



**NO WAR!**  
Stop the war  
in Ukraine

page 6

**STOP THE HATE!**  
Trans rights and  
the far-right

page 7



# Socialist Worker

\$2 | No 650 | February 2023

socialist.ca

# Defend public healthcare

Premiers are privatizing healthcare across the country  
Workers resistance is the key to saving public services



Ontario Health Coalition rally to save public healthcare. Coverage on page 4-5. See: [ontariohealthcoalition.ca](http://ontariohealthcoalition.ca) to join the campaign.

# Solidarity and class pride

**W**ay back in the 1980s I traveled with my then partner to Indiana to meet her family.

In particular that meant meeting 90-year-old “Grandmommy”, the family matriarch.

Things went well. She was sharp and lively and had led a fascinating life, a strong independent woman growing up when Indiana was still a frontier, when women were not full citizens, had no vote and could not own property. In short, she was history and I’m always interested in history.

But the moment of truth came when we had a few quiet minutes alone and she got right to it. “So you work for Socialist Worker. Isn’t that propaganda?”

I could have tried to dance around it, but instinct told me to drop the gloves. “Absolutely. We look at what’s going on in the world from the point of view of working people. We make arguments about why people should question what they’re told. And we put what we think right up front in the name, Socialist Worker. Your big paper (the Indianapolis Star) pretends to be neutral, but the writers answer to the owners, advertisers and big money. If they were honest, their name would be ‘Capitalist Pig’. But they can’t be honest, they can’t admit what they’re really up to.”

She just nodded and said, “So you’re proud of what you do. That’s good.” And from then on we were golden, and I am glad to have shared a few quality visits with her in her last years.

All this came to mind this week

when I read a Guardian article: UN Agency and US Labour secretary deny backing UK anti-strike bill.

## Class war

There is a class war being waged all over the world, sometimes hidden, sometimes overt. Today one of the key battle grounds in that war is the so-called United Kingdom, where a desperate Tory government is locked in battle with striking public and private sector workers.

On one side is a government led by billionaire Rishi Sunak, third PM since 2020. He presides over a fractious gang of antediluvian aristos, big money bagmen and far-right wackadoos. The lame duck Tories cling to power thanks to the utter impotence of the Labour (in name only) Party, that in its wisdom decided the time was right to purge itself of leftists and socialists.

On the other side is an embattled and increasingly impoverished working class, divided for decades by racism, Brexit, and national divisions. The other side has taken advantage of those divisions to usher in austerity budgets, racist immigration policies, and attacks on public services and jobs. Inflation rages, led by soaring energy prices.

And now the boss’s government in Britain, like boss’s governments the world round, has moved in for the kill. They have tabled plans to sell off the National Health Service, the Royal Mail, and other public services. And when unionized workers fight back and threaten strikes – so far limited to short duration rotating work stoppages – the government proposes new

anti-strike laws. It should be noted that such laws are essential now because the strike wave has enjoyed overwhelming public support.

## Which side are you on?

Okay, at this point you are probably saying, “Jabber, what the hell does a conversation with a small town Indiana nonagenarian have to do with nurses in the UK striking against corporate takeover?”

The answer is Pride. Who can proudly, openly proclaim their aims and goals, and who has to sneak through back channels saying one thing and doing another.

I, as an individual and speaking for the International Socialists here in Canada, state unequivocal support for striking nurses, rail workers,

Tories. We are proud of UK workers rediscovering the source of their great power, and recommend their example to workers here in Canada.

We want these struggles to become universal. We can answer, loud and clear, the eternal question: which side are you on.

Our ruling class counterparts cannot be so honest. They can’t come right out and say “We want to beat lowly workers into submission and make them pay for the economic crisis we have created.” Which is exactly what they want to do.

Instead they lie, say one thing and do another. The coddle their armed thugs, their last resort against our solidarity, and desperately stoke divisions. They try to demonize our mutual aid and support, our empathy



postal workers and all others standing up against corporate bullies. More, we openly call for escalation of the fight, moving from limited actions to all-out strikes to defeat the

for our fellow human beings, as if being “woke” was a criminal act. They flirt with fascism in fear of our renewing, democratic movement from below.

Sunak tries to justify his anti-strike laws by saying other national and international representatives of capitalism support him. Which, in secret phone calls and back-room meetings, they no doubt do. But when challenged to publicly declare “Which side are you on” they waffle and double speak. As the above cited Guardian article shows, they scramble to disassociate themselves from Sunak without actually condemning anti-union laws for what they really are: anti-democracy laws.

Over the past decades, when our side was pushing for more freedom, more human rights, better lives, the word “pride” has been used to describe our movements. We have every right to be proud of our demands, of the freedoms we want for ourselves and those around us, and of the kind of world we want to live in.

It is recognition of our power.

And when the Sunaks, the Bidens, the Trudeaus and the Fords of the world try to steal our rights and freedoms they have to hide behind big lies and ideological gibberish.

On one hand a mass of humanity that produce all the wealth. On the other side a greedy minority stealing the fruits of our work while hiding behind smoke and mirrors. As UK workers are rediscovering, rising struggle blows the smoke away.

There is no guarantee of victory, but we should be proud that millions are answering for themselves the big question, which side they are on. As Grandmommy observed: “You’re proud of what you do. That’s good.”

## Alberta politics: clown car wreck

**A**lberta premier Danielle Smith has appointed Preston “Reform Party” Manning to head an inquiry into the province’s handling of the COVID crisis. When asked why a washed up, far-right, bible-thumping politician with zero healthcare experience should get such a job, her answer was that he wanted to do it.

Well of course he did. Not only does the part-time job pay \$254,000 (plus expenses) but Manning has already been hard at work with his own cross-country “Citizens’ Inquiry” into the national pandemic response. The Inquiry gives equal weight to epidemiologists and conspiracy theorists, and is obviously designed to embarrass the Trudeau Liberals.

As for Manning’s opinion, he’s on record stating that far-right Nazi flag-wavers in last winter’s Ottawa occupation were operatives paid by the Liberal Party.

### Return of Whooping Cough

Vaccine skepticism is actively encouraged by the current Alberta government, and is especially strong in rural areas. So it should come as no surprise that health officials have declared an outbreak of pertussis, or whooping cough, in the province’s southern zone.

Once a leading cause of child mortality, whooping cough had been all but eradicated through the use of vaccines. But catastrophically low levels of early childhood immunization in the Lethbridge area have allowed it to make a comeback.

Pertussis is a bacterial infection that causes severe and prolonged coughing that lasts for weeks. It can impact people of all ages, however, infants one year and younger are at greatest risk of serious complications, including pneumonia, convulsions, brain damage and death. It is highly contagious.

At last report 16 children have been diagnosed, and 3 hospitalized.

### UberAmbulance

Alberta Health Minister Jason Copping has announced the province plans to privatize its EMS ambulance service. Largely this means get rid of ambulances staffed with trained, unionized health workers in favour of entrepreneurs and modified vans. In some cases patients will be transported between facilities in taxis or ubers.

The Health Ministry is acting on recommendations from an independent review that it commissioned last year to tell it what it wanted to hear.

### Criminal interference

Last winter’s border blockade at Coutts, Alberta led to a number of

criminal charges laid by the Alberta Attorney General’s office, ranging from mischief to concealed firearms infractions.

Early in January CBC News reported it had evidence of a series of communications from Danielle Smith’s office to the Justice Ministry calling on them to drop charges and suggesting courses of action for court cases. The evidence came, CBC said,



from more than one “highly placed” source, and names were not released to protect whistle-blowers from reprisals from Smith’s office.

Smith denied the story and demanded a retraction and apology. She said an internal investigation of “a million” emails did not find any evidence.

Then emails surfaced, from Smith to Justice Minister Tyler Shandro’s office repeatedly asking for updates on the cases and asking if it was possible to drop the charges. The inquiries were particularly concerned

with a far-right church pastor named Artur Pawlowski.

Pawlowski is a notorious street pastor, anti-abortion activist and outspoken anti-LGBTQ+ bigot, who switched seamlessly into opposing public health measures during the pandemic.

The CRA revoked his group’s charitable status in 2010. He is also, as of 2022, leader of the Independence Party of Alberta.

Smith declared that the messages were “not inappropriate”. Legal observers disagree, and the CBC has doubled down on their story, essentially daring Smith to either launch legal action or shut up.

### Splits in the UCP

The good news is that the non-stop scandals and far-right stupidity coming from Smith’s office are resulting in a multitude of splits in the UCP ranks.

On one hand old time Conservatives are jockeying to get rid of her before the scheduled spring election. Insiders say that corporate funders (read Oil&Gas) are shying away because of Smith’s calls for “Alberta Sovereignty” and ideological objections to all public health measures. Smith’s personal communications with a number of corporations urging them to drop internal health requirements ruffled a

lot of feathers.

On the other, the far-right splinters that came together in the UCP to get Smith elected are disappointed she has not gone far enough to the right. The energy from last winter’s occupation of Ottawa, the wave that carried Smith to office, has dissipated. Far-right groups and cults that temporarily united behind her are falling out, shifting around for a new rallying cause now that health mandates have been abandoned. That means their fascist ideas, previously masked by vague cries of “freedom”, are becoming more evident.

### ANDP goes (more) right

The bad news is that opposition NDP leader Rachel Notley decided the time was right to move further to the right, to capture Tory votes and oil corporation’s donations.

In mid-January she tweeted: “The federal government has to put the brakes completely on its sustainable jobs legislation, as well as plans for the emissions cap.”

And response from Alberta’s organized labour to UCP attacks on jobs and services has been muted. Union leaders don’t want to rock the boat for the ANDP in the leadup to the election.

Will Notley reverse the UCP cuts and privatization? We aren’t holding our breath.

# Canada's shame

## More Indigenous graves found. Where's Trudeau?

by: **Kim McAuley**

**T**he past few weeks have seen the horrific discovery of more Indigenous children's graves across Canada.

On January 17 in Kenora, Ontario, the Wauzhushk Onigum Nation announced that more than 170 'plausible burial' sites have been found with ground-penetrating radar during a search for unmarked graves at the site of former "St. Mary's Indian Residential School".

Also January 17, the 3rd National Gathering of Unmarked Burials, took place in Vancouver, calling for the release of records from the agencies linked to residential schools.

"Records are important to this sacred work," "These records that we're trying to obtain impact real people, real lives, people looking for their grandfathers, their fathers, their children," and "These

records can no longer be held in vaults by colonial institutions." said Kimberly Murray, independent special interlocutor for Missing Children, Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, speaking to the gathering.

The fight to find and obtain records from Catholic, Anglican and other agencies across the country continues and is crucial to obtain and preserve evidence, reveal who the missing children were and how they died - and hold the people responsible to account and prevent deniers from continuing to sow disinformation.

January 24 saw the release of a new preliminary report from the Acimowin Opaspiew Society, formed by The Saddle Lake Cree Nation in 2021, to investigate unmarked burial sites at the Blue Quills residential school in Alberta. The report poses that tainted, unpasteurized milk was the reason for many First Nations children's deaths at the 'school'. Leah Redcrow, executive director of the Society, noted "we feel that these children were being deliberately infected with tuberculosis". The consumption of unpasteurized milk led to rampant disease among the children and was a differentiating

factor between them and school administrators. In many cases, children who came to the school healthy were sick within weeks and soon died.

On January 25, Williams Lake First Nations ongoing search revealed at least 28 children died on the grounds of the former St. Joseph's Mission site and identified 66 more potential burial sites, adding to the initial 93 potential graves already detected at the site. The National Centre for Truth and

his deal with the NDP, addressing health care and the 'economic crisis' and eating at a hipster restaurant that opposed the increase to minimum wage. The retreat included invitations to Premiers and meetings with new Mayor Andrea Horwath, but not to First Nations leaders - all of which exposes the government's hollowness on Truth and Reconciliation and empty promises of nation-to-nation discussion.

This follows on the record of



Indigenous children at St. Anne's residential school in Fort Albany, Ontario

Reconciliation Memorial Register lists 16 children as dying at St. Joseph's Mission, but the investigation shows at least 28 buried in unmarked graves. Whitney Spearing, lead investigator at the site also said interviews with survivors and archive searches revealed "...many of the children and infant babies born at the mission as a product of child sexual assault were disposed of through incineration on and off-site at the mission."

In Brantford on January 24 the Survivors' Secretariat at Six Nations of the Grand River received \$10,259,975 from the Feds, for the search for graves. It's a token amount. Brantford is home to The Mohawk Institute - the first residential school in Canada that ran from 1831 to 1970 and saw 90 to 200 children per year "enrolled". The timing of the announcement, with Trudeau half an hour away in Hamilton, was incredibly self-serving - another reveal of this government's true priorities.

Much like when he left for vacation on the first National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, Trudeau could be found January 23 to 25 on a three day "retreat" in Hamilton - situated on Haudenosaunee Territory - by paying lip service to

the Tories and Liberals stymieing Indigenous claims through the courts and the horror and brutal legacy of Canadian colonialism, environmental racism and lack of true response and meaningful action.

Real reconciliation would mean - among many other things - Land Back to the Indigenous peoples, canceling pipelines, preventing further real estate developments, finding missing Indigenous Women, ensuring the health of First Nations' communities, and providing funds for unlimited healing services and mental health support to survivors of the horrific abuse inflicted on Indigenous peoples by the Canadian government and the various churches that supported genocide.

*A national Indian Residential School Crisis Line has been set up to provide support for former students and those affected. People can access emotional and crisis referral services by calling the 24-hour national crisis line: 1-866-925-4419.*

*Mental health counseling and crisis support is also available 24 hours a day, seven days a week through the Hope for Wellness hotline at 1-855-242-3310 or online at [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca).*

# Philanthrocapitalism and the whitewashing of corporate greed

by: **Morgan Oddie**

**L**ondon, Ontario's downtown is pockmarked with empty buildings decorated with Farhi signs. A holdings corporation known for speculative real estate that has resulted in dozens of empty buildings in the city's core, Shmuel Farhi was recently celebrated in local media for its "huge gift" of \$750,000 over five years to the London Children's Museum.

London's most prominent landlord said the gift was about "our children, our future." Claiming to have donated over \$30 million in the last 35 years, the company and its founder craft an image of an altruistic and community driven business owner. However, once you scratch beneath the surface of these tall claims, all that is left is a predatory business owner trying to generate public goodwill while amassing huge amounts of wealth at the expense of the very same community.

Since 1988, Farhi has accumulated more than four million square feet of office, commercial, and residential space, as well as over 3,000 acres of land holdings and

ration) who cares about the future of the community's youth and their museum access.

"Philanthrocapitalism" is a term coined by Matthew Bishop and Michael Green first in a 2006 Economist article, later developed more fully in their book titled the same. They argue that the increasing propensity of capitalists towards charitable gifting has created a web of wealthy corporate donors who are our best hope to "saving the world." This of course is far from the truth. As many authors including Canadian Socialist Susan Rosenthal have shown, capitalist charity is an art of deception. The history of philanthropic giving is inextricable from its strategic capitalist underpinnings and business-oriented strategies. It is rooted in the erosion of democratic responsibility and sustains a social inability to challenge the system of accumulation that allows and requires the charity to exist in the first place. Social and financial good become inappropriate bedfellows in an era where Ontario is seeing increasing privatization of public services and attacks on workers' rights.

A governing principle of capital-



Farhi signs in downtown London, Ontario

development projects in southwestern Ontario.

A lack of municipal oversight and the province's unwillingness to apply penalty taxes to vacant properties are certainly contributing factors in the amassing of property wealth by Farhi. But rather than challenging the vast accumulation of wealth and an underutilization of property in the time of a homelessness crisis evident in London's downtown core, philanthropic donations obfuscate the nature of traditional capitalist investment that motivates these "gifts". It glosses over the exploitation of the working class and the poor who suffer at the hands of the capitalism. And it does both things while framing the developer as a kind and generous person (and by extension, his namesake's corpo-

ism, Marx and Engels show in the manifesto, is the tendency to move towards a state of "agglomerated population, centralised means of production, and... concentrated property in a few hands." Philanthrocapitalism buttresses this consolidation of property and wealth and reinforces individual accumulation and consolidation of socioeconomic power. This legitimates the exploitation of workers and obfuscates the goals of corporate capitalist power.

When predatory capitalists like Farhi actively create homelessness and poverty in their communities, and then claim to be a social force for upliftment, it is sickening. As socialists, we must continue to expose this and shine light on the exploitative core of these enterprises.

# STOP FORD!

## Save public healthcare

*Public healthcare is under attack across Canada. In Ontario, Doug Ford has announced that private hospitals will be used to fill in the gaps in the public system opening the door to further privatization. Below we analyze the drive toward for-profit healthcare and outline why we will never be rid of the threat of privatization as long as the capitalist system remains.*

*“That’s the standard technique of privatization: defund, make sure things don’t work, people get angry, you hand it over to private capital.” — Noam Chomsky.*

Chomsky’s quote encapsulates the method that premier Doug Ford is using to privatize healthcare and education in Ontario. He is cutting core funding, forcing real wage cuts on healthcare workers and withholding needed emergency funding, despite sitting on almost \$3 billion in surplus cash.

The reality is, Ford and the Tories don’t want to fix the public system at all. They want it to fall apart so that they can justify privatized services which will erode the public system and result in for-profit healthcare, like we see in the US.

He is not the first Premier to do so. Over the years successive Liberal, Tory and NDP governments have underfunded the system.

What is different now is that the COVID crisis provides Ford - and Premiers across Canada - with a cover for their plans.

They blame the crisis in the system on external factors rather than their own deliberate policy decisions.

This is the most unprecedented attack on the public system that we have seen.

The main beneficiaries of Ford’s plan are the corporate health providers that will make billions as they take over certain services. Healthcare and education are coveted by corporations because they are necessities. People will pay exorbitant fees for care if they are either dying or watching someone die. As well, the subsidies paid by taxpayer cash are a profit guarantee. It is the goose that lays the golden egg and the corporations want it all to themselves.

### How did we get here?

Healthcare was not gifted to us by a benevolent federal government but came about because of a decades-

long fight. The first publicly funded plan was introduced by Tommy Douglass in Saskatchewan but it would not have become the law of the land without a struggle. Trade unions, community members and healthcare workers organized and marched in their thousands to win a public system.

From the first moment of implementation there has been pressure from corporate interests to defund certain services. It was pressure from the rich that scuttled plans for universal dental care and pharmaceuticals.

Under Tory Mike Harris there were cuts to the health system and the development of for-profit Long Term Care homes.

During the pandemic, the for-profit long term care homes were a disaster. It is estimated that the death rate was 78% higher in the for-profit homes versus the public ones.

Harris made a huge profit off of this venture. He currently holds more than \$7 million in LTC stock and investments.

### Liberal Cuts

The previous Liberal government in Ontario played its role in privatizing services as well. It was Dalton

McGuinty who froze healthcare funding at the behest of Don Drummond who was hired to find ways to balance the books in Ontario. Drummond led an anti-democratic consultation with bank and health care corporate executives and laid out a plan to starve the public system.

Under Ford this has reached a new level. His cuts have been systematic and are designed to create a crisis in the system. Bill 124, which capped salary increases for all public sector workers at 1% has led to staffing shortages.

### Public funds for private corporations

Ford is also using public funds to subsidize services being carried out by private corporations.

He and health minister, Sylvia Jones insist that people will only need their health cards to get care. What he fails to mention is that the services are still privatized and public money is still being given to the private sector. The public system is still being eroded through these processes.

The announcement of \$20 million to run MRI labs in 27 small rural hospitals is another signal that Ford is courting private investment in key

medical assets. The province, on the advice of McKinsey & Co., hopes to sell off the future income stream of OHIP payments to corporations willing to put up the private capital needed to buy the MRI machines and run the labs. While it appears to be a win for people served locally it comes at a higher price than if the equipment is owned by the hospital. Corporations that make the \$5 million plus investment in an MRI are not doing this out of benevolence but because they are guaranteed to be paid the actual costs plus the added cost of a profit. Profit is generally rationalized as a reward for the risk taken, but in this case, there is no risk.

### Trudeau and the privateers

Many are looking to the Trudeau government to stop the privatization agenda. Provincial Liberal parties are talking tough against Conservative premiers and vowing to fight. But their rhetoric is not in line with their behavior once in office as we have outlined.

Trudeau has no interest in ending for-profit care and has done little to challenge the provinces. In fact, he described Ford’s plan for more private service as ‘innovation’.

### Reforms and Capitalism

This process of underfunding and then shifting services to the private sector is going on around the world. Under the policies of the neoliberal economic models, cuts to the public sector are demanded as a means to balance budgets. This remains a central preoccupation for the international financial institutions like the IMF and World Bank which demand cuts to secure loans.

In most advanced capitalist states, the same process can be seen at work. In the UK, cuts to the NHS have resulted in a broken system and labour revolt among nurses being squeezed by the cost of living crisis.

This is not an aberration or just a product of neoliberal policies but is a central dynamic in the capitalist system which values profit above all else - including human needs.

And the profits generated by selling off necessary public services are enormous. The ruling class will not simply sit back and watch the opportunity for billions in profits to go unclaimed.

This profit motive is behind the cuts and the privatization processes we see. We will never finish this fight while the capitalist system remains in place.

### Resistance can win

The full-court press in favour of healthcare privatization by politicians, media and pundits is designed to convince people that resistance is futile, that the public system does not work and that there is no alternative to for-profit healthcare.

But privatization plans have been defeated before.

In early 2001, in a surprise announcement, Cancer Care Ontario – a government-appointed body that oversees the province’s cancer treatment – revealed that a renewable one-year contract had been given to their former Executive Vice President’s new private for-profit company to run an after-hours cancer treatment centre at Sunnybrook Hospital in Toronto.

*continues on next page...*



There is more than enough money to fund healthcare but capitalism prioritizes war and profit

# Nova Scotia health care in crisis

**E**mergency Room deaths in Nova Scotia have risen 10% in the past year, to 558. ERs are overworked in part because over 100,000 Nova Scotians have no personal physician.

The crisis was exemplified by the death of a young Amherst woman who went into cardiac arrest and died after waiting in excruciating pain for more than 6 hours in the regional ER. Alison Holthoff's pain was such that she had to lie on the waiting room floor for relief. Lack of staff was the cause.

Like his Tory counterparts in other provinces, Premier Tim Houston was quick to dump all pandemic public health measures after he was elected in 2021. Like them his solution to the crisis is privatization. The all-powerful Irving family have used their oil fortune to build a string of private hospitals from Quebec, through the Maritime provinces and south of the border into New England.

His response to Holthoff's high-profile death was to convene a round table meeting with "stakeholders" at which he pounded the

table and told them to "Go like hell." Some participants were baffled, wondering where exactly it was they were supposed to go like hell.



The whole performance was for the media. Ever the huckster, Houston has turned the annual State of the Province report into a fund-raising, corporate-first road show along with the Port of Sydney chamber of commerce (\$75 for members/investors, \$100 for non-members/investors; tables of 10 available for purchase.)

It is official: the Shittiest Tory Premier Derby has a new contest-

The contract for the clinic was awarded without tender by the then Mike Harris government, to avoid a public outcry.

This marked the establishment of the first profit-seeking clinic of this kind in Ontario since the inception of public Medicare. It was touted as the solution to wait times, and was supposed to operate without syphoning off staff from existing public cancer care clinics.

After the terms of this secret deal were revealed, and an audit was conducted, it was found that the clinic's costs were \$500 more per treatment than costs in public non-profit hospitals. The private clinic did nothing to reduce wait times for cancer treatment. The provincial auditor's findings, massive

work time out of local hospitals.

Doug Ford is rolling out the same playbook, claiming his policies will reduce wait times without poaching desperately needed staff from existing public facilities. We need to learn the lessons from the Tories' botched cancer-care privatization scheme, to debunk their lies and help organize the fightback against Ford.

## Working class

Increasingly people are realizing that we cannot reform a rotten system. But we are also seeing the alternatives on display. The recent fight by education workers in Ontario is a case in point. The workers defied a forced contract and back to work legislation by



Union members march for public healthcare in Toronto

public pressure, and a change in leadership at Cancer Care Ontario ultimately lead to the closure of the for-profit clinic in 2003.

Critically, there was no public accounting of where the clinic found their staff, though it was revealed that at least some of the nurses came from nearby non-profit Princess Margaret Hospital. Because it received more funding than the public cancer treatment centres, the clinic was able to pay its staff bonuses to attract their

striking in their tens of thousands. The power of the working class to shift the terrain and build a better world themselves can be seen in their fight. The struggle opened up new possibilities for a fightback.

The defeat of Ford on bill 28 has broadened the horizons of millions of people who want to fight.

But we will only win this fight completely when we are rid of the capitalist system which pursues profit above the lives of working people.

# How abortion rights were won

by: Carolyn Egan

**A** major victory was won when the Supreme Court of Canada overturned the federal abortion law in January of 1988. The campaign was situated in the broader context of reproductive freedom. Abortion rights were seen as one of a number of demands that the women's movement was struggling for in the fight for reproductive rights for all.

Before the law was struck down, there was access to abortion, but it was a very privileged access. In 1969, legislation had been passed which allowed abortions to be performed if they took place in an approved or accredited hospital with the consent of a therapeutic abortion committee. There was uneven interpretation of the law across the country and many hospitals did not establish committees. The law was unjust and denied women the right to make decisions over their reproductive health.

## OCAC

The Ontario Coalition for Abortion Clinics (OCAC) was formed in 1982. The group thought long and hard about how best to change an increasingly desperate situation for so many women. We looked at the circumstances in the province of Quebec where CLSCs (community health centres) and the Centre de santé des femmes (women's health centre) were providing abortions to women in their own communities. A lesson was learned from our sisters in Quebec and we modelled our campaign after theirs. The strategy was the combination of a doctor willing to challenge the law and a broad and representative movement willing to fight for the necessary changes.

OCAC has always been a grassroots, activist organization. The immediate objectives were to overturn the federal law and to legalize freestanding clinics providing medically insured abortions. We were fully aware of the limits of the notion of "choice." Full access to free abortion, as significant an advance as that would be, does not guarantee that all women have choices over their lives or over having or raising children. The definition of "choice" was broadened in our organizing.

## Pro-choice

OCAC stated that for all women to have real choices in our society they require safe and effective birth control services in their own languages and their own communities, decent jobs, paid parental leave, childcare, the right to live freely and openly regardless of their sexuality, employment equity, an end to forced or coerced sterilization, and, of course, full access to free abortion. All were required if women were to have reproductive freedom.

OCAC tried to ensure that the demand for abortion access was never seen in isolation, but as one of a number of interdependent struggles. We tried to make this concrete by challenging the coerced sterilization that Aboriginal women, women with disabilities and Black women were facing. We held joint forums on the issues with women speaking about the injustices that they were experiencing. Healthcare workers told us that therapeutic abortion committees sometimes refused abortions unless a woman agreed to be sterilized. We fought for childcare as a woman's right and campaigned against extra billing by doctors.

OCAC worked with Dr. Henry

Morgentaler and in 1983 he opened a clinic challenging the federal criminal code. The clinic became a symbol of women's resistance to an unjust law. A long campaign against two levels of government and an organized anti-choice movement began.

## Arrests

It did not take long before the police raided the facility, seized the medical equipment, and arrested Drs. Morgentaler, Scott and Smoling. This was not unexpected and OCAC had been building broad support. We knew we were going to be in a long, drawn-out campaign. We had to change the balance of power in the country, and while the issue had to be in the courts because of the arrests, the critical task was mobilizing the strong support that we knew existed for women's reproductive rights.

OCAC took a mass action approach. We did not leave the campaign to the lawyers or to the lobbying of politicians. We believed that tens of thousands of women and men would come into the streets across the country to fight for women's reproductive freedom. Groups took up the cause in every province and the Canadian Abortion Rights Action League (CARAL) fought side by side with us.

In linking struggles, OCAC was able to build a wide campaign through demonstrations, marches and rallies—in which thousands participated. Through our organizing, we were able to broaden the participation of trade unionists, students, AIDS activists, people of colour and immigrant women's organizations in the campaign. We understood that, without the active participation and the



Dr. Henry Morgentaler

support of thousands, no change would occur. The goal was to build a visible, mass movement that fought together for women's reproductive freedom.

## Collective victory

When the Supreme Court finally overturned the existing abortion law, it was through the strength of a broad and representative movement. It was a collective victory in which tens of thousands played an active role. The fact that OCAC understood that the state was not neutral—and was not acting in the interests of women—was critical to the success of our campaign. We believed that only a mass movement could change the balance of forces in the interest of all women.

There was a spontaneous demonstration of thousands of supporters outside the Morgentaler Clinic when the decision of the Supreme Court was announced. Women and men were dancing in the street! Similar rallies erupted across the country. Freestanding clinics were legalized in Ontario, fully covered by the healthcare system, and clinics began to open in other parts of the country as well.

It did not take long before the Conservative government in Ottawa began the process of introducing new legislation recriminalizing abortion.

Because of the strong roots that had been developed, a major campaign against a new law was launched. There was wide support from groups such as the National Organization of Immigrant and Visible Minority Women, the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Council of Jewish Women, the Federation des Femmes du Quebec, the United Church of Canada, the Canadian Medical Association, AIDS Action Now!, and a large range of provincial and local organizations across the country. There were national days of action and large numbers came out into the streets. Tragically, during this period, a young woman in Toronto died of a self-induced abortion because she believed a legal procedure was not available.

During the campaign against the new law and for increased access, anti-choice forces began another assault. "Operation Rescue," as they called it, started in Toronto in the fall of 1988 and attempted to blockade the entrance to the Morgentaler Clinic. They physically and verbally harassed women seeking abortions.

## Clinic defence

OCAC organized defence of the clinics, rejecting the argument that it should be left to the police to protect the facilities. We would link arms, chanting, "Racist, sexist, anti-gay: born-again bigots, go away" and "Campaign Life: your name's a lie. You don't care if women die!" These chants reflected the politics of the campaign. The broad support created the political pressure to defeat the legislation in the Senate in 1991, after it narrowly passed in the House of Commons.

There are now over 30 freestanding clinics providing funded abortions across the country. Access is much wider than when the campaign began in the early 1980s and sexual health services are more widely available, but the fight for reproductive justice is far from over. Prince Edward Island is still forcing women to go to the mainland to access abortions, and New Brunswick refuses to fund clinic procedures. Hospital amalgamations and healthcare cuts are reducing reproductive services in many areas. Women are still being harassed as they enter clinics.

The Conservative government initially refused to fund International Planned Parenthood and now gives money on the condition that it be allocated only in countries where abortion is illegal. There is no national childcare program, equal pay for work of equal value is still a dream for many, employment equity has not been implemented, systemic discrimination still exists and many of the other services necessary for women to have real choices in their lives are not in place. Private members' bills are regularly being introduced in the House of Commons to create barriers for women. To date, all have been defeated.

## Tactics

Support for reproductive justice is still very strong across the country. While the overall strategic situation has changed and will always change, the lessons of the campaign that was waged still remain relevant. The principles and tactics that were used created a broad-based movement for reproductive rights, which overturned the federal abortion law and created a network of clinics making abortion much more accessible for women who were previously denied.

# One year since the start of the Ukraine war

## End the killing — Peace talks now!

1. The war in Ukraine is a year old. We responded to the initial invasion with this assessment: ‘The Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February was an act of imperialist aggression and a violation of the Ukrainian people’s right to self-determination. For Ukrainians it is a war of national self-defence. At the same time from the side of Western imperialist powers led by the United States and organised through NATO it is a proxy war against Russia. The war is both an imperialist invasion of a former colony and part of an inter-imperialist conflict between the US and Russia with their allies. We are against both imperial powers. We express our solidarity with the Ukrainian people, supporting their right to resist the invasion. While doing so, we also oppose NATO and its expansion to the East.’ <https://internationalsocialists.org/announcements/ist-statement-on-the-war-in-ukraine>

2. Developments over the past year have vindicated this analysis. By choosing to invade Ukraine Vladimir Putin has inflicted great and unnecessary suffering on its people, but he has also embroiled Russia in a military and economic disaster. Thanks in large part to the weapons and training supplied by the US and its allies, the Ukrainian armed forces have been able to halt the Russian advance and push it back at points. The fighting has become a bloody war of attrition extracting a terrible human cost from both sides. The overdetermining factor in the Ukraine war is the expansion of the imperial sphere of power of the West (NATO and the European Union) under the leadership of the US on the one hand and the reclamation of Ukraine into the imperial sphere of power of Russia on the other.

3. Western governments’ denials that they are waging a war by proxy with Russia have long ceased to have any credibility. By imposing sanctions immediately after the invasion the West waged an economic war against Russia from the start. The advanced weapons systems NATO has rushed to Ukraine – perhaps most importantly the HIMARS multiple rocket systems – have hugely increased Kyiv’s striking power. Now they are beginning to supply armoured personnel carriers and tanks. In late January the US started combined arms combat training in Germany to enable Ukrainian battle formations to use these weapons effectively. This military support has gone well beyond allowing Ukraine to defend itself against the invasion and is increasingly designed to enhance its armed forces’ offensive capabilities. The NATO powers are now deeply involved in the Ukrainian war effort. For example, there are reports of British special forces’ involvement in raids on Crimea.

4. As a result, the defence of Ukraine’s national rights has been more and more subordinated to the geostrategic aims of the Western imperialist powers, reducing Ukraine increasingly to a NATO vassal state. The Zelenskyy government agitates for the combat aircraft and main battle tanks that it hopes would allow it to retake the whole of Ukraine, including Crimea. These demands are echoed enthusiastically by virtually the same Central and Eastern European states that were part of George W Bush’s ‘coalition of the willing’ backing the invasion of

Iraq almost twenty years ago in March 2003.

5. But the two most powerful Western states, Washington and Berlin, don’t seek a total Ukrainian victory. Their interest lies in keeping the war of attrition going. This reduces the risk of escalation into a war between Russia and the West and leaves Moscow bogged down in a war it cannot win. The fighters on both sides and the Ukrainian civilians suffering Russian atrocities and bombardment and driven from their homes are cannon fodder for the two rival imperialist blocs – the much more powerful Western alliance and Russia, increasingly propped up by China.

6. For US imperialism, the main axis of geostrategic conflict today is with China. The Biden administration has repeatedly stated that Beijing is the only power with both the economic and military capabilities and the political will to challenge the so-called ‘rules-based international order’ through which the US has sought to exercise its hegemony since 1945. From Washington’s perspective, Ukraine is simply one front in this global struggle. The war serves to

base of its Black Sea fleet Moscow might respond with nuclear escalation. The proxy war could then become a world war.

8. The Ukraine War is thus a threat to the whole of humankind. This is despite the fact that most states in the global South are either neutral or even sympathetic to Russia. Even if nuclear catastrophe is avoided, the economic disruption caused by the war, in particular its impact on energy and food inflation, is spreading impoverishment and hunger world-wide. Other wars – for example, the appalling conflict in Tigray in Ethiopia, which has taken 600,000 lives – receive a tiny fraction of the attention that Ukraine does. This underscores the hypocrisy of Western imperialism’s concerns about the lives lost and the humanitarian crises resulting from the Ukrainian war. The same double standards were reflected in the welcoming arms for Ukrainian refugees at the start of the war, whilst refugees from wars in Africa and the Middle East are shut out by Fortress Europe.

9. The bloodshed needs to end now:



Canadian Leopard tanks. Part of a massive buildup of NATO weaponry in Ukraine

weaken Russia and to bind Europe to the US. Hence the efforts to brigade Europe against China, reflected, for example, in the NATO summit in Madrid in June last year and its more recent meeting about Taiwan. The result is the growing militarization of Europe, as individual states – including nominally neutral Ireland – ramp up their military spending.

7. The logic of contained proxy war underlies the tortuously negotiated process behind the decisions by the US, Germany, and Britain to supply Ukraine with main battle tanks. But flooding more and more weapons into Ukraine can’t be as carefully calibrated as the Western imperialist powers hope. War is full of surprises, as the failure of Moscow’s initial offensive shows. A sudden Russian collapse might encourage a drive by Kyiv to reconquer Crimea. Faced with the prospect of a humiliating loss of the

· Russian troops out of Ukraine now!

· An immediate and unconditional end to NATO’s intervention on the side of the Ukrainian government! The fatal logic of escalation must be broken.

· Instead of expanding, NATO should be dissolved.

· We demand the withdrawal of NATO troops from its eastern flank – No expansion to the east – No to Sweden and Finland’s accession to NATO – Scrap the target for NATO member states to spend at least two percent of national income on the military.

· Rather than encouraging Zelenskyy to impose further neoliberal ‘reforms’, the Western powers and their international institutions should cancel

Ukraine’s debt and supply the resources it needs to rebuild.

· End the repression of dissent in Russia, Ukraine, and increasingly the West.

· All refugees are welcome, open the border for Russian and Ukrainian deserters and war resisters.

10. The anniversary of the outbreak of the Ukrainian War falls a few days after another anniversary – that of 15 February 2003, the gigantic day of global protest against the invasion of Iraq by the US and Britain. The anti-war movement is much weaker today. This is partly because those protests didn’t stop the invasion – it was armed resistance on the ground that broke the occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. More important, however, is the political disorientation caused by the development of the inter-imperialist conflict between the West, on the one hand, and China and Russia, on the other. Many peace activists are pulled towards one of the two sides. This is a mistake. Both the imperialist blocs are contending with each other to maintain and extend their economic and military domination. The exploited and oppressed of the world have no interest in either’s success. The movement for nuclear disarmament – which defied West and East alike at the height of the Cold War – must be revived.

11. The class issues at stake in the cost-of-living crisis have yet to affect popular attitudes to the war. But this will change. The ruling classes’ response to the inflationary upsurge exacerbated by the Ukraine crisis is to reimpose hard-money policies with the aim of forcing unemployment up and wages down. At the same time as they are thus making workers and the poor pay for the failure of their system, they are pouring resources into the military. The intensification of workers’ struggles that we see in countries such as France and Britain creates a space in which to build mass opposition to the war.

12. This inter-imperialist struggle, which threatens the very existence of humankind, is yet another sign that time is up for the capitalist system. It distracts from the developing climate catastrophe that urgently demands socialist revolution to rid the world of capitalism. We pledge ourselves again to devote all our efforts to help working people achieve this objective.

*Statement of the International Socialist Tendency*

### 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.*

Find us on: @socialist\_ca socialistca socialist.ca

### Never miss an issue.

Yearly subscription **\$30**  
Institutions, 1st Class & U.S. **\$50** international: **\$60**

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Phone: .....  
E-mail: .....

Mail to: PO Box 339, Station E,  
Toronto, ON Canada, M6H 4E3  
Phone: 416.972.6391 / E-mail: reports@socialist.ca

### WHERE WE STAND [socialist.ca/ourstand](http://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](http://socialist.ca/ourstand)**

### Join the Socialists

Name: .....  
Address: .....  
Phone: .....  
E-mail: .....

Fill in the form and send to **International Socialists**, PO Box 339 Station E Toronto ON M6H 4E3 416.972.6391 / reports@socialist.ca

# Defend Trans rights

Far-right forces across the country have begun targeting drag queen story time events as part of their campaign to attack trans rights but they have been defeated by broad community solidarity.

by: **Alex Adams**

**R**ecently, after a period in which many gains have been made, trans rights have become a target of the so-called “culture wars” and the “war on woke” waged by the far-right around the world.

This has gone hand in hand with attacks on Indigenous sovereignty and groups fighting back against racism. Right-wingers use buzzwords like “wokeism”, “critical race theory” and “cultural Marxism” to hide attacks on human rights.

Their supposed defence of “free speech” means expressing hatred for gains of mass movements such as Black Lives Matter, abortion rights, and the climate movement.

The right has built their attacks on trans rights over several years, recognizing that it is a wedge issue to open up space for attacks on other oppressed groups and to bring more people to their cause.

It is crucial to understand how these arguments are being used to fuel the general bigotry of the far-right forces.

At the Ottawa convoy protests last year, far-right groups carried transphobic placards calling for an end to teaching “gender ideology” in schools and “protection” for children against the same.

The People’s Party of Canada (PPC) released a statement in 2021 promising to “fight radical gender ideology”. They want to repeal Bill C-16, legislation passed in 2016 that added gender identity and expression to the Canadian Human Rights Act. Predictably, they are also against legislation banning conversion therapy.

On the provincial level, small groups and parties promise to fight “woke activism” on a number of fronts – they tie together racism, transphobia and homophobia.

Over the past year, there have also been increasing attacks on drag events – across both the US and Canada. The far right has been organizing to protest all ages drag events such as popular “drag queen story time” events in public libraries.

While these are not specifically trans events, we know trans issues are part of LGBTQ2S+ rights in general. Call-outs for right-wing protests often conflate gender and sexuality (similar to many other attacks on trans rights) and cite the need to “protect children” from gender and sexual confusion – that is, developing into well behaved gender normative, heterosexual adults.

To be clear, these events are about acceptance of self and others, expressing self identity, and of course fun and dressing up.

## Oppression and division

There is a political climate in which the right is growing. So it is especially important to take the right position on issues of oppression because oppression literally serves to divide working class resistance. Our starting point in today’s culture wars and conflicts over trans rights should be one of solidarity with trans, non-binary and gender-diverse people.

We need to show respect for how the oppressed self-identify, and resist claims that the rights of one

oppressed group (trans people) undermine those of another (women). Such arguments are inherently divisive and potentially reactionary, and they fail to identify oppression in capitalist societies as being driven from the top.

Well-funded right-wing lobby groups in the UK, US, Canada and elsewhere have access to the corridors of power in the Tory and Republican parties, and the Supreme Court. Prominent media spread disinformation, give platforms to transphobes and defend them when grass-roots organizing tries to shut them down.

All these attacks pretend concerns for the “safety” of women and girls from “biological men” accessing bathrooms and other gendered spaces, the alleged push by “predatory doctors and activists” for children and youth to identify as trans and undergo the gender transition process.

They also confuse gender identity and sexual orientation, asserting that children with gender dysphoria are “being encouraged to start transitioning”, but that otherwise they would all become gay or lesbian as adults.

## Hate and harm

These articles, reports and posts damage trans and gender-diverse people; transphobic misinformation has real consequences. Hate speech causes emotional damage and legitimates hate crimes. As Judith Butler recently wrote: “The fear is particularly prevalent when public figures—politicians, high profile newspaper columnists and so on—demonize trans people in print or on air; it makes the fear more pronounced because you worry someone is going to act on it”

Opposition to trans rights is a touchstone issue for ideological opponents of equality and apologists for capitalism. The central aims of capitalism—continued economic growth and the maximization of profit—now pose a clear existential risk to humanity in an era of war, environmental catastro-

phes and pandemics. Transphobia, just like anti-migrant racism, Islamophobia and antisemitism, is being deployed as a key weapon of the right to maintain its ideological and political control of society and minimize the potential for organized resistance.

A wedge issue that simultaneously unites the right and divides the left is dangerous. Of course, the right-wing never cared about women’s rights and the sexism and misogyny faced by women. By advancing transphobia, they hope to pry open other fronts in their decades-long wars against LGBT+ rights and women’s rights, for example, over school curriculums, abortion rights and so on.

## Biological essentialism

Transphobia from right and left shares an underlying biological essentialism. The same “radical feminists” who argued “biology is not destiny” in the abortion rights struggle now argue the converse—biology is all. Biological essentialism means that a person cannot “change sex”, that there are only two immutable sexes, and that consequently trans women remain potentially violent “men in drag”.

Yet, modern biological science offers a much more nuanced account of the sexed human body. This understanding of sex recognizes that the sex assigned at birth is neither immutable nor binary. People’s biological sex characteristics do change over time—they are not, as the transphobes claim, static. Changes occur throughout our lives, sometimes by choice and sometimes by circumstance, natural or otherwise. Moreover, how we categorize and give significance to sex and to its mutability is down to human culture and social relations.

Whether from right or left, abstract pleas for “debate and dialogue” display a lack of basic empathy with trans and non-binary people, expecting them to debate their own existence. They fail to accept that trans rights are human rights. Instead, their

biological essentialism leads them to deny that trans women are women and trans men are men and that non-binary identities are worthy of respect and dignity.



Conni Smudge addresses supporters at the Coquitlam Library

Trans oppression arises from the same roots as women’s oppression, the rise of class society and the consolidation of the nuclear family under capitalism. This happened as a consequence of the systematic oppression and dispossession of women and the subordination of women’s sexuality. Women’s oppression, heteronormativity, the gender binary, the commodification of women’s bodies and control over bodily autonomy are deeply embedded in capitalist ideology, as are homophobia and transphobia.

Sex, gender the oppression of women, and also gender-variance and non-heterosexual sex, exist in complex interaction—each affects the other reciprocally.

There is a constant tension within capitalism; although certain legal rights and protections may be won in some societies by oppressed groups as a result of pressure from below (for example, same-sex marriage, equal pay laws and nominal equal rights for trans people), these are all historically and socially contingent. They do not essentially undermine the capitalist mode of production’s reliance on the subordination of women for bearing and raising the next generation of workers.

Only an approach to human sexuality and gender variance that starts from the basic material factors of human societies—how human beings produce the things we need from the land and raw materials, how we organize to distribute these goods, who owns and controls what is produced—can provide a comprehensive understanding of how homophobia, biphobia and transphobia (and sexism) have emerged.

Trans liberation, as with liberation from other forms of oppression, is not possible within capitalism even though particular trans rights can and should be fought for and vigorously defended in the here and now. Without full political and economic power we lack the conditions for permanent freedom of all to express the diverse varieties of human sexuality and gender expression that make people whole.



Hundreds of community members shut down the bigots in Peterborough

## Israel ramps up attacks

New ultra-nationalist coalition is increasing repression and violence against Palestinians

by: Sid Lacombe

The new Israeli government has increased the killing of Palestinians to a level not seen since the intifada in the early 2000's. They killed 9 people in one attack on the camp at Jenin and followed that with fresh airstrikes against the people of Gaza including strikes against the densely packed al-Maghazi refugee camp.

The world heard a lot about the response from some Palestinians who retaliated by killing worshipers at a synagogue in Jerusalem. Most mainstream coverage started with that attack and in many cases left it at that. On CBC the coverage did acknowledge that some Palestinians had 'died' but without any reference to that fact that they were massacred by Israeli troops.

### New government

The new government, headed by the same old Benjamin Netanyahu, is rife with a layer of vicious settler groups who are now exerting a level of influence which would have seemed impossible only a few years ago. It is an indication that the state is moving further to the right.

Netanyahu has cobbled together a coalition including The Religious Zionist Party (RZP), Otzma Yehudit, and Noam, all far right forces who are rewriting Israel's laws and policies to further punish Palestinians.

The ultra-nationalist Otzma Yehudit's leader Itamar Ben Gvir is now the minister of national security and has introduced a series of new laws including legalization of settler outposts in the West Bank, making it an arrestable offence to fly the Palestinian flag and reintroducing the death penalty for enemies of the state.

He has already stirred the pot by visiting the Al-Aqsa Mosque which was seen as a deliberate provocation. He has a huge amount of influence and now has direct control over police and army

sections.

Ameer Makhoul director of the Union of Arab Community-Based Associations, wrote that, "Under the coalition agreement, he (Ben Gvir) now has control over a part of the army — 12 border guard battalions experienced in suppressing Palestinians through home raids, violent arrests, and snipers. The national police is now also completely subject to Ben Gvir's whims, from his views on operational aspects

such as loosening open-fire regulations, to wider policies regarding arrests of people waving Palestinian flags and shooting of Palestinian protesters."

He is only one of many extremists that are now at the head of powerful ministries in the country. Religious Zionist Party head Bezalel Smotrich, now the newly minted Finance Minister was heard on tape describing himself as a fascist homophobe. His party is well know

for its attacks on LGBTQ people including harassing the Jerusalem Pride events holding signs that said "Israel is the holy land - not the homo land."

The new government is moving quickly and have already announced that they plan to force more than 1,000 Palestinians from their homes in the Masafer Yatta area of the West Bank. The only thing that has stopped them is the fear of a widespread revolt among Palestinians.

The revolt in May 2021 was huge and garnered widespread support abroad with mass solidarity rallies around the world. It even led to labour strikes that crippled some industries in Israel.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Israel to show his solidarity with the state. He spoke at a press conference with Netanyahu and although he suggested that settlement development needs to stop - because the US fears that the loss of that smokescreen would further radicalize some Palestinians. But he told the press that the US would never abandon the Israeli state. "It's important that the government and people of Israel know America's commitment to their security remains ironclad," Blinken said. "That commitment is backed up by nearly 75 years of United States support. America's commitment has never wavered; it never will."

Canada has likewise reiterated their support for the Israeli state despite the new settlement construction directly violating international law.

For Canada and the US, the need to maintain Israel as an imperial bulwark in the middle east will always trump the rights of Palestinians.

The revolts of Palestinians against the vicious colonization of their lands remains a central feature of the global resistance to Imperialism. The new Israeli government is hell bent on ramping up the killing and dispossession. There will be fresh attacks and we all need to be ready to act to stop the brutal violence of the apartheid Israeli state.



## Don't deport Zain Haq!

by: Bradley Hughes

Zain is an international student at Simon Fraser University and a tireless climate activist. The Canadian government is using his status as an international student to try to stop his climate activism.

Zain has been involved in numerous climate actions many of which involved non-violent civil disobedience. He organized a hunger strike calling on SFU to divest from fossil fuels. The university capitulated in less than a day. He is also one of the co-founders of Save Old Growth, which organized blockades on highways this summer.

In response, the Canada Border Services Agency has taken away his work permit and student visa. They also are trying to have him deported to Pakistan where he faces persecution for his actions and beliefs.

Pressure on the federal Liberals to stop the deportation of Zain Haq is growing. An online petition to the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Refugees now has almost 2500 signatures. The Simon Fraser Student Society supports the call to let Zain stay. KAIROS is a social justice organization of Canadian churches and religious organizations. They have joined the call to let Zain stay.

There are several injustices here. While climate activists like Zain are sent to jail, the climate criminals in the oil and gas companies, the banks that finance them, and the premiers and Prime

Minister who subsidize them are all walking free.

There is also shameful double standard when it comes to people in Canada who are not citizens or permanent residents. They must fear that if

they step out of line they can be deported away from their work, studies and/or family. And this punishment isn't part of the criminal law system, it's meted out by CBSA agents without due process.

If Zain is deported it sends a clear message to every international student and those on work permits, you can't participate in political dissent unless you are willing to risk being deported. And of course, CBSA and the police have been so heavy-handed with Zain because his dissent threatens the billions in profits made from resource extraction.

Don't let them deport Zain Haq!

### Take action:

Zain needs your support. There is an online letter to the Prime Minister and Immigration Minister that you can sign, and a GoFundMe page to help with his legal expenses. Please go to [Socialist.ca/Zain](https://socialist.ca/Zain) for the links to those pages.

Contact your MP and ask them to request the Minister of Citizenship, Immigration and Refugees grant Zain's appeal to stay in Canada on humanitarian and compassionate grounds.

If you want to get involved in the campaign to stop the deportation email the Vancouver branch of the IS and we'll forward your email to Zain: [VancouverIS@socialist.ca](mailto:VancouverIS@socialist.ca)

