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## Climate criminal Trudeau sings while our planet drowns



**Liberals spend billions on war and big oil while lives are ruined by inflation and climate catastrophe**



# Doug Ford's magical bookkeeping hides attacks on the vulnerable

After tabling a budget that cut billions from healthcare and education funding, in the name of slaying a “deficit” of \$33 billion, Ontario Premier Doug Ford and his accountants have suddenly announced they discovered a \$2.1 billion surplus.

That is a \$35.1 billion bookkeeping error. It raises the eternal question: incompetence or corruption. The answer may be both. When Ford defends his government for slashing education and healthcare budgets he inevitably quotes spending huge amounts. He's out there

partnership. It will create 122 beds by 2026. There's a huge gap 122 and 30,000. There are currently 38,000 seniors on waiting lists for LTC space.

While self-congratulatory government handouts quote huge amounts willy-nilly, actual accountants tell a different story.

The Financial Accountability Office reports that funding for Long Term Care projects is actually being cut. Funding for LTC services is being cut by .4%, more than \$26 million less than last year. Overall funding for Long Term Care minis-

Tory agenda is epitomized by Bill 7, rammed through the legislature without public review, allowing government and hospital bureaucrats to strip sick seniors of their rights, remove them from hospital and dump them in any for-profit LTC facilities not of their choosing, far from their homes, families and support networks.

Seniors who dare to refuse an unwanted move will be charged between \$400 and \$1800 per day to stay in hospital. Asked about this fine Ford said: “I can pretty well guarantee you, it's not going to be \$1,800.” What a sport.

But Ford is nothing if not fair. He is equally abusive of children as elders.

Buried deep in his budget is this justification for a \$1.3 cut to education spending: schools aren't holding enough bake sales and bottle drives.

“Education sector expense is projected to be lower primarily because school boards experienced a decline in non government revenue, from sources such as fundraising, community use of schools and international student tuition, and lower than projected enrollment. This results in a projected \$1.3 billion decrease.”

At a time when the Tories are putting greater demands on schools to make up lost ground, they are cutting funding. In part they blame “declining enrollment” while at the same time they incentivize public schooling for the wealthy. The downward spiral into two-tiered education gathers momentum.

So if Ford has magically discovered billions to give tax breaks to his corporate friends, and spend on unwanted highways, remember where the money came from. What used to be considered elder abuse is now government policy.

try projects is down \$315 million, and LTC capital projects are down \$376 million.

These are cuts from a sector that was in a crisis before COVID ripped the lid off scandalous LTC conditions – conditions that prompted the Ford Tories to rush to pass laws protecting private LTC operators from lawsuits.

Ford's fancy LTC media photo op is pure greywashing, a distraction from his government's relentless attacks on Ontario's elderly, disabled and vulnerable population. The real

with his hard hat and silver shovel for the photo op, but the spending announcements are exaggerated if not outright fictions.

Take for instance his recent announcement of “Generations”, a new Long Term Care facility in Toronto. The official government press release does not specify what the Tories are spending on the project, only that it is part of a \$6.4 billion plan to build 30,000 LTC spaces by 2028.

Generations is touted as “non-profit” but is a private-public



# Why we won't mourn for the Queen

by: Bradley Hughes

The mainstream media covered the Queen's death non-stop for more than a week. Reactions from politicians from all parties, interviews with people in the street and the taking heads on the news paint a picture of a planet that is united in its support for the monarchy and devastated by the passing Elizabeth Windsor.

But the monarchy is a horrible institution, based on violence and Elizabeth's rein was drenched in the blood of colonial violence on behalf of the British Empire and the Canadian State.

The British trade in enslaved people forcibly displaced 3.5 million people from Africa. These crimes brought over £80 billion back to British “investors,” including the royal family.

When Elizabeth's father died, she was on a royal tour of Kenya that was occupied by the British. Over the next few years the British would murder 50,000 people in Kenya to try to keep the country's riches for their own. Despite this, Kenya won its freedom in 1963.

The Queen never publicly objected to these crimes, or the many others committed by Britain and Canada in her name. Rather than mourn her passing, we should mourn her empire's millions of victims, who, unlike the Queen, never saw their children and grandchildren grow up, nor got to meet their great grandchildren.

Even if the Queen wasn't the figurehead for racism, colonialism and violence, her position is inherently backwards. The monarchy is all about unearned privilege and power. Her son will now inherit her position and all that wealth from the slave trade and other brigandry. Despite the good that could come from using those billions for education, or healthcare, or reparations to the nations that that wealth was stolen from in the first place.

Why are all of the Canadian establishment and the media outlets that help prop them up so united in mourning the Queen? Unearned

privilege is at the heart of capitalism, and the monarchy plays a role in normalizing that. Colonial violence made the fortunes of many of the current Canadian ruling class, just like it did for the British rulers. Which is why the Canadian ruling class has always been an enthusiastic participant in, and defender of, the British Empire. This country fought two world wars to try to keep the British Empire intact. And, of course, Canada itself is built on the theft of indigenous land and the genocide needed to keep that land.

The Queen's death comes at a time that more and more people are questioning the legitimacy of a nation built on genocide. In 2019, rail traffic was brought to a standstill across the country as thousands joined road and rail blockades in support of the



Wet'suwet'en nation's right to control its own land.

After last year's publicity of the thousands of unmarked graves of Indigenous children who perished at the hands of the people running the residential “school” system, thousands joined Cancel Canada Day rallies on July 1st. Add the housing, healthcare and cost of living crises on top of that, and more and more people are questioning if we are all in it together, or if Canada as a nation is just there to enrich the 1%. Pretending we are united in the loss of the Queen is part of the attempt for Canada to regain some of the legitimacy it has lost over the last few years.

For Trudeau the Queen's death is a gift. It allows a whitewashing of Canada's colonial past even as the Canadian state continues to destroy the unceded land of Indigenous people.

# Convoy grifter convicted of libel, contempt

Chelsea Hillier, a prominent supporter of last winter's “freedom” convoy has been found guilty of libelling a university instructor with whom she disagreed over vaccine requirements, and ordered to pay \$100 thousand in costs and damages.

Hillier is daughter of former Ontario MPP Randy Hillier, a spectacularly failed People's Party candidate and an exemplar of what the far-right means when they talk about “free speech”. She and her father were prominent during the far-right led convoy occupation of Ottawa last winter, trying to turn anger into financial and electoral support for the People's Party and other right-wing organization, and line their own pockets.

Hillier took to social media to accuse a former friend, Carleton University instructor Esther Post, of sexual impropriety, and using a “rape drug” to lure students. The two had fallen out over Hillier's

increasingly conspiratorial views of COVID public health measures, and other QAnon inspired beliefs. She incited her many internet followers to wage a harassment campaign directed at Post and her employer.

When Post confronted her former friend and warned she would sue for libel if the lies were not retracted, Hillier reportedly mocked her, saying she was too poor to afford a lawyer.

Post, with the support of colleagues and friends, proved her wrong.

In June, Justice Sally Gomery handed down a blistering judgement in Post's favour, ordering Hillier to pay all court costs and damages to Post for her personal and professional suffering. Gomery also ordered Hillier to retract her false accusations.

Instead, Hillier repeated her libel, framing herself as a victim of censorship and champion of “free speech”. She used the judgement to

fundraise from her followers.

This resulted in contempt of court charges for which she now awaits sentencing. Hillier finally published the court ordered retraction months late, but just hours before her contempt hearing. There was no apology. Hillier has declared bankruptcy in an effort to evade responsibility.

During the contempt hearing Hillier admitted to making a number of false statements on social media. “I'm not honest on twitter. Very few people are.” Her contempt sentence will come next month, and will include additional fines and possible jail time. No doubt she will posture as a martyr to her cause.

The whole episode is a revealing look at how the far-right uses rage-farming techniques and misinformation to raise funds and organize followers. These champions of far-right “freedom” are dangerous grifters.





# Socialist running for BC NDP leadership

by: **Erfan Rezaie**

*Socialist Worker's Erfan Rezaie sat down with Anjali Appadurai, who is running against former attorney general David Eby, to become the leader of the BC NDP, and hence Premier of BC.*

Anjali comes from an activist background, working on climate issues with different NGOs. She calls herself a democratic socialist, which she describes as “believing in the limits of wealth accumulation, with a strong social safety net, all within the ecological limits”, and she believes democracy can deliver that.

## Her campaign

There is certainly a lot of excitement about Anjali's campaign, with potentially thousands of new BC NDP members joining before the deadline in early September. According to Anjali, this likely includes disenfranchised NDP voters, like herself, climate conscious voters who don't

social movements, working together.”

Her experience on the front line of social movements taught her that only organized groups can make transformative change. Her goal as leader of the BC NDP is to help return the party to its roots as a party of the working class, one that takes direction from social movements. She cited the Dave Barrett government of the 1970's as an example of where the party needs to return to.

## Would she be any different?

Anjali would not be the first social activist to be elected to office, and in 2017 after seeing so many activist friends get elected to power with the NDP, the excitement quickly faded, as according to Anjali, “there's something in the water, and something about the design of the system itself makes people less accountable.” She adds, “I don't think any single person is immune to that, nor am I above that, but the only way to guard against



Anjali Appadurai speaks at a StopTMX pipeline protest

align with the Green party's economic and social values, young people and legacy NDP members. Her popularity has led to a smear campaign against her from corporate lobbyists and some current MLAs.

## Why She's Running

Anjali first ran for the NDP in 2021, in the federal election in the Vancouver-Granville riding. This seat was formerly held by Jody Wilson-Raybould. She came to within 400 votes of winning that election, which she did not expect. She says “I did it not to win, but to advance a climate conscious agenda.”

I asked her whether she thinks it's possible for even the premier of BC to make the necessary changes to a system that has given us climate chaos, extreme wealth inequality, and all the connected crises. She responded, “I never paid much attention to who was in the seats of power, because my theory of change was that only social movements were capable of that, but now the context has changed. As the systems around us are unravelling, particularly with the time sensitive nature of climate change, there is an obligation to engage in power in all its forms and blur the lines between social movements and where each of us is best placed.”

Anjali also states that “the party system is not setup to deliver the sweeping changes we need, but I'm here to give social movements access to power, which is a much truer version of democracy than what we have. We need both the right people in the seats of power as well as the

that is to set up formalized structures that keep the doors open between the movements and government to create the checks and balances that can keep government accountable to social movements.”

Some examples she suggested of the structures that can keep government more accountable include “setting up a youth council with access to the premier's office, providing more access to grassroots movements than corporate lobbyists, and ultimately have more people like herself enter government to help keep it accountable.”

She also knows that the current NDP caucus isn't welcoming her into this race, as they prefer their established candidate, David Eby. When I asked her about how she plans to gain their support, she says, that she knows the people in government genuinely believe they are doing good work, but “they come up against the limitations of the system and do their best anyway. They're not inhabiting a reality in which their actions are able to meet the challenges of the time. They're not surrounded by the right voices reminding them about the type of action that's required. Instead, they're surrounded by voices that equate incrementalism with progress, which is a poisonous pairing.”

“My job as leader is to believe in everyone's best intentions, but also work to ignite people's imaginations about what we can do if we create the conditions for it. Because I'm a movement candidate, I would bring the imagination of the movement,

which is something the government is not usually exposed to. I'm not coming in thinking that I'm better or people here aren't there for the right reasons, but to reorient who we are accountable to.”

## Climate Justice

For Anjali, her focus on climate is “about an overall redistributive approach”. For her, “we don't get to a climate safe future without a significant redistributive project, in its core about the well being of everyone.” She goes on to say that “the first step is a jobs transition, and that consideration of working people goes hand-in-hand with our need to drive down emissions. To say otherwise is violence.”

She plans to go from the current extractive, endless growth-based neoliberal paradigm to a new one, that will involve large government investments.

According to her, all fossil fuel projects must end. Specifically, she stated that the federally owned “trans-mountain pipeline needs to be cancelled, but the first step is to have a public conversation about the true cost of that project”, as well as LNG Canada, the Coastal Gas-Link pipeline, Site C, and other projects that have locked us in.

She thinks that if the truth is laid bare about these projects, and at the same time, the well-being of people is prioritized by government, there will be a push toward deeper public investment in that jobs transition, and understanding these projects can and must come to an end.

She makes the connection between that public investment to all the other systems that prioritize human wellness, such as housing, health care, education, as well as our energy systems.

When I pressed her on what she would do differently than the John Horgan government, which has repeatedly sent the RCMP to attack land defenders on Wet'suwet'en territory, she reiterated that her government would proactively takeover the just transition, communicating the truth to the public and providing the necessary investment, rather than letting the fossil fuel industry drive the decisions.

## Policies

Her campaign plans to reveal specific policies on health care, climate and energy, taxation, and more in the coming weeks, but she was able to speak to a few proposals.

Given the record profits in private industry during the pandemic and the so called “inflation” working people are suffering from, Anjali would like to see a “windfall tax from those pandemic profits.”

She also has ideas for projects, that require far less investment than we currently spend. One such example is a “heat pump program, that could re-train workers in a fairly short-term manner, and at the same time help build communities and industries across the province, while helping reduce emissions.”

Earlier that day, Anjali submitted her application to officially enter the BC NDP leadership race. It remains to be seen if the party will authorize her to run or not, but regardless, she is already giving voice to the social movements of this province.

# Quebec election 2022

## CAQ wins, QS gains and the centre continues to collapse

by: **Chantal Sundaram**

In 2018, Quebec's party of the left, Quebec solidaire (QS), made a huge breakthrough in the Quebec elections. Founded twelve short years earlier as a party that aimed to be a “party of the ballot box and party of the street,” building on social justice movements, it succeeded in electing 10 MNAs and the next spring became recognized as the official “second opposition” the Liberals playing opposition to the ruling CAQ.

In 2022, QS demonstrated that it was capable of carrying that breakthrough forward. This is the

co-spokesperson for QS, famous in Quebec as a leader of the 2012 Maple Spring student strike that brought down a government and overturned both government policy on tuition and a retrograde law on the right to protest.

This is a reflection of the interest in QS generally in this campaign, including in ridings beyond the urban centres or previously solid areas of support. Some candidates who agreed to just stand as names on the ballot found themselves getting more attention than expected.

Even where this didn't translate into seats or even a huge increase in the popular vote, it still indicates that a party that does tack independently left, instead of to the centre like the NDP with its alliance with the federal Liberals, can make gains both on the ground and at the ballot.

Only those who gravitate to the centre will lose.

And the collapse of the centre doesn't mean that Liberal support or even PQ support is moving en masse to QS: many are moving to the ruling right-wing CAQ and its xenophobic nationalism and pro-market politics. And the Tories of Quebec did better than they should have with their even more explicitly racist and pro-market attacks on the most vulnerable communities of Quebec, but with the same fake right-populist rhetoric that Tories federally and in many other provinces are using to prey on discontent.

The CAQ is still posing as the hero of the pandemic while promoting private healthcare as the solution to the emergency room crisis.

And above all the question that looms large is how to fund all the social services that need massive reinvestment, from healthcare to education to daycare. Taxing the rich was an open part of the QS election campaign last time and remains something that distinguished them in this campaign from everyone else.

## The ballot and the street

Ultimately social change doesn't happen at the ballot box. But parties that pledge to bring social movements to the ballot, and that come out of movements that were moved by possibilities of social change, can have a role to play in shaping expectations at election time - one of the few times the mass of the population is asked to make political choices.

QS is one of those few such parties that is still struggling to bring the street to the ballot. But how it will continue to deliver on its electoral gains for social movements that have a life outside of elections? Can gains in elections provide strength to those movements or will they possibly hold them back? As long as QS remains a member-driven democratic grassroots party, this will be an active debate. But the answer debated will be: can victories at the ballot ultimately empower the street?



Manon Masse in Montreal

first time QS has occupied a solid second place in the popular vote in any previous campaign. And regardless of how it has played in many actual election seat victories, it is an indication that though Quebec society may be polarizing, it is not entirely to the right.

## The results

In the end the ruling CAQ secured a majority within 10 minutes of the polls closing. Their vote was 41% which in the distorted first-past-the-post system meant a majority of 88 seats.

The two main parties that had dominated the electoral map in Quebec since the 70's - the Parti quebecois and the Liberal party all saw their votes drop even further than the 2018 election.

Once again, the centrist parties are losing ground to both the left and the right.

While Quebec solidaire didn't secure the breakthrough many hoped for they did increase their seat count by one winning in the riding of Verdun where candidate, Alejandra Zaga Mendez beat the Liberal in a close race. QS also received the second highest vote percentage of any party with 15% but the concentration of Liberal votes in the west Island in Montreal meant that it was the Liberals who will form the official opposition.

## The QS platform

The major themes of the QS campaign platform struck a chord: climate crisis, the affordable housing crisis, the cost of living crisis, healthcare and affordable public transit.

By mid-campaign, current leader Francois Legault was still out in front. But on his heels, ahead of any of the traditional parties, was Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois,



# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY REVOLUTION

*Capitalism continues to lurch from one crisis to the next. Perpetual war, climate crisis, and inequality are features of the system. It needs to be ended and a new society built and that will require a revolution. But what does that look like? How can working people take over the reins and develop a new world that protects people and the planet. Sadie Robinson outlines Marx's conception of revolution and how we may achieve that today.*

**K**arl Marx believed that workers have the power to transform the world through revolution.

The working class, he argued, could create a new system based on meeting the needs of everyone, not making profit for a tiny few.

Marx called this system communism and later used the term socialism.

Along with his collaborator Frederick Engels, he wrote about how this new world could come about and what it might look like.

Marx was writing in the 19th century at a time when capitalism was still coming into being in many parts of the world.

He had seen how the bourgeoisie, the capitalist class, was sweeping aside the old feudal order.

For Marx “revolutions are the locomotives of history.”

They drive society forward. Marx described how revolutions happen when economic development pushes against ways of organising society that hold it back.

For instance, capitalism marked a huge advance on the feudal societies.

It revolutionised production and unleashed great potential. But while Marx saw the dynamism of capitalism, he also saw the horrors that it brought about.

He wrote that capitalism “comes dripping from head to foot, from every pore, with blood and dirt”.

Marx and Engels were revolutionary socialists actively involved in organising to overthrow it.

It isn't simply that capitalism forces working class people to live in hovels, work in dangerous condi-

tions and suffer poverty. For Marx, it also has a deeper damaging effect.

Marx wrote that humans can be told apart from animals by many things, but importantly, “They begin to distinguish themselves as soon as they begin to produce their means of subsistence.”

So people have a unique ability to labour consciously on the world around them.

But under capitalism this is controlled by the bosses for their own interests.

it is rather a sacrifice of his life”.

This alienation is built into the way capitalism works, and can't simply be reformed away.

## Reactionary

Marx also argued that revolution is the only way to get rid of all the reactionary ideas that capitalism generates.

In Marx's time just as today, ruling classes used racism to try and divide workers.

When Marx was writing, racism

means at the disposal of the ruling class”.

For Marx and Engels, the ruling ideas in any society are “the ideas of the ruling class”. This doesn't mean they are the only ideas.

But those at the top of society are in a position to promote certain ideas—respect for the rule of law, nationalism, and so on—and these dominate.

“Revolution is necessary not only because the ruling class cannot be overthrown in any other way, but also because the class overthrowing it can only in a revolution succeed in ridding itself of all the muck of ages and become fitted to found society anew,” they wrote.

## How would this revolution come about?

It might seem that the rich, with all the power and influence they wield, can quite easily protect their system. And much of the time, many workers don't appear very interested in overthrowing capitalism.

But Marx identified how struggle is built into the system.

Capitalism is based on bosses competing with each other.

Each fights to accumulate more wealth than the rest—and those who don't compete successfully risk going to the wall.

This pushes them to constantly attack workers. So they might try to slash pay or scrap a pension scheme to cut costs and boost their profits.

But these attacks push workers to collectively resist.

When workers do fight back, this opens up a space for their ideas about the world—and themselves—

to change.

And in times of crisis, these struggles can spill over into bigger challenges to the system.

So capitalism contains the seeds of its own destruction—it creates its own “gravedigger” as Marx and Engels put it. But a successful revolution isn't inevitable.

## Ruin

Marx and Engels wrote that class struggle could lead to the “common ruin of the contending classes”.

But they did not waver from arguing that only a revolution could liberate working class people.

In an address to the Communist League in 1850 they said, “Our concern cannot simply be to modify private property, but to abolish it, not to hush up class antagonisms but to abolish classes, not to improve the existing society but to found a new one.”

And even when the bourgeoisie was still a relatively new class, in some cases fighting an old feudal order, they warned against putting any trust in it.

“In all the conflicts to come, it will be the workers who will be chiefly responsible for achieving victory,” they argued.

“The petty bourgeoisie, to a man, will hesitate as long as possible and remain fearful, irresolute and inactive.”

Marx argued that workers had to liberate themselves, not rely on any other group to win change on their behalf.

“The emancipation of the working class must be the act of the working class itself,” he wrote.



Women marching in Petrograd during the Russian Revolution in February

Marx wrote that workers are alienated because of this—from their work, from each other and themselves.

In words many people will recognise, he said the worker “does not count labour itself as part of his life;

in England was mainly directed towards Irish workers.

Marx wrote that the “antagonism” between English and Irish workers was “artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the





Students call for revolution at the global climate strike

A socialist society would do away with private property and put ordinary people in charge. Marx said that over time, society would be run on the principle of “from each according to his ability, to each according to his needs”.

There would still be classes in the transition between capitalism and communism.

Workers will need to organise in order to protect the new society from a counter-revolution by the old ruling class.

Marx wrote that this transition would see the “dictatorship of the proletariat”. And Engels wrote that a revolution is where “one part of the population imposes its will upon the other part”.

Right wingers sometimes use such quotes to paint Marx and Engels as anti-democratic or in favour of repression.

### Imposing

But a workers’ revolution would see the vast majority imposing its will on a tiny minority.

It would protect and extend democracy against a minority determined to hold onto its power.

As Engels asked, “Would the Paris Commune have lasted a single day if it had not made use of this authority of the armed people against the bourgeoisie?”

The experience of the Commune in March 1871 showed the power of workers and the potential for revolutionary change.

An uprising of workers forced the government to flee Paris and the first ever workers’ government, the Commune, was set up.

It got rid of the army and police, and armed the people instead.

Marx wrote, “For the first time since the days of February 1848 [when revolution broke out in France], the streets of Paris were safe, and that without any police of any kind.”

The Commune’s representatives were elected by universal suffrage—and they could be recalled. All took a workers’ wage. Education was opened up to all.

“When plain working men for the first time dared to infringe upon the governmental privilege of their ‘natural superiors’ the old world writhed in convulsions of rage,” wrote Marx.

“Wonderful, indeed, was the change the Commune had wrought in Paris!”

Marx saw how the Commune didn’t challenge the centralised capitalist state, and kept many of the old structures. After two months it was drowned in blood.

For Marx, this confirmed that workers can’t just take over the “ready-made state machinery”. Instead they have to create new forms of organising.

Despite the defeat, workers had shown that they were capable of running society for themselves. Marx said the Commune “will be forever celebrated as the glorious harbinger of a new society”.

There have been many revolutions since Marx’s time that have also shown the potential of bringing about a socialist society.

Organising together to fight for that change is the task that faces us all.

## STRIKE!

# Workers are fed up and striking across the country

## Solidarity forces TSSA bosses back to the table

Steelworkers and the Toronto and York Region Labour Council organized a solidarity rally for TSSA safety inspectors in OPSEU 546 who have been on strike for 11 weeks. The rally was held at the Minister of Labour, Monte McNaughton’s office in Toronto.

The strikers, who inspect everything from nuclear power plants to amusement rides, have been demanding both decent working conditions and better safety standards from their employer and the Ontario government which oversees the safety law.

The strikers were also joined by Injured Workers Action for Justice and Justicia (Justice for Migrant Workers) who launched a “Justice Bus” tour from the Ministry of Labour office following the rally to

demand rights for injured migrant workers in Ontario.

During the strike, OPSEU has solidly backed the strikers, and the labour movement has responded with solidarity on the picket lines,

at rallies and many locals are sending money to the strike fund.

JP Hornick, president of OPSEU, announced at the rally that the pressure has paid off and the employer has been forced back to the table!



Scabby the Rat joins the rally at the Ministry of Labour

## Ontario education workers deliver huge strike vote



More than 45,000 education workers from librarians to custodians have voted 96.5% in favour of a #strike in #Ontario. It is a massive mandate and puts Doug Ford and the Tories on notice that they cannot steamroll over public sector workers.

### The demands

A raise of \$3.25 an hour per year of the collective agreement, enough to make it a bit more likely that education workers, who make an average of \$39,000 per year, can support themselves with just one job, instead of two or three.

A restoration of much needed services for students after years of cuts, including enough educational assistants and early childhood educators so every student gets the type of learning environment they need.

Protection against future service cuts by guaranteeing minimum staffing levels at each school board.

Negotiations continue but the workers are ready to fight.

## Worker solidarity grows in BC ports strikes

More than 1,000 workers, including welders, pipefitters, electricians and a host of other trades have refused to cross picket lines set up by striking tugboat operators in Vancouver, effectively shutting down production at Seaspan’s Vancouver shipyards.

The tugboat workers have been on strike against Seaspan since August 25. Strikers wore T-shirts reading “2% is for milk not wage increases.”

“We cannot cross this picket line, we will not cross a picket line, ever. So we’re standing out here waiting for Seaspan to come to terms and bargain in good faith with the guild and give them what they deserve - very plain and simple.”

Toby Charette, president, Marine and Shipbuilders Union





# Fascist threat in Italy a menace to us all

by: **The Coordination of the International Socialist Tendency**

**T**he victory of the parties of the right in the Italian elections means that for the first time since the fall of the dictatorships in the 1970s a fascist party will head a European government. In October 2022, a hundred years after Mussolini's March on Rome, a fascist will once again be prime minister of Italy.

Giorgia Meloni is a skilful politician but she is no mere 'conservative', as the media endlessly describe her. She helped to create the Fratelli d'Italia as a rejection of the old fascist MSI's evolution towards integration into mainstream bourgeois parliamentary politics. Her speeches are full of classical fascist rhetoric and coded antisemitism – in defence of family and nation against 'cosmopolitan' financial speculators.

Responsibility for this frightening development lies firmly at the door of the mainstream parties – notably the centre-left Partito Democratico and the supposedly 'anti-establishment' Movimento 5 Stelle – that supported the government of Mario Draghi. This bankers' banker locked Italy more firmly into the neoliberal grip of the European Union and enthusiastically backed NATO's proxy war with Russia in Ukraine. The Fratelli were the only major party to stay out of this government and they were able to soak up the discontent it created.

The fascist breakthrough shouldn't be overstated. Votes for the main right-wing parties in the Chamber of Deputies were 12,409,981 in 2018, 37% of the vote. In 2022, they fell to 12,299,648. So 110,000 fewer people voted for them this time but their share of the vote rose to 44% thanks to the fall in turnout. The

right's success is a product of the failure of the other parties and the resulting alienation with the political system at a time of pandemic, economic instability, ecological catastrophe, war, and inflation.

Moreover, Meloni's success is overwhelmingly electoral. She has been able hugely to increase the Fratelli's representation in parliament by winning votes mainly from the other

Nevertheless, the victory of Meloni and the Fratelli is an extremely threatening development. It will give encouragement and legitimacy to fascists everywhere. The Fratelli will use their role in government to strengthen the social and institutional base of the far right and push through reactionary policies. All the right-wing elements in the state apparatuses and openly fascist groups such as Casa Pound



right-wing parties, the Lega and Forza Italia. She hasn't been able to build the kind of fascist street movement whose offensive against the left and trade unionists launched Mussolini into the premiership.

will gain in confidence.

The new government will continue the attacks mounted by its predecessors on working people, especially migrants and refugees. Already the Fratelli have confirmed they will

scrap the very modest citizen's income that was one of the few social reforms achieved by the 5 Stelle in office. They also plan to weaken the right to abortion. These attacks need to be met with massive resistance. International solidarity with struggles against Italy's far right government will be important. And wherever Meloni goes she should be denounced and isolated as the fascist she is. The international conference organized by Stand Up to Racism in London on 15 October assumes a special importance in this context. We will continue to organize resistance to fascist mobilizations internationally.

Meloni and her government aren't invincible. They don't represent a deepening or widening of the right's social base. Moreover, there will be plenty of divisions inside the government. Neither Silvio Berlusconi of Forza Italia nor Matteo Salvini of the Lega share Meloni's enthusiasm for the Ukraine War. To hang onto his leadership of the Lega Salvini will have to assert himself against Meloni. A determined movement of mass resistance that breaks with the bankrupt policies of the centre-left can exploit these weaknesses and force Meloni out.

The fascist breakthrough in Italy is a warning to us all. Humankind faces a deeply dangerous multiple crisis spawned by the capitalist system. But this can be exploited by the far right, as we have seen recently not just in Italy but also in France and Sweden. For the left to offer an alternative they need to break with strategies based on parliamentary manoeuvres and alliances with the neoliberal 'extreme centre'. Only the methods of class struggle that mobilize working people against the bosses and their state offers a way forward.

30 September 2022

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RBC strikers reading the SW on the picket line

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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.

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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

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# Hurricane Fiona is only the worst yet

by: **Bradley Hughes**

**H**omes and vehicles crushed by falling trees, roofs blown off houses, houses and other buildings washed out to sea, 3/4 of Nova Scotia and 95% of PEI are without electricity, this is what the early stages of climate change looks like. Winds reached speeds of 160 km/hr, and more than 100 mm of rain has fallen in parts of PEI and Newfoundland. In Port Aux Basque an entire two story apartment building was swept away. The remnants of Hurricane Fiona have created the worst climate catastrophe yet across Nova Scotia, PEI, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador and parts of Quebec. The emergency is still unfolding as the storm continues across Newfoundland and more devastating rain is still expected in many regions.

Although emergency centres have been opened across the Atlantic provinces, many are without power. Fallen trees, roof debris including roofing nails, and downed electricity lines have made the roads too dangerous to travel on. People have been warned to stay home and not try to get to the emergency shelters.

The full extent of the devastation will not be known for days until roads become passable enough to determine where bridges, roads and homes have been blown down or washed away.

## The worst is yet to come

Each year we see a new worst for climate disasters. Fiona is the worst storm to reach Canada. The heat dome that killed over 600 in BC was the worst heat wave anywhere north of Oregon, and all of Europe and South

America. The flooding that followed a few months later closed all highways into the Vancouver region and was the worst flooding we have ever seen in BC.

Numerous scientific reports have shown that the extreme weather we are seeing now is mild compared to what is to come. Even if all the nations honour their pledges to the UN to reduce emissions, which none of them have ever done in the 30 years of regular international climate meetings, we are still on track to see average temperatures rise by at least 2.4oC. The disasters we are living through now are just the beginning of the consequences of the current rise of 1oC. What

the world we be like as it continues to warm is unimaginable.

In 2019 the remnants of hurricane Dorian passed through Atlantic Canada with similar high winds and rainfall. Luckily the devastation was much less than it has been this time. The response to that hurricane, the massive wild fires, floods and BC's heat dome of 2021 has been to maintain Canada's production of oil and gas, the key green house gas emitters. In fact, production of both has increased slightly since 2019.

## Where do the parties stand?

None of the political parties in Canada have

any plan to reduce oil and gas production and consumption. That is because they all respect and uphold a system that protects the 1% and their profit above the needs of the rest of us. Most of us have no real options on the consumption side. Public transit, where it exists, is mostly slow and very unpleasant compared to driving, and how many have an extra \$45,000 lying around to but the "cheapest" electric car in Canada? Nor do we have the cost of replacing gas heating and/or appliances. And for renters, it's obvious what the result of asking your landlord to do that will be. Personal solutions are too expensive for most, and will be too little too late. And the workers in these industries are being forced to choose between feeding their families or walking away from jobs for which no alternatives will be provided.

## We need a revolution

We need a climate movement that combines strikes and occupations that will guarantee employment at the same wages of all workers in fossil fuel extraction and other industries. We need a climate movement powerful enough that it can force governments to provide energy retrofits for all homes and buildings, create plentiful, pleasant and rapid public transit. And do all the numerous other things what are wildly expensive and disruptive and which we have no choice about if we want to keep a livable planet.

The minimum changes we need to survive as a species will never be possible as long as we live in a world where the bulk of money and power is in the hands of the few. We need to build a climate movement that recognizes that the enemy is capitalism and the only way forward is by destroying it.



Hurricane Fiona wiped out entire communities on Canada's East coast

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The rally in Toronto highlighted the issues of climate justice by calling for a halt to continued expansion of fossil fuel projects, respect for Indigenous sovereignty, demands for a Just Transition for communities and workers and the expansion of green jobs in public services. During the pandemic period governments at all levels in Canada have attacked all these constituencies and as things have opened up, there is a growing mood for resistance that is tempered by concerns for the ongoing public health issues related to the ongoing pandemic.

Networks that had mobilized for the fantastic climate strikes in September of 2019 and made the shift to supporting and participating in the Indigenous led #ShutDownCanada movement of early 2020 have begun mobilizing again, spurred on by renewed layers of youth some of who have now had their first taste of action. These actions don't yet approach the fantastic Just Stop Oil occupation of Westminster in London, UK that started on October 1st and vows to continue until the Tory government cancels new oil projects. We have organizing to do to build to the level of resistance there, which included mass rail, mail and other strikes across the UK on the same day along with 50 Enough is Enough rallies that support the striking workers. Strikes are occurring across Canada by workers struggling to keep their heads above water with rising costs and stagnating wages, and fightbacks are building to protect public healthcare and other services that are under attack by opportunistic provincial governments.

Revitalizing the broad fightback against pipeline projects like the CGL pipeline is an urgent task, as highlighted by a number of speakers at the Toronto Global Climate Strike rally. Vanessa Gray, a queer Anishinaabe water protector, environmental researcher and community organizer in the Great Lakes region read a message from Wet'suwet'en land defenders on the front line: "September 30th, it's supposed to be the National Day of Truth

and Reconciliation, yet at this very moment oil and gas projects and pipelines are being built on unceded Indigenous land in our name. ... for the past six months, a special unit [C-IRG] of the RCMP has been continuously and in a discriminatory way stopping and arresting Wet'suwet'en people whose only interest is to protect their land title that is recognized by a 1997 ruling by the supreme court of Canada. Go to their website, yintahaccess.com, Follow their social media accounts ... Take action and rise up to the call to #KilltheDrill and plan for actions where you are."

Layla Staats, who is a Mohawk woman, Turtle Clan from the Six Nations of the Grand River who has focused on Indigenous water issues, including decades of unsafe water on First Nations reserves, joined land defenders on Wet'suwet'en land last November to stop CGL from drilling under the Wedzin Kwa river. She was one of 32 violently arrested by the

RCMP. While facing the wall of hundreds of militarized police she sang the Mohawk Water Song, which she performed for the rally along with her daughters. She shared her experience at this still pristine river: "I put my hands in the river and I put it to my lips and I could feel it was alive. It was electric, it tingled on my tongue and I knew in that moment this is how water was meant to be. My river at home, the Grand River, I won't let my children swim in it. I would definitely never let them drink from it."

She also shared her hopes: "I don't trust our politicians or our governments to save the earth. It's not going to come from the top, it's going to come from the ground up. And so these moments of resistance, these moments of fighting back, of using our voices, of unifying together, they matter. They matter to us. They matter to the people and the people are the ones who are going to save this planet. Who's

with me?"

Jinkie David also spoke to the rally as a member of CUPE Local 4948 representing Toronto Library Workers and treasurer of the Toronto and York Region Labour council. She spoke about the global justice issues spoke about the Just Transition:

"Climate disaster is rapidly increasing and it is hurting working peoples. Unions have taken a simple stance: there are no jobs on a dead planet. Unions have a role to protect jobs in the current industries. But we also have a role in fighting to create new jobs. We support new quality jobs in this emerging green economy. We know that there are jobs and we know that there's an opportunity to create a million good unionized jobs across Canada for young people, for Indigenous people and for equity seeking groups."

She added inspired by the youth in attendance: "This is what I saw in 2019 and it was so inspiring. My little girl was so much younger, and what she will tell you is that there is no planet B. And knowing that you guys have thrived and you continue to grow your movement is so friggin' inspiring."

There was an energizing performance by Mark Clennon, a Jamaican LGBTQ+ activist and singer and a Toronto based singer, Ahsan, originally from Pakistan, who highlighted the humanitarian and climate disaster that has devastated that country and displaced 33 million people. He sang a song in Urdu with an ecological message: "what things you crave - all nature is your fellow creature."

One of the youth MCs for the rally, Megan Breau, read a statement from seniors groups: "Your generation is not alone, the generation of your grandparents and your great grandparents are also organizing. Our numbers are growing and we will support you and we will join you to change the world." She and co-MC, Allie Rougeot, led chants such as "I don't know what you been told, Fossil fuels have got to go, We protest as you can see, Cause we ain't got no planet B" and "The Climate is Changing, Why aren't we?"



Labour and Indigenous activists join the climate strike in Toronto



## Patients, unions unite to fight Ford

by: Carolyn Egan

**T**he Ontario Health Coalition (OHC) held a dynamic organizing conference over two days at the start of October. It brought together hundreds of activists from across the province, in person and on zoom, representing grass-roots groups and unions. A large number of local organizations have developed in the last years in many towns and cities under the umbrella of the OHC. It has brought together both residents and health care workers committed to fighting the attacks on our public health care system.

There was a real sense of the urgency from those participating both from urban and rural areas. They felt that their work against the privatizing of health care has led to a 5% drop in popularity for Premier Doug Ford since the provincial election. The Conservative government had passed legislation forcing seniors out of hospitals into long term care (LTC) facilities far from their homes unless they are prepared to pay \$400 daily. They have no choice. The OHC activists are committed to continue the fight against this callous disregard of people's needs.

The key issues people across the country are concerned about are the cost of living and health care. The reasons are obvious. There has been a concerted drive by governments for decades to assist for-profit corporations in taking a larger and larger portion of the sector. The government has created a crisis and put



Healthcare workers fight Ford's privatization agenda photo: Ontario Nurses Association

this forward as the only solution. There is a huge need for more spaces to relieve the pressure on hospitals and families.

The province of Ontario is providing money for 30,000 badly needed new and rebuilt LTC beds, but the vast majority are going to for-profit companies. They have the worst record of resident deaths, neglect and inadequate care during the pandemic, but it

doesn't matter to these free market ideologues. There were demonstrations in front of many of these institutions, rallies at the provincial legislature, summits across the province, meetings in community centres and union halls, and yet nothing was done and now these same corporations are being rewarded. There is an ideological assault on public services and the OHC has taken a strong stand against it,

mobilizing communities to raise their voices and fight back.

It has strong support from hospital unions, and private sector unions are supporting the organizing as well. There were contingents from many of them at the conference lending their weight to the campaign.

The fight against the rising cost of living is also continuing. The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) just had a 96.5% strike vote among support staff at Ontario schools. Negotiations are continuing. The average wage is \$39,000 and they are demanding wage increases that deal with the inflationary spiral we are experiencing. They have proposed an increase of \$3.25 an hour for every worker. We saw the successful strikes fought by many unions in the building trades a few months ago which shut down work sites across the province.

There has been a lot of pressure on the trade union leadership to launch a broad based campaign as we have seen in other countries. "Enough is Enough" in the UK has combined mass mobilizations against the rising cost of living with strong strike support for workers walking out for wage increases and broader improvements in their working conditions. There is a mood to fight both in the community and the workplace. We have seen it on the picket line and in groups such as the OHC. Let's continue to organize locally, build mass demonstrations and support striking workers to push back the attacks.

## Renewed global climate strike calls for people not profit

by: Brian Champ

**O**n Friday September 23rd the Fridays for Future Global Climate Strike continued mass action on the streets around the world to demand action for climate justice under the banner #PeopleNotProfit.

At the forefront of these actions, there were 20,000 on the streets of Berlin, Germany; 15,000 in Montreal, Quebec; 10,000 in Seoul, South Korea; 5,000 in Rome, Italy. There were actions in India, New Zealand and over 450 locations around the world. 400 rallied in Kinshasa in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in Kampala, Uganda protesters focused on the need to stop the East African Crude Oil Pipeline (EACOP), a joint project by the French oil giant Total and the China National Offshore Oil Corporation that will run through a region already facing disastrous drought conditions.

This is the second global climate strike that has been organized under the banner of #PeopleNotProfit - the first was March 25th of this year that had strong actions in many places around the world. This follows the huge Global Day for Climate Justice on November 6 last year during the COP26 meetings in Glasgow that failed to even commit to ending coal burning.

This is in the context of the deepening climate crisis, intertwined with the global pandemic, economic crisis amid rising costs and the context of global conflict.

The number of people in acute need of

food has increased more than four times since 2017. In Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia, the changing climate has caused the failure of the annual seasonal rains crucial for agriculture for the fifth consecutive year. The Russian invasion of the Ukraine, and the sanctions imposed by the west have slowed the shipments of desperately needed food to the region. Higher oil prices have seen profits soar for oil company executives, literally taking food out of the mouths of some of the poorest people on the planet.

In Pakistan, catastrophic floods this

summer caused by the combination of high temperatures melting glaciers and extreme monsoon rains submerged one third of the country, killing around 1,500 and displacing 33 million people. Crops have been destroyed and 700,000 livestock have been lost.

The devastation caused by Hurricane Fiona as it ravaged Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic and the Bahamas before striking the Atlantic provinces of Canada, and of Hurricane Ian that has struck Cuba and Florida have dominated news coverage. But the Philippines Island of Luzon was just hit

by Super Typhoon Noru/Karding that was marked by explosive intensification in 24 hours, displacing over 40,000 people and causing widespread damage before slamming into Vietnam, causing floods and landslides.

Another disastrous storm system, Typhoon Mebok formed in waters far to the east of Japan that are the warmest on record for 100 years, moving north into the Bering sea and impacting many coastal regions of Alaska and the Aleutian archipelago. The worst storm in over 50 years had a particular impact on the coasts, destroying protective sea barriers and inundating freshwater reservoirs impacting many Indigenous communities getting ready for the winter.

Wildfires are burning on just about every continent; water crises continue to expand with the shocking images of major rivers that no longer drain into the sea.

In my home town of Toronto, the day marked a return to in person action in the city where pandemic conditions have curtailed activity over the past few years, with over 3,000 participating in a rally highlighting the politics of climate justice followed by a spirited march through the centre of the city. The Fridays for Future Toronto led event brought together a coalition of environmental groups, union and labour bodies, student organizations, NGOs and social justice groups highlighting the need for urgent actions by governments and industries to reduce emissions while leaving no community or worker behind.



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