenders and the natural world.

The economic situation for millions in Canada is worsening at an alarming rate. Cost of everything from food to housing is on the rise.

And the Trudeau government has decided that rather than help working people, they want to spend tens of billions on new war machines

that will be used to kill workers in other countries.

The costs of war, climate crisis, the pandemic and corporate profiteering will fall on working people but for Canada's oligarchs these crises are moneymaking opportunities.

Working class

We know that there is only one force that can stop this path to barbarism and that is the working class. It is the workers themselves who have the power and strategic position to shut the system down and to re-imagine a future based on equality, ecology and peace.

There have been many inspiring examples of recent fights against the system. We can remember that just last summer there were mass movements in solidarity with Indigenous sovereignty across the country. Cancel Canada

Day mobilizations reshaped consciousness for millions.

And the workers strike wave that began last summer is heating up again. From healthcare to railways workers are striking and winning gains.

Capitalism is sold to workers as the best means of providing wealth and security to the masses. It is increasingly obvious that this is not the case.

We are at a turning point. The war is reshaping the world order, the climate crisis requires immediate and comprehensive solutions and the cost of living crisis is pushing people to despair and anger.

The world can change. We can end the destruction but to do so we need to organize and build a socialist movement that can challenge the system and shut down the Canadian oligarchs making billions sowing destruction.

Normalizing COVID death and destruction

At the 2-year anniversary of the pandemic emergency, we can step back and look at how government and corporate interests have conducted a strategic campaign to normalize the death and serious long-term health complications of COVID-19.

Recall the first response: serious lockdowns, the scramble to adapt to remote work and schooling, and a proliferation of acts of mutual support and solidarity. Some frontline workers drew special bonuses to continue working in essential services. And we all began to learn what epidemiologists have been warning about for years.

Right from the start we heard about the need for “balance” between public health and the economy – between human life and business profits.

Governments were caught off guard. On one hand they did provide support for people unable to work, like the federal CERB program. It was never enough, and excluded too many, but it was something. And they piled resources into vaccine procurement.

On the other hand, they ignored advice about containing a global plague. They fell back on national or regional solutions to an international problem. Instead of scrapping pharmaceutical patents to allow low cost vaccines for all, they doubled down on supporting corporate profits. As a result, measures to contain and stem the disease were hoarded by richer industrialized nations, while the majority of the world’s population was left adrift. The virus has continually taken advantage of capitalisms greed; the global south became a petri dish for COVID to grow and mutate new strains.

The ruling class’s main takeaway was that COVID was virulent but the death toll was relatively low, especially among people who took precautions. So they loudly touted vaccination as the solution. The fine

print admitted that vaccines were not perfect, but one aspect of a program of defensive measures.

What most people heard was that vaccines were the magic bullet solution. And when they failed to live up to that billing the small but vocal minority of science skeptics and conspiracy theorists found fuel for their arguments.

So the first step in normalizing COVID was to discover that the

duction and distribution. It is hard to generate sympathy for poor suffering Walmart, or Loblaws, or Amazon. But your favourite pizza place or your local butcher? They became the poster child for suffering capitalism.

So the second crucial step in normalizing COVID was to tip the balance away from public health, and build sympathy and identification with “our” businesses.

Another lurch toward normaliza-

Government and corporations met every trough by dropping the very measures that got them there. Then with the inevitable return, new public health measures were less stringent, less universal. After all, we were reminded, thanks to vaccines even if you get COVID it won’t seriously hurt you.

The get-it-and-forget-it step in the normalization required focusing on the “mildness” of new variants like

and titular public health leaders came right out and said it: get used to it, learn to live with it.

Thanks to the far-right led convoy movement, “We’re tired of COVID and we just want it to be over” became a political demand, even if it was a scientific impossibility. Conservative politicians like Jason Kenney and Doug Ford, and even BC’s John Horgan, were quick to comply.

They stopped testing. They all but stopped compiling data. They even admitted that what data they did release was a gross under-estimate.

The so-called balance between health and profits has been scrapped. Now, medical experts are virtually unanimous, calling for masking and proof of vaccination to stay in place even as the next wave is at our door-step. Government ignores them.

Educators and child health experts beg that masks may be mandated in schools – the government refuses. (Kudos to the Hamilton Wentworth school board which defied Doug Ford’s decree.)

Communities like Edmonton and Calgary tried to impose their own health regulations. Kenney tabled a new law making it illegal for them to do so.

Do your own risk assessment (sans useful data or social supports) advised Ontario’s CMOH Kieran Moore. If you are vulnerable, have vulnerable loved ones, or are just a concerned neighbour, well...you’re on your own. The rest of us will be over here pretending that COVID is done because we’re done with COVID. Hey, just in time for St Patrick’s Day.

The process is complete. Millions of vulnerable people are cut loose – their susceptibility to COVID is their problem. What started as “We’re all in this together” has become “You’re on your own”.

And that, under capitalism, is how to normalize COVID: you privatize it.



death toll was significant, but not enough to threaten the system.

The next step was to downplay the death toll, and turn the spotlight on the suffering of business. The media focused on small business losses without giving equal time to the families of the victims, or patient who “recovered” but developed a litany of new, chronic health problems.

The focus on local small business was deliberate. They are not without importance to the economy, but the real economic power always lies with the big corporate enterprises of pro-

duction was foregrounding “pre-existing health conditions”. Whenever the mounting death toll was grudgingly mentioned, there was always an asterisk: they were already sick, they were old, they were weak. No one said it out loud, but the suggestion was there—maybe “the herd” is better off without them.

The virus is a highly adaptable thing. It presents in waves: we devise defences, seem to gain the upper hand, it mutates to evade our defence and the cycle of illness and death spikes again.

Omicron and ignoring the growing chorus of people suffering from “long COVID”. Even less attention was paid to the relentlessly growing death toll.

This yo-yo approach gave confidence to the far-right fringe that feeds on conspiracy theories and extols individual selfishness as a human right. It also feeds on loyalty to and covert funding from the oil and gas industry. And it throws shade on public health advocates and on science itself.

So we entered the final phase of the process, when pundits, politicians

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board defied Ford over masks

by: Michele McAuley

Hamilton Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) voted on March 15 to continue to require students and staff to mask until April 1, in defiance of the provincial direction from the Ford government to lift mandatory masking March 21.

The Ford government’s decision to lift the mask mandate falls directly after March Break which worried many given the history of COVID resurges. HWDSB’s reasoning was explained in a letter to families “to provide a two-week transition period to mitigate the spread of COVID after March Break” and “By remaining cautious and taking a strategic, gradual

approach, we hope to best support our medically-vulnerable students and community members during this time of transition.”

This was deemed prudent and cautious by many in the community and applauded as true leadership publicly by some parents and medical leaders. Many others disagreed, reflecting the divisiveness and confusion created by the provincial government over the past two years.

The next day, Ontario Premier Doug Ford spoke at a news conference in Barrie and told School Boards to “Follow the direction of the chief medical officer, plain and simple” and continued “they aren’t medical experts – the chief medical officer is the expert.”

The problem with that statement is that he’s referring to only one expert – Dr. Kieran Moore – who was put



in place by the Ford government in June, 2021. Dr. Moore’s direction to lift masks March 21 favored the Ford government’s desire to appease voters in the upcoming June election, but went

against advice of McMaster Children’s Hospital, other leading pediatric health organizations and key members of the scientific community such as Dr. Peter Juni and Dr. Menaka Pai, who have said it’s too soon to remove masks.

Nurses in this province are exhausted, burnt out and leaving the profession in droves; nursing programs can’t attract students; the nurses who have stayed continue to work to save our lives despite the incredible toll their job takes on them.

Instead of showing any support for them, or for families who have locked down for the majority of the past two years, Ford demonstrates yet again that he really only cares about impressing his corporate friends who demand “business as usual”.

Community is a word they don’t truly understand and only pretend at.

Education Minister, Stephen Lecce also continued to stay in lock-step with Ford, stating “School boards in this province are expected to implement this cautious plan, coupled with the ongoing improvement of air ventilation within Ontario classrooms.” That statement begs questions. How is it cautious to remove masks in schools, the day everyone returns from March Break? Why is the improvement of air ventilation in Ontario classrooms “ongoing” rather than done, already? Where is the sense of urgency with this government? Evidently, their focus is completely absorbed in the race to secure the votes necessary to win the election in June.

NDP Liberal agreement means more climate chaos, corporate profiteering and militarization

The federal NDP has decided that they are not interested in contesting an election for at least 3 years and signed a ‘supply and confidence’ agreement to keep the Liberals in power until 2025.

At a moment when we need radical action to stop the climate crisis, oppose Canadian military spending increases and challenge the corporate control of the economy, the NDP has given up any pretence of being an opposition. It is a shameful position and will make the NDP even more irrelevant on the political scene.

For decades, the NDP brass has pushed the party to the centre in the interests of ‘electability’. For most Canadians that has meant that they may as well vote Liberal - usually in an effort to strategically vote to stop the Conservatives.

By supporting the Liberals, the federal NDP has shown it prioritizes its own parliamentary dreams over building a struggle to put people before profit. They could lead progressive movements but this agreement shuts the door on that, ensuring that all official party discussions will remain in the parliamentary realm.

What this means in practice is that the Liberals will have carte blanche on policy throughout the term of the agreement. With no threat of competing policy from the NDP on the left, Trudeau can now stake his claim to represent anyone to the left of the Conservatives.

This allows Trudeau to continue to represent the interests of Canadian business without threat of an election.

The NDP explains their decision as being in the interests of Canadians. They want to push the Liberals to enact universal pharma care and dental care and believe this is the best way to do so. While those are laudable goals, this agreement will not necessarily make them come true.

The Liberals have been promising such legislation themselves for years and have done nothing to make them a reality. This agreement won’t change that. The Liberals will slowly implement a watered down version of the dental plan and otherwise set up commissions to investigate other policies and delay implementation until the next election.

The deal also means no substantive action on key issues. For



example, under Trudeau housing prices have skyrocketed and while there are policy options to change that, the NDP didn’t demand them in the agreement. Their peace accord with Trudeau effectively accepts massive hikes in housing costs.

The Liberals will take credit for any progressive legislation that the NDP does support and Trudeau knows that he can rely on the conservatives to support things like increasing military spending, subsidizing corporate profits and

building more pipelines.

Gift to the far-right

The agreement also means that the Conservatives will be able to portray themselves as the only opposition to Trudeau. The far-right in Canada will be the main beneficiaries of this.

The racist right have already been given ample air time throughout the ‘convoy’ protests to air their grievances. They will now have the floor to themselves for the next 3 years while the NDP will be

coated in the stench of the Liberals’ criminal policies on climate, war and attacks on workers.

The Conservatives know this. The official CPC response from Candice Bergen & Pierre Poilievre is full bore red baiting, designed to both inflame the far right fringe and bind them to the party. Under the circumstances of rising violence and hate crimes, this is extremely dangerous.

The left in Canada needs to chart a very different course and needs to shun engagement in this sham of an agreement.

The mood to fight is there. Thousands of people have marched in demonstrations across the country in opposition to the far-right led convoy protests. The past year has seen dozens of strikes in Canada and workers are winning gains on the picket lines. Mass protests in support of Indigenous sovereignty last summer shook the Canadian ruling class.

Far from pushing that advantage, the NDP has decided to provide succour to the bosses that are destroying the planet and driving working people into increased hardship.

Inflation? It’s the oligarchs...

by: John Bell

Four corporations control meat packing and distribution in North America. They are Cargill Inc., JBS ULC, Tyson Food Inc. and National Beef Packing Co LLC. They have all been named in a class action suit brought before Quebec’s Superior Court, alleging that the 4 colluded to drive up the price of meat.

Innocent until proven guilty, yadda yadda, sure. We know they did it. It is done all the time. We know the bread industry, led by the Weston family and Loblaw’s, stole from Canadian families for years through price fixing. When the price of gas mysteriously rises overnight, it goes up the same at all the brands, like magic.

Inflation is presented to us like a mystical presence, just the “invisible hand” of free-market capitalism periodically giving us all the middle finger. And we’re told inflation hurts us all.

But does it?

Let’s look closer at capitalism’s blood-stained butchers. (Blood-stained in more ways than one. The meat packing industry set the standard for cold-blooded indifference during the pandemic. Even before the pandemic, it was one of the most dangerous industries under capitalism.)

Cargill showed over \$5 billion in net income in 2021, the biggest profit in its 158 year history.

Brazilian-based JBS raked in \$16.8 billion in profit in 2021 – also a new record.

Tyson got off to a slow start in 2021; it only booked a \$467 million profit in the first quarter, but it finished with a bang, with \$1.12

billion profit in the final 3 months.

National Beef, and its Brazilian parent company Marfrig, saw profits miraculously double in the 3rd quarter of 2021.

Overall, profits in meat packing rose by 120% collectively, such an egregious profiteering that even the Biden White House economists started pointing fingers.

The butchers complained and said price increases were necessary to offset rising energy, transportation and livestock costs. They cited supply-chain disruptions due to COVID. But investigations showed that while consumer costs were going up, payments to farmers were actually going down. And price increases (and profit rates) far exceeded production cost increases.

Lawsuits against food producing giants are becoming run-of-the-mill. In February, JBS paid \$52.5 million to settle a price fixing lawsuit in the US. In 2021 Tyson paid \$221.5 million to put an end to a price fixing investigation.

Penalties in the millions are just the cost of doing business when there are billions to be made. And why not just pass the cost of periodic penalties back to consumers? The butchers are raising prices because they can, because consumers have no recourse, and they shrug and say “That’s inflation for you.”

System-wide

The food processing industry opens a window into a massive round of profit gouging that is taking place across the economy.

I noticed a curious TV ad from Esso. It showed a happy man filling up his tank, while a marching band happens by. He’s so happy because

his gas purchase gets him reward points to use at Loblaw’s grocery stores, so a peculiar example of corporate cross-pollination. The tag line was: “Every trip to the pumps is a celebration. At least we think so.”

For most Canadians a trip to the pump is a nightmare. Using the pretext of supply disruptions caused by Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, gas companies jacked up prices to record levels. In one case prices rose 15 cents per litre overnight.

Time to call bullshit. In 2019 Canada imported just 3% of its crude supply from Russian suppliers. In 2020 that number was 0. Sure demand was down during the first stages of COVID disruption, but even with the

grumble but have no recourse.

There is a small uptick in public transit use and bicycle sales, but for many workers there is no option. (It is noteworthy that Ottawa’s OCTranspo decided now would be a good time to hike transit fares.)

No wonder O&G corporations are making big bank.

Profits

Imperial Oil scored \$2.5 billion in net revenue for 2021, even after using some of their revenue to offset 2020 losses.

Shell Oil saw its 2021 profits quadruple, raking in about \$6.5 billion in just the last 3 months.

Enbridge banked \$11.5 billion in 4th quarter revenue, up almost a billion from the previous 3 month period.



recovery, almost no Russian oil comes to Canada.

So why is the price skyrocketing? Corporations jack up prices because they can. Consumers

Petro Canada’s 4th quarter profits quadrupled.

Across the board, fossil fuel corporations are posting record profits. That this happened just as

“inflation” was driving prices to record highs is surely coincidental.

You can bet that the gang of oligarchs that run the industry are not exactly feeling the pinch of inflation. B.W. Corson, Chairman, President and CEO of Imperial Oil took home \$4.48 million last year. Shell boss man Ben van Beurden rose to \$8.2 million, in part to compensate him for taking a pay cut in 2020.

It should be noted that these figures only refer to base salary, and exclude other forms of compensation. So it is that Canada’s highest paid energy CEO – Encana’s Doug Suttles – had a base salary of a mere \$1.37 million, but with stock options and bonuses added in his total compensation was \$17.6 million for 2021.

No wonder they think that every trip to the pump is cause for celebration.

We can do this exercise for every sector of the economy: housing, banking, pharmaceuticals, food distribution, telecommunications, and so on. The picture is the same. Across the board, corporations are posting record profits, and the oligarchs at the top of the pyramid are getting record compensation. The world’s 2.365 billionaires increased their wealth by \$4 trillion during the pandemic.

That money didn’t appear by magic, it came from your pocket, it came from all of us: from our rising prices, from our stagnant wages and whittled down pensions, and from our privatized public services.

The most obscene transfer of wealth in history, from the majority to the hands of a cabal of oligarchs, will continue as long as they think they can get away with it.

War and imperialism

The war in Ukraine is an ongoing battle between imperialist rivals, driven forward by capitalist competition writes Alex Callinicos.

The great power grab - imperialism and the war in Ukraine

The mainstream media present the war in Ukraine as a struggle between “democracy”, represented by Ukraine and its Western backers, and “authoritarianism” in the shape of Vladimir Putin’s regime in Russia. But this is much too simplistic.

For example, probably Ukraine’s most enthusiastic backer is the far right government in Poland, which is under investigation by the European Union for its authoritarian tendencies. Putin is supported by India, which, despite its own brutish fascist government, remains a multi-party democracy.

The mainstream way of framing the conflict is designed to equate the Western bloc of liberal capitalist states with the “international community”. It is also a way of denying legitimacy to the interests of this bloc’s rivals because they are “authoritarian.” This gets forgotten however when it comes to, for example, the murderous Saudi autocracy.

So are there better theoretical frameworks for understanding the conflict? One resource is provided by the idea of imperialism. After all, Putin seems intent on restoring the old Tsarist Empire that was destroyed by the Russian Revolution of October 1917.

But it’s important to clear about what we mean by imperialism. We can understand it as a phenomenon that spans historical eras, as the way in which powerful states dominate, conquer, and exploit neighbouring societies.

This has been a feature of class societies for thousands of years, going back to the ancient Persian, Chinese, and Roman empires. Now

Russia is clearly behaving like an imperialist power in this sense, seeking to batter the Ukrainian state into submission and carve up its territory. But is it enough to understand the conflict in these terms?

The Lebanese Marxist Gilbert Achcar thinks so. He has put forward what he calls a “radical anti-imperialist position” that focuses exclusively on the struggle between Russia and Ukraine.

“A successful Russian takeover of Ukraine would encourage the United States to return to the path of conquering the world by force in a context of exacerbation of the new colonial division of the world and worsening of global antagonisms, while a Russian failure—adding to the US failures in Iraq and Afghanistan—would reinforce what is called in Washington the ‘Vietnam syndrome’.

“Moreover, it seems quite obvious to me that a Russian victory would considerably strengthen warmongering and the push towards increased military spending in Nato countries, which has already gotten off to a flying start, while a Russian defeat would offer much better conditions for our battle for general disarmament and the dissolution of Nato.”

It would indeed be good if the Ukrainian people were able to drive out the Russian invaders. But there is a small problem with Achcar’s argument that this would weaken the US and Nato. They

are enthusiastically backing the Ukrainians, flooding them with arms, and boosting their own military budgets.

If, thanks to these efforts and the courage of the Ukrainian fighters, Russia were defeated, would the US and its allies react by disarming and dissolving Nato? Of course they wouldn’t. They would celebrate this outcome as their

originally in Karl Marx’s Capital in the 1860s. But it is developed more systematically in the early 20th century, around the time of the First World War.

Marxists were confronted with a reality similar to our own. The radical liberal economist JA Hobson wrote, “The novelty of recent Imperialism ... consists chiefly in its adoption by several nations. The

notion of a number of competing empires is essentially modern.”

This geopolitical competition was expressed in conflicts over territory—the colonies and semi-colonies that the biggest states were striving to dominate—and in an accelerating arms race. The Marxist theory of imperialism was developed to explain these rivalries, which precipitated the two world wars of 1914-18 and 1939-45, drowning the world in blood.

It was a theory of capitalist imperialism. The Russian revolutionary

Vladimir Lenin called imperialism the highest stage of capitalism. His Polish-German comrade Rosa Luxemburg wrote, “The essence of imperialism consists precisely in the expansion of capital from the old capitalist countries into new regions and the competitive economic and political struggle among those for those new areas.”

To put it another way, capitalist imperialism represents the

intersection of economic and geopolitical competition. Economic competition is the driving force of capitalism—rival firms struggle against each other, investing in improved and expanded production to seize a larger share of markets.

In the late 19th century, the geopolitical struggle among states was subsumed under the capitalist logic of competitive accumulation.

This reflected changes in both warfare and capitalism. War was industrialised, as military power came to depend on mass production to arm, support, and transport huge armies. States therefore needed to promote industrial capitalism.

Meanwhile capitalist firms increased in size and started to operate globally. They depended on state support against their rivals. During the depression of the late 19th century, seizing overseas colonies compensated for falling profitability.

So capitalist imperialism isn’t just big states bullying and conquering smaller states—though there is plenty of that. It’s a global system of inter-capitalist competition. Just as before the First World War, today imperialism means geopolitical competition against the background of global economic integration.

The power of the antagonists depends on their position in the capitalist world economy. The US dominates finance and big tech, China has a vast manufacturing machine, and Russia relies on energy exports. Today one can identify perhaps six leading imperialist powers—the US, China, Russia, Britain, France, and Germany.



Thousands marched in Russia against the war

victory, and boost Nato further. The US would feel invigorated in its world-historic competition with the real challenger to its hegemony, China.

What is missing from Achcar’s approach, and that of other leftists that duck the issue of Nato such as Paul Mason, is the more historically specific understanding of imperialism offered by Marxism. We can see this theory emerging



The most important antagonism is that between the US and China whose leaders aim to displace Washington's hegemony, initially in the Indo-Pacific region. But Russian imperialism, manoeuvring to rebuild its power, creates a three-way conflict.

The big western European powers are pulled in different directions. They depend on Russian energy and are attracted by the vast Chinese market—but, as at present, they ultimately line up with the US. Now this understanding of capitalist imperialism as involving a system of interstate rivalry is completely missing from Achcar's analysis.

He denies that the Ukraine war involves a conflict among imperialist powers. "If any war where each side is supported by an imperialist rival were called an inter-imperialist war, then all the wars of our time would be inter-imperialist, since as a rule, it is enough for one of the rival imperialisms to support one side for the other to support the opposite side.

"An inter-imperialist war is not that. It is a direct war, and not one by proxy, between two powers, each of which seeks to invade the territorial and (neo) colonial domain of the other." This is much too narrow. The US waged a proxy war against the Soviet Union after the latter tried to seize Afghanistan at the end of 1979.

Along with allies such as Britain, Saudi Arabia, and Pakistan it armed and trained the mujahedin fighters who resisted the Soviet occupation. The conflict helped to drain Soviet resources and morale in the last decade of the Cold War.

Of course, the mujahedin had their own political agendas. This became clear after Soviet forces withdrew in 1989, culminating in the Taliban's support for al-Qaeda and its resistance to the US occupation following the 9/11 attacks on New York and Washington.

But the US played a decisive shaping role in an important final episode of the Cold War. Of course, there are huge differences between Ukraine today and Afghanistan in the 1980s.

Western imperialist powers are instrumentalising the Ukrainian national struggle against Russian imperialism for their own interests

But there is an important similarity, in that the Western imperialist powers are instrumentalising the Ukrainian national struggle against Russian imperialism for their own interests.

Inter-imperialist struggles and wars of national defence often interweave. The First World War started when the Austro-Hungarian Empire attacked Serbia, which it blamed for the assassination of its crown prince Franz Ferdinand. Russia then backed Serbia, leading to an escalating process of military mobilisations that ended in a terrible general war.

The German Marxist Karl Kautsky argued that the role played by the Serbian struggle for national self-determination meant the conflict wasn't just an imperialist war. Lenin responded, "To Serbia, i.e., to perhaps one percent or so of the participants in the present war, the war is a 'continuation of the politics' of the bourgeois-liberation movement.

"To the other ninety-nine percent, the war is a continuation of the politics of imperialism." Of course, the balance is different in the present case since the direct fighting involves just Ukraine and Russia.

Nevertheless the Nato powers' efforts to stay out of the fighting—above all to avoid nuclear confrontation with Russia—don't alter the fact they are doing everything they can short of this to defeat Russia. This too is "a continuation of the politics of imperialism".

The Marxist theory of imperialism is important politically. Without it we are confronted simply with a struggle between rival nation-states. But once we see the role of imperialism, we can identify the class antagonism at work. We can see the thread of class interest that binds together not just the Russian conscripts dying in Putin's war and their families back home being walloped economically by the effects of Western sanctions.

This thread also connects with working people all over the world, hit thanks to the war by food and energy inflation and threatened with nuclear destruction. It unites them all against the rival ruling classes busy feeding this terrible war.



Trudeau wants to spend billions on killing machines like the F-35

Liberals plan to ramp up spending on war

by: **Bradley Hughes**

Canada and other NATO nations are using the Russian invasion as a pretext to raise arms spending by billions. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has called for each NATO country to spend at least 2% of GDP on their military.

Earlier this month Defence Minister Anita Anand told CBC that she is "bringing forward aggressive options which would see [Canada], potentially, exceeding the two per cent level, hitting the two per cent level, and below the two per cent level."

Not only will this make the world a much more dangerous place, these billions of dollars could go to much better things. According to the Department of National Defence (DND) it is the largest department of the federal government. No other department has as large a budget.

At \$24.3 billion it consumes 7.1% of federal spending. (BTW, the last time Canada was involved in a war that could be plausibly be called "national defence" was in 1812.)

If the Liberals raise the DND budget to 2% of GDP it will go up by \$17.1 billion to \$41.4 billion.

If the Liberals decrease spending elsewhere to make up the \$17 billion, military spending will take up 12% of the federal budget, or \$3 out of every \$25. That adds up to spending \$1,100 for every person in the country. This is in addition to the regular increases that the military has already enjoyed. Even adjusting for inflation, the military budget has increased by 43% since the year 2000. If they increase it to the 2% goal that will be 2.5 times what they spent in 2000.

The \$17 billion increase - which the Liberals will exceed if they think they can get away with it - could be spent on many better projects.

After being forced by the courts to increase spending on fixing the drinking water problems in Indigenous communities the federal government has promised \$6 billion over ten years. Or, around 3% of what just the increase in military spending will be.

\$17 billion is enough to construct around 600 km of surface rail light rapid transit in our cities. That would be enough to stretch from the west end of Vancouver east out to Coquitlam, and then from Milton

through Toronto to Pickering, and also right across the island of Montreal, plus around the Bedford Basin from Bedford through Halifax to Armdale and across the other way from Cole Harbour through Dartmouth to the other side of Halifax. And then you could do it all again two more times. (Several of those cities have rapid transit systems already, this shows the scale of resources that will be wasted on war.)

Instead of increasing the military budget you could install solar panels on 450,000 homes that would create enough electricity to power those homes.

The new hospital being built in Cowichan District in BC is expected to cost \$888 million. The increase in military spending is enough to build nearly 20 new hospitals every year.

There are 6.2 million children and young adults in Canada between the ages of 5 and 19. Around half of the proposed increase (\$8 billion) would be enough to pay for weekly music lessons for all of them. The remainder would leave \$1,400 each to buy the instrument to practice on. This would also create work for around 80,000 full time music teachers.

The 2% goal means that the war budget will cost almost as much as the Canada Health Transfer of \$43 billion per year. If instead of increasing the military budget we eliminated it entirely, we could double the health transfer and dramatically improve our underfunded hospitals.

In 2019 all provincial governments combined spent \$46 billion on K - 12 education. We could take the increase, and the previous military budget, and instead double the spending on public education.

If we divided this money up between the 3.1 million families living on less than \$40,000 a year, they would each get \$13,000, every year.

The Liberals want to waste billions on the machinery and organization of mass destruction and death. They will be derided by the Tories for spending too little and too slowly. They will be grudgingly supported by the NDP in return for social programs that cost a fraction of the military budget. It's up to the rest of us to build a movement that can stop them all.

World against racism

Hundreds of thousands marched around the world to mark the international day for the elimination of racial discrimination. Below we outline the reasons why it is crucial for us to keep up the fight to end racism in Canada.

The far-right led convoy protests exposed a thread of racism and fascist thought that is gaining mainstream appeal and attention. The protests received a huge amount of sympathetic media coverage and were openly endorsed and enabled by politicians and police in Canada. We need a mass movement to push back against the gains of the right and against those forces that would drive a wedge between working people.

The Canadian state is one of the biggest promoters of racism through its own actions. The attacks on Indigenous Land Defenders from Wet'suwet'en territory to 1492 Land Back Lane are steeped in the racism of the colonial project in Canada.

Mass graves of children killed in residential schools are still being investigated and thousands of graves sites have now turned up. Our governments continue to push for the exploitation and pillage of Indigenous lands on behalf of corporate interests. We must oppose that process because it will result in both environmental destruction and increased racism against Indigenous people.

Globally the impact of climate change is being felt disproportionately by Indigenous people and those in the global south who hold little responsibility for the crisis. The IPCC report stated that 3.6 billion people - or about half of the global population - are in the danger zone as it is. The industrialized countries are mainly to blame for the highest emissions. Now Canadian oil and gas companies want to increase production to

take advantage of the recent price rises in fossil fuels further adding to the destruction.

Pandemic

The pandemic has worsened racial inequality in Canada. The front line workers who have borne the brunt of the risks associated with the pandemic are in a majority, racialized workers. A recent study from Brandon University found that migrant workers and those who came to Canada under the temporary foreign worker program suffered from, "overcrowded worker housing, poor access to medical care, and unsafe and unhealthy working conditions." The City of Toronto found that systemic racism and discrimination resulted in poorer health outcomes for racialized people in Toronto - mainly because of a lack of access to health services. In many

ways, the pandemic just exacerbated existing inequalities.

War and racism

The war in Ukraine is exposing a new level of racism in our media and in broader society. There is a tremendous sympathy for the Ukrainian refugees - as there should be. But coverage of the refugees repeatedly mentions that the fact that those fleeing this war are white and European which means they are seen in a more sympathetic light than those refugees from Iraq or Afghanistan or Syria.

This discrepancy reminds us that Islamophobia - central to the imperial aims of Canada and a major motivator of the far-right - remains a primary pillar in the racist framework of Canadian society.



Marchers gather in Toronto to say not to racism

We call for all refugees who are fleeing wars to be allowed into the country regardless of their point of origin. As most refugees are fleeing wars that the US and NATO partners like Canada started, we have an extra responsibility to call for the borders to open. ALL refugees welcome!

The interests of capital in Canada are clear. They want to continue to pillage the environment for profits - destroy Indigenous lands and peoples to expand fossil fuel production - hyper exploit front line workers to make even more billions and to use the fascist oriented 'convoy' protesters to push their agenda on the streets.

Governments across Canada are pursuing privatization schemes, planning austerity budgets and ignoring the massive increase in the cost of living from housing to food. Meanwhile Canadian capitalists are making billions in profits while prices skyrocket.

Central to this project of mass destruction is the tactic of divide and conquer. The rulers know that if they can keep us divided along lines dictated by racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia and any other division at their disposal, they can achieve their aims.

While people targeted by such oppression bear the brunt of these attacks, working people of all racial backgrounds, religions or identity suffer the impact of oppression whenever it is allowed to run rampant because it weakens our collective resistance.

That's why we are marching to end racism. We need to join together to stop the onslaught of the planet destroying, warmongering fascists and we can only do that together!

... Climate - continued from page 8

Fossil Fuel Subsidies

Subsidies to the fossil fuel industry were \$8.6 billion in 2021. According to a report by Environmental Defence entitled Buyer Beware: Fossil Fuels Subsidies and Carbon Capture Fairy Tales in Canada, \$5.8 billion in Canadian and provincial government money has flowed to carbon capture, utilization and storage (CCUS) projects since 2000 yet have been ineffective, accounting for a miniscule 0.05% of Canada's total (official) emissions. Recent CCUS tests have shown that the process emits more carbon than it absorbs - any other project would have been shut down. The reality is that the only reason for CCUS to exist is as cover for oil and gas companies to continue operating and generating profits.

Continuing profitability for the fossil fuel sector is looking even brighter since the war in Ukraine has raised the price of oil enough to encourage tar sands and pipeline investments. Despite this, oil companies have not invested in CCUS to any great degree but rather are calling for \$50 billion in subsidies for these projects. This climate plan includes support for other dubious climate solutions such as "blue" hydrogen and carbon offsets that allow companies to continue their business as usual.

It is criminal to continue peddling weak, market based solutions as the answer to the climate crisis while continuing to fund the companies driving the destruction and to go to war for fossil fuel profits. This is not a problem of the future, it is happening right now. The brunt of the crisis is being borne largely by women, Indigenous communities, racial minorities, LGBTQ+ people, young, older and poorer people. Any solution to the climate crisis needs to address the historic and ongoing inequalities that have been made more stark by pandemic conditions.

But for the Liberals, it is merely a political position. An example that demonstrates how little they care about climate commitments came in 2020, a year when the drop in demand for fossil fuels was an opportunity to make significant public investments into zero emissions energy production projects. But instead of increasing the roughly \$1 billion that is spent on renewables, \$18 billion was given to fossil fuels, twice as much as in a normal year.

But haven't they promised to cut public funding of fossil fuels?

There is no doubt that the Liberals feel vulnerable to criticism of their ongoing fossil fuel funding, so they have promised to "Develop a plan to phase-out public financing of the fossil fuel sector, including from Crown corpora-

tions, consistent with our commitment to reach net-zero emissions by 2050."

But more vague promises won't do. And neither will the peddling of false solutions that purport to allow things to "go back to normal".

These include: centering net-zero instead of emissions reductions; peddling market solutions like carbon taxes and incentives instead of directly investing in zero emissions infrastructure; implementing a cap and trade for the oil industry when we need to phase out fossil fuels; giving billions for carbon capture, utilization and storage to the fossil fuel industry instead of accelerating the development of renewables.

The funding for these items in the current plan runs to around \$9 billion, which might sound like a lot until you consider the price tag of up to \$44 billion for the F-35 jets the Liberals are about to buy.

Every report on the climate crisis paints a more and more dire picture of the future, yet this climate plan has a limited budget and only affects particular programs and policies. The transition required to shift away from fossil fuels will need to affect all programs and policies, ensuring everything is in line with the emissions reductions goals. New fossil fuel projects need to be scrapped and fossil fuel production needs to be phased out as rapidly as

possible. This requires ramping up the development of zero emissions energy production. For a just transition, workers who are phased out of their job would need to have access to training and jobs in the green economy.

But now the NDP has made a deal to support the Liberals, and the climate commitments promised are vague and weak. This is therefore also the NDP plan. This is disappointing yet hardly surprising - the NDP's pro-pipeline and tar sands positions have continually thwarted real climate action in Parliament.

But time is running out.

We need climate justice politics to be a force in the mainstream, but this will only happen by building it from the bottom up in the streets, on the picket line and at the blockade.

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.

Read the full statement at: socialist.ca/ourstand

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Starbucks union wave - What are the workers fighting for?

by: Alex Thomson

History was made in December 2021 when workers in a Starbucks coffee shop in Buffalo, New York voted to unionize after the first ever successful organizing drive at a Starbucks location. Since this groundbreaking event, workers in more than 100 Starbucks stores across the United States have started their own drives in a huge wave of solidarity. Since December, stores and roasteries have unionized in 6 states and more are joining each day. Starbucks workers, or 'partners' as they are known in the company, are organizing with Starbucks United, under the umbrella of Workers United, an affiliate of the SEIU.

The union drive across American Starbucks stores is particularly exciting because Starbucks 'partners' tend to be younger workers and because the company has traditionally been known across the industry as a better than average employer.

The growing movement is indicative of a recent increase in union militancy across the United States, and in this instance, of younger workers increasingly not being satisfied with workplace conditions that are lower than the

working conditions and standard of living that their parents and grandparents had.

Some of the key issues that the Starbucks workers wish to address include safety, particularly during the pandemic. Another grievance is pay. Partners with years of seniority are paid pennies more than new hires.

Starbucks promotes a rich benefits package which includes health insurance, deeply discounted vacations and 401(k) retirement savings plans but many workers cannot afford to take advantage of because they are not paid a living wage. Inability to pay for the company health insurance can leave workers relying on state subsidized health plans, thus effectively providing the company, which earned 8.1 billion dollars in 2021, with government subsidies.

The company, which increasingly relies

on credit card sales, particularly during the pandemic, currently allows for cash tips only which effectively reduces income for the workers. Further issues are job security, staffing levels, training and scheduling.

Union busting fail

In response to the wave of union organizing, Starbucks, which has long banked on the favourable public perception of their 'Starbucks values', has mounted an aggressive anti-union drive. They have a website for the purpose, they have held compulsory store-wide staff meetings to dissuade workers from organizing. After these meetings led to COVID outbreaks, tactics switched to smaller meetings where two managers would hold a meeting to intimidate a single worker. The employer has consistently filed

objections with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to slow each vote, even when precedent has been set that the objections will be overturned. During any organizing drive, typically, Starbucks hires additional staff ahead of the union vote, to dilute the yes vote. Workers report that these additional staff are trained an outside location, contrary to past practice, and exposed to anti-union propaganda.

Coming out of the first Buffalo drive, seven workers who were the main organizers were fired after the store was unionized. While the employer maintains that they were not targeted for their union activity, the terminations were as a result of policies that had never existed before. In addition, in early February, seven workers at a Starbucks store in Memphis, Tennessee, known as the Memphis 7, were fired for their organizing activities in the midst of the union drive. In response, local trade unionists came out in support of their fight and Starbucks workers across the country and their supporters have organized rallies to support them.

In spite of the employer's anti-union efforts, the many ongoing organizing drives at Starbucks stores across the United States are indicative of a very exciting time for labour where younger workers are taking the initiative to take control of their working conditions.



CP strike exposes Canada's rail oligarchs and their Tory pals.

by: Ritch Whyman

Just after midnight on March 20, 2022 train conductors, workers and yard employees walked off the job across the country shutting down CP Rail. Workers were forced to strike after the employer issued a public notice that it would be locking out the 3,000 members of the Teamsters who were bargaining for a new contract.

Within a few short days the employer would rescind its lock out notice and the Teamsters, faced with looming threats of back to work legislation, agreed to take outstanding issues to binding arbitration.

The workers were demanding wage increases and pension changes. Also at stake were serious attacks on workers time off with family and friends. CP Rail was trying to demand that Federally mandated breaks be taken not at employees' home depots (the yards employees

As if this gross display of corporate greed wasn't enough, CP Rail had just last year spent \$27 Billion to purchase Kansas City Southern railroad. Beyond the huge hikes for Creel, other top CP Rail executives have seen their salaries jump between 94% - 132%.

The workers on CP rail trains and yards covered by this agreement not only had to face the hypocrisy of their filthy rich bosses, but also attacks from both Liberal and Tory politicians.

Conservative Premiers like Scott Moe, Jason Kenny of Alberta and Heather Stefanson of Manitoba – fresh from their support and encouragement of the far right blockades of borders – rushed out a joint letter demanding the Trudeau Liberals enact back to work legislation to break the strike.

The Liberals while professing to not want to immediately issue back to work legislation, have made it clear that they, like their Tory brethren, will intervene to support employers

by breaking strikes. Most recently they broke the strike of Montreal Dockworkers in 2021 who were also fighting against excessive time away from families.

The looming threat of back to work legislation is something all working class activists need to address.

It is unfortunate then that the federal NDP did not even bother to make a pretense of demanding the Trudeau liberals

recognize workers right to strike when they signed their pact. We need to demand an end to back to work legislation.

Further it is clear that the rail bosses are more interested in their own enrichment than the safety and well-being of rail workers.

It is time for the railways to be nationalized and taken out of the hands of pandemic profiteers like Keith Creel and his overpaid cabal of CEO's.



work out of). Such a change could see workers being forced to take mandated down time far from their homes.

CP rail oligarch Keith Creel went from praising employees for their work during COVID in late January, to deriding the union members as being greedy. This from a man whose compensation has skyrocketed 920% over the past 5 years to nearly \$17 million per year.

Essential healthcare workers at Lifelabs win first contract

by: Pam Johnson

Lifelabs workers won a first contract after a two week strike that forced the employer back to the table.

These workers, in OPSEU 5119 have been on the front line of healthcare throughout the pandemic. LifeLabs couriers transfer thousands of blood samples, COVID swabs and other specimens from clinics, doctors, hospitals, and pharmacies to Lifelabs laboratories for analysis. These workers receive only \$15.55 per hour with few benefits. Their employer profited hugely from the pandemic was refusing to

offer decent wages and benefits.

Highlights of the agreement include wage increases, job security provisions, break times, wellness days, two paid inclement weather days, and uniform allowances. It is an excellent achievement for newly unionized workers and shows the power of the strike.



Workers rally for an end to Bill 124

by: Peter Votsch, CUPE 7797 (retired)

Close to 100 workers came out to a picket at Dave Smith's constituency office (the Tory MPP for Peterborough & the Kawarthas), organised by the Ontario Council of Hospital Unions (OCHU-CUPE) to protest the Ontario Tories public sector wage restraint legislation, Bill 124. This piece of legislation limits wages and compensation that can be bargained, to just 1% (in total), and has been in force since June 2019. As a result of this bill, workers in the public sector are now seeing a reduction in their wages and benefits, due to steadily rising inflation, which now sitting at 5.7%.

Despite the election 'goodies' offered by the Ford Tories, such as licence sticker rebates, and the re-instatement of a minimum wage which they took away 4 years ago, the Tories show no sign of slowing their attack on the public sector. Bill 124, in combination with Bill 195, brought in under the aegis of emergency legislation from 2020, which allows employers to use the pandemic to violate Collective Agreements at will and without consequence, has decimated the healthcare field. Along with the anti-vaxxers' ceaseless attacks on healthcare workers, we now face a serious crisis in the public healthcare sector. The

Tories have the solution private profiteers have been waiting for: private hospitals, as recently announced by Minister of Health Christine Elliott, and continued in vestment in private, for-profit Long Term Care.

In this round of bargaining, OCHU has teamed up with SEIU Healthcare, to bargain



jointly, and have sponsored demonstrations such as this one across the province at the offices of Tory MPPs. At the Peterborough protest OCHU members and their SEIU allies were joined by OSSTF members from as far away as Durham Region, and members of the Ontario Health Coalition, which has teamed up with the unions to lead the fight to save our public medicare. The relatively large and enthusiastic turnout is an encouraging sign that workers will not take the Tory attacks lying down.

See: ontariohealthcoalition.ca/ for more info

Amazon workers organize and win!

by: Carolyn Egan

The upsurge in labour activism that we have seen in both the United States and Canada is continuing with the successful organizing drive at JFK8, the Amazon logistics facility in Staten Island, a borough of New York City. Another smaller facility nearby is expected to follow suit shortly.

This is a huge breakthrough showing that workers are sick and tired of being treated like cogs in a machine, and are willing to fight for their rights.

They took on one of the largest multinational corporations in the world employing over 1.6 million workers, and won. The vote was 2,654 to 2,137 and showed the results of the hard work that went into the two year campaign. It also gave confidence to other workers that these huge facilities can be unionized.

An independent union, the Amazon Labor Union (ALU), was formed after Christian Smalls was fired for leading a walk out in March 2020 protesting unsafe working conditions during the Covid pandemic. He had worked at the facility for four years and garnered a lot of support from fellow workers. It's an independent union which was formed by Smalls and others who were employed at the warehouse.

They were fully aware of the tremendous profits being made and the conditions under which they

were working. The huge gap between the 1% and the other 99 was obvious everyday when they walked through the doors. Covid exacerbated these conditions, and when the virus spread at the workplace it was obvious that all that mattered to the employer was the profits being made on their backs.

This spurred the drive and involved a diverse group of workers who felt that this was the moment to make their stand. Many of them were young from different races and backgrounds. They used social media and crowd funding to finance the campaign, but it was the one on one conversations, pulling workers together in meetings, discussions in break rooms, and engaging as many as possible

in the activities of the campaign that brought success.

They also learned from history examining the methods of much earlier union drives by the Industrial Workers of the World, the Congress of Industrial Organizations in the nineteen thirties, and read William Z. Foster's "Organizing Methods in the Steel Industry". He was a leader in the Communist Party involved in organizing the 1919 steel strike. An ALU organizer said that it was a must read!

The company also underestimated the commitment of the workers, and frankly had contempt for the organizers. A leaked memo from the company stated that Chris Small the young, Black man who

had been fired and is now president of the union, "was not smart or articulate". The disrespect is reprehensible. This didn't stop Amazon from spending millions to stop the union, and yet in spite of the money spent, and because of its disdain for the capacity of a racially diverse workforce to organize successfully in their own defense, company management and lawyers were forced to eat crow with 55% voting yes to the union.

These logistics centre are the huge workplaces of today located all across globe which have the capacity to shut down the economy if workers withdraw their labour. These workers are low waged, often racialized, and are understanding that they have real collective power.

In the 1930s it was the steel mills, the auto and rubber plant that employed thousands in massive workplaces. Union activists joined with their fellow workers building broad working class unity taking on the bosses in successful union drives.

This working class upsurge surprised the wealthy owners, and sparked a massive increase in unionization across the US and Canada winning real gains. We have no crystal ball that will predict the future, but the victory of workers in Staten Island is a shot across the bow of employers everywhere, and hopefully will give confidence to others to follow in their path.



More hot air from the Liberals on climate

by: Brian Champ

On March 29, the federal Liberals released a new climate plan which they claim will end subsidies to oil and gas, cut emissions 40-45% from 2005 levels by 2030 and achieve "net-zero" by 2050. They boast of spending \$100 billion on climate action since coming to office, but they are the only G7 nation to see their emissions rise in that period.

This plan promises urgent action, but throws a lifeline to the fossil fuel industry. The truly remarkable thing is the sophistication of the Trudeau Liberals' ability to obscure the dirty open secret at the centre of plan.

But before getting into these details, let's look at a few key features of the plan. They promise to "create new, middle class jobs for Canadians by making Canada a world leader in batteries to power the clean economy, helping industries adopt clean technologies to cut pollution, and supporting all workers to ensure no one is left behind."

The newly announced Lithium Ion battery plant in Windsor is a part of this - the Liberals also want to position the Canadian mining industry to "win the race" for critical minerals for the "net-zero" economy.

But whether or not such production facilities are part of a Just Transition depends on the involvement of Indigenous people and other communities whose land and livelihoods are affected by the mining of raw minerals, as well as the environmental sustainability of the battery plant itself. Maintaining and expanding the availability of green jobs requires the vigilance of workers in the production process to ensure

that there is continual improvement in the environmental impact of production. Given the track record of Canadian mining companies for violating Indigenous land rights as well as human rights and leaving a path of destruction these workers will need to be vigilant indeed.

As for "clean technologies", which I've written about elsewhere, I'll just say that they include those that improve fossil fuel combustion efficiency when we should be moving off

we need ambitious public programs to lead the way into the future, making fossil fuel companies who have profited from the lack of climate action through denial, obfuscation and deceit pay for the transition instead of giving them tax breaks and incentives to continue their destructive ways.

It includes investments of "\$8 billion to accelerate green jobs and Canada's industrial transformation, with an extra \$1.75 billion of targeted support for the aerospace sector

their own transition plans, and a promise to launch a Green Jobs Training centre. But all these programs need to be massively expanded.

Disgracefully, the plan almost completely ignores Indigenous communities. No mention in the section on Clean and Healthy Oceans. No mention in the section on Clean Water, despite (or perhaps because of) the failure of the Liberals to deliver clean water to dozens of First Nations reserves. No mention in the section on protecting Canadians from pollution, despite the fact that Vanessa Gray and others from Aamjiwnaang First Nation have chronicled the poisoning of their land and people by chemical valley in Sarnia.

In the section on protecting old growth forests, there was mention of Indigenous stewardship but it's unclear how much of the paltry \$50 million will go to First Nations. And there was mention of expanding Indigenous Guardian projects and the expansion of Indigenous Protected and Conserved Areas (IPCA) but no dollar amount was included.

It is not only shameful that it shows the continuing colonialism that characterizes the relationship of Canada with Indigenous peoples, but also because it is Indigenous led blockades of pipelines and hydrocarbon megaprojects that have delayed or stopped the equivalent of 25% of annual US and Canadian carbon emissions. Indigenous communities worldwide make up 5% of the world's population, yet are responsible for protecting 80% of biodiversity.

But the main theme of the Liberal climate plan, despite Trudeau's protestations to the contrary, is continuing support and subsidies to fossil fuel companies.

continued on page 7...



fossil fuels altogether. Improving the efficiency of combustion will lead to the expansion of emissions as the economy grows.

A lot of the promises made will not be met until 2030 or 2035, including promises around phasing out internal combustion vehicles, overall emissions targets and the "cap and cut" oil and gas industry targets. Thermal coal will be allowed to flow across Canada's borders until 2030. These timelines are too slow to avoid a harsh future -

to accelerate the transition." Some of this investment may well be going to zero emissions projects, but a great day of it, like the money for the aerospace industry, is to improve fuel efficiency rather than transition to zero emissions.

There are subsidies for building and home owners to do energy retrofits, as well as community level programs. There is \$2 billion for workers and communities in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Newfoundland to develop