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From **Turtle Island** to **Palestine**

BUILD THE RESISTANCE



There have been massive ongoing demonstrations around the world calling for an end to the massacre in Gaza. These events are reshaping people's understanding of the world.

Israel's genocidal assault on Palestine – and the lock-step support given to this slaughter by the US, UK and Canada – are grim emblems of the horrors into which capitalism plunges humanity to save the system.

Israel has led one of the highest-intensity bombing campaigns in human history in Gaza, generating destruction “comparable in scale to the most devastating urban warfare in the modern record,” according to the Washington Post. As of January 2nd, 22,185 Palestinians had been killed in Gaza since October 7th, and 70% of Gaza's 439,000 homes and half its buildings had been damaged or destroyed.

In the face of this carnage, Canada has played a shameful role supporting Israel. While Canada did support the non-binding vote at the UN December 12th calling for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire, in reality the Canadian state has been

complicit in Israel's murderous assault in every way.

The only reason for Trudeau's change of heart at the UN is the growing movement in Canada and globally, supporting Palestinians and calling for an end to Israel's massacre. It is this movement that has challenged Trudeau's weasel words. Importantly, it is making the links between Canada as a settler colonial state itself, and its ongoing support for Israel's crimes.

Gaslighting and repression are increasingly the key methods deployed by governments in the face of mass movements demanding change. This is as true of struggles by Indigenous peoples for self-determination, as it is of the climate justice movement and workers' struggles.

This is because they have no solutions to the multiple and mutually-reinforcing crises capitalism has generated. This was on display at

the recent COP28 conference in Dubai, where Canada's commitments fell farcically short of what is needed to seriously tackle accelerating greenhouse gas emissions, considering Canada's massive contribution to those emissions through unprecedented wildfires in 2023.

It is movements on the ground that have made the greatest strides in combating runaway climate change. In 2023, the successful divestment campaigns at three federated colleges of the University of Toronto, at McGill and the University of Manitoba show the potential for concrete wins. And a recent study by the Indigenous Environmental Network found that Indigenous resistance across Turtle Island has stopped or delayed greenhouse gas pollution equivalent to at least one-quarter of annual U.S. and Canadian emissions.

Building solidarity with Indigenous-led

resistance to projects like the Coastal Gaslink (CGL) Pipeline in BC and the so-called Ring of Fire in Ontario will be critical in this next period. Wet'suwet'en land defenders arrested for opposing the CGL pipeline will be in court on January 8th. And the Land Defence Alliance – representing five First Nations whose combined territories cover 60,000 square kilometres in Northern Ontario – is building on the 6,000-strong protest last September to defend their right to self-determination.

In all of these struggles, deepening links with workers' struggles will be crucial. 2023 ended with a magnificent mass strike in Quebec that forced concessions from the Legault government. Such mass workers struggles, when they intersect with the movements against imperialism, colonialism and climate crisis, have the potential power to challenge this crisis-ridden system.

Housefather, horsefeathers, and genocide cheerleading

In October a hitherto nondescript Liberal MP took it upon himself to become parliament's loudest, unquestioning cheerleader for Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza. Anthony Housefather is full of horse feathers.

Oh he had plenty of allies. Virtually every elected official, from Toronto's newly minted "progressive" mayor Olivia Chow, to Ontario's top Mafioso Doug Ford, to the Canadian association of Chiefs of Police, were quick to denounce the almost immediate solidarity rallies with Palestine as "hate" events. Keffiyeh shawls became "hate scarves". Chanting "Palestine will be free" became "hate speech".

PMJT rushed to the podium and restated Canada's unswerving support for Israel. Support isn't just words, Canada exported \$21,329,783.93 in military goods to Israel in 2022. Even when adjusted for inflation, this makes 2022 the third-highest year for Canadian military exports to Israel on record.

This "unswerving support" has been subtly building and fostered for decades. The Israeli lobby has been tirelessly organizing "good will" trips for MPs, provincial politicians, trade officials, sympathetic academics and, disturbingly, a long list of police officials, RCMP functionaries and security experts.

In 2005, under the then OLP McGuinty government, a 6-person police delegation journeyed at Israel's expense, to study ways to enhance Ontario's security measures.

Those "enhancements" came in handy a few years later when Toronto hosted the G20 summit in 2010. The result was the biggest single abuse of human rights in Canadian history, squandering billions of dollars and involving over 20,000 cops and security agents.

Housefather didn't ride out to Israel alone. His posse included Tory Deputy Leader Melissa Lantsman, far-right Con Michelle Rempel Garner, Tory MP Marty Morantz and Liberal Marco Mendicino. They were accompanied by about 60 Canadian Zionist supporters and business-people, no doubt to carry souvenirs and guide them through

the segregated, apartheid road system that can be so pesky for visitors.

The junket, which the CBC report called "quietly planned" was not quietly received. Although not met by war-criminal Benjamin Netanyahu himself, the MPs were briefed by the next-worst things, top military advisors and far-right politicians.

"I want to make sure that it is clear to Israelis that Canadians support them." Horse-feathers brayed.

The trouble with his widely reported statement is that it just

slaughter."

"There's been polling in recent years that shows that rank and file ordinary Canadians are way ahead of their government. Regardless of which political orientation they have, whether they're Conservatives, Liberal, NDP, Green or Bloc, they are far more supportive of the Palestinian cause than is the Government of Canada."

Of particular concern was a growing cohort of young North American and European Jews willing to break with the Zionist

instructive. It uses vaguely worded language to actually blunt the fight against real antisemitism, which is primarily the work of a resurgent far-right, neo-Nazi movement, and shift the blame to Palestinian Human Rights solidarity and legitimate criticism of Israel.

It laid the basis to attack academic freedom in schools and universities. It was used to censor and attack student-run Palestine solidarity events on university campuses. It took place alongside a general rising tide of Islamophobia, being fostered by government complicity with the "war on terror" emanating from Washington.

Israel was Western imperialism's "loyal little Ulster in the Middle East" and could do no wrong. Contempt for international law grew. Israel dropped all pretense of allowing the existence of any Palestinian state entity, not even a ghetto/prison Bantustan like Gaza. A series of increasingly blood-thirsty, corrupt and fascistic Israeli coalition governments came and went. Ethnic cleansing and genocidal rhetoric increased.

And the suffering and misery of the people of Gaza increased – deprived of water, power, work and respite.

The ruling class thought it had its ideological ducks in a row, and went about its business.

And in less than a week the whole thing blew up in the faces of Washington, London, Ottawa and Israel. Innocents were being slaughtered and the word was watching, worse, the world was taking action. IRHA or no IRHA, the taboo against criticizing the apartheid state of Israel was broken for good and all time.

Housefather – MP for who?

Governments panicked and shrilly denounced massive, peaceful solidarity rallies, but their insincerity and desperation was palpable. They lied, recycled atrocity stories from previous war-drives and were swept aside. Millions marched, blocked banks, occupied arms factories. Indigenous people blocked shipping routes and

disrupted trade.

In Canada petty vandalism of a bookstore was hyped as an anti-Semitic hate crime. A few activists were dragged from bed in pre-dawn raids. Lawyers and doctors who expressed solidarity with Palestine were threatened with dismissal and placed on a new-McCarthyist black list.

But only the most zealous Zionist crackpots were buying it.

The junket to Israel led by MP Housefather mentioned at the top of this story was not his first. As a rookie MP, within 7 days of his election he was jetting – all expenses paid of course – to Tel Aviv for a meeting of the World Jewish Congress. You would think that a rookie MP would be learning the ropes about how parliament works and how to represent their constituents. Young Housefather was clear from the git – go where his duties lay: "As a Jewish parliamentarian, my constituents expect me to be interested in that."

So even as popular support for Palestine was growing, as irrefutable evidence was mounting of a brutal one-sided campaign of genocidal ethnic cleansing, the crises in Ottawa, Washington and the corridors of Oligarchic power were deepening.

Through it all, the right of Israel to impose its will is challenged. In fact, the legitimacy of the sub-imperialist settler state imposed on the region in 1948 is being legitimately re-evaluated.

So here we are. Would-be McCarthyists like Anthony Housefather take it upon themselves to implore Canadian universities to crack down on academics and students who speak and demonstrate in solidarity with Palestine.

Housefather has quickly earned the reputation as "Netanyahu's right-hand man" in Ottawa. Even as Trudeau has to bow to the movement's demand for ceasefire, Housefather contradicts him and becomes more shrill.

While this will earn him a solid place in the Zionist lobby, choosing just now to be a tin-pot McCarthy is a questionable career move.



Housefather meets with former Israeli PM and right-wing warmonger Naftali Bennett

isn't true. Support for Palestine has been gaining steadily for decades, especially among young people. Crucial has been the slow-but steady call for non-violent solidarity measures like the tactics that help defeat apartheid South Africa – Boycott, Sanctions and Divestment. And decades-long illegal occupation of Palestinian communities by ultra-Zionist "settlers" created a PR nightmare for the state that wanted to keep its ethnic cleansing ambitions on the low-down.

According to James Kafieh, VP of the Palestinian Canadian Congress, "Canadians do care about human rights, and they can see the contempt for human rights that's evident in the present government as it relates to Palestinians. Ordinary people see the

playbook. Here in Canada groups like Independent Jewish Voices and Canadians For Peace and Justice in the Middle East have been invaluable resources. The recently formed Jews Against Genocide is cementing that growing movement.

IHRA: Anti-Israel = anti-Semitic

The Zionist lobby group International Holocaust Remembrance Association recognized the dangers implied by the changes in attitude, and has been stealthily working to introduce bogus laws that conflate criticism with of Zionism and the actions of the state of Israel as anti-Semitic.

The introduction of Bill 168 in Ontario in 2020, is dangerously

Stay gassy, Ontario

Two years ago Doug Ford gave a big present to one of his favourite constituencies: drivers. He scrapped the \$120 annual car registration fee, giving away well over a billion dollars annually used to maintain roads and highways.

But fees or no, drivers remain responsible for registering their vehicles each year, just like periodically renewing their licence.

Now police report that drivers are "forgetting" to register at a record pace.

At the same time, impaired driving charges in Ontario are dangerously spiking. 2023 saw more than 10,000



impaired driving charges, an increase of 16% over the previous year.

Consequences for drunk driving remain a joke. The driver who killed a Muskoka father of 4 on his way to work was found guilty, but sentenced to 30 days in jail, a year probation and 2 year driving ban.

So more drunks are driving unregistered cars on more poorly maintained roads.

What better time for the Ford government to open up the sale of beer, wine and spirits at corner stores, gas stations and groceries all over the province.

What could go wrong?

Tax cuts kill

Saskatchewan's premier Scott Moe chose New Years Day to post a boastful meme, saying that between elimination of carbon tax and cuts to income tax increased "affordability" by more than \$720.

I guess affordability comes with a different kind of pricetag.

New stats show that, across Canada, life expectancy is falling. The drop is sharper in some provinces than others, and Saskatchewan is the worst – or should we say briefest - place to live.

Over the past 3 years, Saskatchewan life expectancy fell by two full years to, 78.5 in 2022 from 80.5 in 2019.

Average rent in Saskatoon is \$1300. Is less than a month's rent worth 2

years of your life?

Of course COVID has an impact on those stats, but all provinces have had COVID to deal with. This is a reminder that Saskatchewan's COVID response was the national worst. Tax cuts and public health cuts kill, full stop.



Quebec workers show the way

The public sector strike in Quebec saw more than a half a million workers walk out for a series of rotating strikes throughout November and December. While most workers were part of a huge Common Front, one teachers federation (FAE) organized an unlimited strike and walked the picket line through the whole month of December.

Spirits were high on all the lines and polling showed huge majorities in support of the strike. It was not only about protecting pensions and fighting for better wages—although those were central demands. It was also about protecting public services more generally.

In the early stages of the fight, the right-wing CAQ government told the workers that there would be no movement on their demands and that the workers needed to be flexible and accept deteriorating conditions. The workers responded by shutting the province down.

Now the government has blinked.

They have offered new packages addressing workers' concerns about working conditions. There are tentative deals being ironed out and the call for an unlimited general strike to start this year has been temporarily shelved. At the time of writing, there are still discussions going on with various sections of the sector and the call for a strike may be renewed if the demands fall short.

There is always a gap between the ambitions of the workers and the union leaders. Many of those leaders have capitulated in the past, and there is no guarantee that they will keep up the fight—especially against the advancing privatization of the healthcare sector. But it will be harder for them to sell out the workers this time. The post-pandemic labour situation is different than during the last Common Front negotiation in 2016. The “essential workers” who kept the system afloat during the pandemic understand the fragility of the public services

and how vital they are to public health. The cost of living crisis has also pushed workers towards more militant demands in both public and private sector strikes around the country.

workers have to protect their jobs and public services. Contrast the Quebec struggle with that in Ontario and we see what happens when workers are demobilized.

In both Ontario and Quebec,



More than 500,000 workers hit the streets in Quebec

Regardless of the outcome of these negotiations, it is clear that the strike is still the best weapon that

the governments have passed laws to bring more privatization into the public system. This will have

devastating effects for working people. In Quebec, some of the worst aspects of that deterioration have been stayed by the workers' actions. In Ontario, the main union federation has only organized one day of action with rallies around the province – in June of 2023.

There have been opportunities to build mass workers' actions in the public sector. The education workers strike in Ontario managed to defeat a Tory anti-strike law and gave a glimmer of what worker's power can achieve. But that movement was squandered when the leaders shut down pickets and then—after a short negotiation—told the workers to accept a horrible deal rather than retake the initiative and walk out.

All of this, once again points to the need to develop rank and file movements that can organize workers independently or in opposition to their own leaders in the event that they capitulate to the bosses.

Quebec government votes for healthcare privatization

by: **Faline Bobier**

Just before the holidays, Quebec's CAQ-led provincial government passed their Bill 15, very similar to the Ford government's recently adopted Bill 60. The bill was forced through after the CAQ (Coalition avenir Québec) ended debate by invoking closure. The main purpose of both laws is to push ahead with the privatization of public health care, in particular by allowing surgeries and procedures currently mostly performed in public hospitals and institutions, to be performed by private for-profit clinics.

Quebec Premier François Legault, the head of the CAQ, has an agenda and a conservative politic very similar to that of Doug Ford. After bill 15 was forcibly passed into law, Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, a member of the National Assembly and spokesperson for Québec Solidaire said, “Legault claims that his government has the courage to change. This isn't change. It's the same process of centralisation and privatization that has been going on in the health care sector for the last twenty-five years.”

Nadeau-Dubois went on to say that the CAQ approach is the exact opposite to that of Québec solidaire, who believe that it's necessary to listen to the workers who have kept the public healthcare system afloat in spite of the years of cuts in both salaries and services that threaten both workers and patients.

Just as in Ontario this law was fought by women's, patient and community organizations and most importantly by health care workers themselves. The Common Front strikes in Quebec, launched before the holidays, represent the biggest threat to Legault's plans to move full-steam ahead with a massive push to further open up public health care to the vultures of privatization.

The same lies are being used to push privatization in Quebec and Ontario: it will cut costs, it will 'help' the public system by taking some of the burden off, it will make care more 'efficient'. As numerous studies have shown, privatizing does not make for more 'efficient' care. It siphons off resources and staff from the public health care system, does not decrease waiting lists for critically needed surgery and serves only to line the pockets of the privateers, who upsell unneeded extras to people desperate for treatment.

The passage of Bill 15 in Quebec won't go without a fight. The Women's Action Network in Health and Services in Quebec stated, “What is the main difference between public and private? Public healthcare has a mandate to assure the quality of services offered, the well-being of those receiving the services. The main goal for private healthcare is profits, to make money on the services being offered and, year on year, to increase those profits. If private health care is looking to make profit, how can they pretend to offer less costly services? It's absurd!”

The Ontario and Quebec governments are at the heart of a disastrous move to privatize health care, with the complicity of the federal government.

Ontario activists will be looking to the struggles in Quebec, and in particular, to the fate of the Common Front strikes, which include hundreds of thousands of health care workers fighting to improve their working conditions but also the conditions of patients across Quebec. And the fight in Quebec can gain inspiration from the organizing in Ontario this past year, including mass organizing for a referendum on healthcare privatization which saw 400,000 people vote 99% against Ford's plans, as well as mass action that drew 10,000 people to Queen's Park.

Benjamin Moore Workers join the rise in militancy

by: **Carolyn Egan**

The affordability crisis is not ending and people are hurting. Shelters are way over capacity, refugees are sleeping on the streets, mortgage rates are high, and rents are out of control. The average cost of a one bedroom apartment in Toronto is \$2502 per month, with a two bedroom going for \$3353. A rent survey recently showed an increase of over 27% in the last year. Toronto leads the pack in cities across the country, but many are not far behind.

Bosses make billions

Canada's 100 highest paid CEOs made 246 times what an average worker earns in a year, shown in a survey done by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. Families in Ontario are expected to pay an additional \$700 this year in grocery bills. This is unsustainable for working families and the poor.

Chris Ramsaroop from Justica for Migrant Workers was quoted in the media demanding that migrant workers be given full freedom of movement from one job to another. Unless they can prove abuse, they are tied to one employer. They are exploited, working under terrible conditions. Recently a class action suit was launched asking for almost a half a billion dollars for seasonal agricultural workers who have been denied benefits. They are not eligible for Employment Insurance even though they pay into the fund.

But these conditions have not been going unanswered by workers

across North America. In the United States 2023 has been called the year of the strike. Over 500,000 have walked the picket line. SAG/AFTRA members were out for months in a high profile strike which won 14% over three years and significant increases in working conditions, which had been long sought. The United Auto Workers, which has been calling for a cease fire in Gaza, won significant wage increase with the Big Three. The leadership called partial and rotating work stoppage, activists thought even more could have been won if it was an all out strike. The lines were militant and gave inspiration to others. 75,000

lessons learned about the strength of collective action.

The Common Front brought out over 500,000 public sector workers and teachers in Quebec. They stood up to the provincial government and had broad support from the public, who overwhelmingly sided with the strikers. We have not yet seen the development of rank and file networks but there is evidence of workers self organizing which hopefully will lead to more.

It's not just large workplaces. A Benjamin Moore warehouse north of Toronto was recently unionized by the United Steelworkers. There are seventeen members and each

and every one has been is on the line since November 10th. They have entirely shutdown their workplace and have led secondary picketing at paint outlets, getting good support from customers. In speaking to them they are committed to the fight and know that they are part of building a renewed labour movement.

The bosses have not gone back to the table. A lot of pressure has been put on the company which values its reputation for produc-

ing high quality paint. This has to be kept up. It's the first facility that has been unionized in their chain and the strikers think that management fears that a good contract will spark organizing at other locations. These workers reflect the diversity of Toronto and are fighting a strong battle for decent wages and their rights at work. Support the campaign, go out to the picket line and join secondary pickets at paint outlets. Solidarity with striking workers is what wins strikes!



Holding the line at the Benjamin Moore warehouse

health care workers at Kaiser Permanente also walked off the job demanding better conditions.

In Canada we saw members turning down tentative agreements, the International Longshore and Warehouse Workers, United Steelworkers at National Steelcar, Metro grocery workers and others. They showed both management and their union leaderships that they wanted more and were not afraid to strike to get it. You could sense the militancy on the lines and the

Antisemitism, Zionism and Socialism

Jewish socialist Peter Votsch looks at the history of Zionism and antisemitism and the tasks for today. “Only united workers’ struggle can create a world free from antisemitism and all forms of racism.”

By: **Peter Votsch**

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) has defined calling the state of Israel ‘racist’, as a form of antisemitism. As such, IHRA has condemned the human rights organization Amnesty International (which uses the term ‘apartheid’ to describe Israel) and other human rights organizations, movements, trade unions and community organizations as “racist” due to their criticism of Israel. Ironically, in their rush to squelch public opposition to Israel, they have included Jewish organizations, inside and outside of Israel, who call for an end to the colonial settler state.

This is hardly new. There is not just one Jewish tradition – Zionism – as IHRA would have it. There is another, based on class, and a view that only workers’ struggle can create a world free from antisemitism and all forms of racism. Thus, it is important to look at these traditions and how they arose.

The origins of Zionism

Zionism found its origins in Europe in the 1890s, in the wake of the “Dreyfus Affair” – the trial of a French Army officer, Alfred Dreyfus, brought up on charges of spying, found ultimately to be false. The damage, however, had been done, as a wave of antisemitism swept Europe. The Dreyfus trial was attended by none other than Theodore Herzl, considered the father of modern Zionism, as a journalist. His view was that antisemitism, as a form of racism, was inevitable and could not be fought. The only solution would be a separate state for the Jews. This view was further confirmed in 1903, when a “pogrom” (anti-semitic race riot) took place in the Russian town of Kishinev, where Jews were slaughtered in their hundreds by a mob incited by the Russian Tsarist government.

The Bund

The General Jewish Labour Bund of Lithuania, Poland and Russia (known as ‘the Bund’) was formed in 1897, in Vilnius, Lithuania. It united Jewish workers and

socialists who identified with the growing Social Democratic (revolutionary) movement in Russia. Members of the Bund also concerned themselves with fighting antisemitism. But unlike the middle class Zionist movement, they did not see antisemitism as inevitable. They rejected promoting Jewish separation as a response, in the search for a state for Jews. Quite the opposite: Bund members, revolutionary internationalists, saw the future of Jewish workers as bound up with the ‘workers of the world’. They believed that antisemitism was a feature of the capitalist system, which needed to be overthrown.

Zionism and Imperialism

The early Zionist movement set about looking for a viable state for Jews – not in the Middle East,

movement, Chaim Weizmann, saw this as an opportunity to offer up support for the British, should they allow or encourage Jewish immigration to Palestine. In so doing, Weizmann did not mince his words, promising that Jews who went there would “... develop the country, bring back civilization, and form a very effective guard for the Suez Canal”.

The Balfour Declaration

Prior to the end of the war and British control over Palestine, a minister in the British government, Lord Balfour, declared his support for the Zionist movement, and stated his intention for a “national home for the Jewish people ... under the protection of the British Crown”. Thus, came the marriage of the Zionists with imperial interests in the region,

a minority view in the Jewish community. The majority of Jews supported the Bund. In 1921, the Bund (by then the “Communist Bund”) merged with the Bolsheviks (by then the Communist Party). During the Russian Revolution of 1917, Bund members were very well represented in leading positions.

However, two events happened to weaken this bond between Jewish workers and non-Jewish workers in Eastern Europe in particular, and Europe in general. The first was the defeat of the nascent workers’ state in Russia by imperialist invasion by numerous Western armies, led by Zionist supporter Winston Churchill. This led to the establishment of Stalinist dictatorships, which were only too willing to use anti-semitism to achieve their ends. Second, was

The Racist State

This emigration to Palestine, supported by imperialism and its middle class Jewish allies, was always a racist project. Slogans such as “Jewish Land, Jewish Labour, Jewish Produce” (used by the exclusively Jewish ‘trade union’, the Histadrut) and “a land without people to a people without a land” helped cement development of racist Jewish-only communities, separate from the indigenous Palestinian population. The terrorism of the Hagana (Zionist army) was a natural and inevitable consequence of this, forcing thousands of Palestinian peasants from their lands and out of Palestine itself. We are seeing the result of Israel’s racist birth today. This racism has not only been on display towards the Palestinians, but also migrant African workers, and indeed Mizrahi Jews. These immigrants from Asia and Africa were destined from the beginning of the construction of Israel to be the labour force used by the Ashkenazi (European) Jews, and hence, second class citizens in their ‘own’ state.

Back to the Bund

What we are seeing now, in the shadow of the genocidal attack on Gaza, is a split like never before among Jews. Independent Jewish Voices, Jewish Voice for Peace, Not in Our Name, supported by a number of Jewish led human rights organizations in Israel, have joined Palestinians and peoples from all over the war in protests and civil disobedience. This visible role played by Jewish-led organizations opposing Israel’s murderous policies has challenged the hold of Zionism.

There has also been a dangerous rise in antisemitism throughout North America since Israel’s bombardment of Gaza began. The answer to confronting antisemitism is the same as it was 100 and more years ago. It lies in the unity of Jews and non-Jews in the struggle against racism, beginning with the fight to replace the colonial settler state with a democratic, secular Palestine, where all who reside there, and the Palestinian Diaspora, can belong.



Jews against Genocide occupy Union Station in Toronto

but in Argentina, as there had been little interest to that point of Jews returning to “their” land of ancestry. In fact, the destination of choice of Jews facing racism in Europe was not Palestine, but the United States. In the fallout of the First World War, the British took over as colonial masters of Palestine after the defeat of Turkey. The new leader of the Zionist

and Palestine in particular. Ironically, Balfour and other Western nations saw this as a desirable alternative to accepting Jews into their own countries. The Zionists were well aware of this racist attitude and were happy to take full advantage of it.

Zionism picks up steam

From its inception, Zionism was

the horrors of the extermination camps set by the Nazis. These events accelerated Jewish emigration to Palestine. While Western Europe and North America were still the chosen destinations for most Jews, Zionists were willing to turn a blind eye to the anti-semitic exclusion of Jews traveling there, in return for encouraging Jewish emigration to Palestine.

Automated Genocide: How Israel's 'The Gospel' is a 'mass assassination factory'

by: Rohit Revi

On Nov 2nd, the IDF issued a statement which revealed that much of the military 'intelligence' that guides their operations in 2023 are based upon an Artificial Intelligence tool called Hasbora or The Gospel. While details regarding the creation and operation of this tool currently remain obscure, investigative journalists at *+972 magazine* and *Local Call* have put together a shocking report based on revelations from insider sources which include those working at IDF. This report provides insights into just how inhuman the Israeli war-machine is, how it's very technological design is built to enable indiscriminate targeting and bombing of Palestinian civilians, and just how extensive the ongoing violations of human rights, international law, and the 1949 Geneva Convention are.

War Crimes of The Gospel

As to be expected, the statement by the IDF itself reveals very little about Hasbora, other than its name and the fact that it is an

hardly be trusted.

Scholars on military technology have been warning for many years about the ethical risks underlying military dependency and trust on evolving Autonomous Weapons Systems. The level of complex and contextual intelligence that is required to reliably generate, verify, and ascertain a something or someone as 'military target' in the real world, while also remaining cognizant of international legal imperatives such as the 1949 Geneva Convention, is simply a non-existent capacity for any AI tool that exists today. Let alone in the realm of war, even within the relatively safer commercial realm of AI tools, the extensive risks of 'misinformation' that underly digital intelligence has been a major focal point of discussions recently, with even the so-called 'Godfather of Artificial Intelligence', Dr Geoffrey Hinton, resigning from Google citing the severity of 'existential risk' posed by unfettered deployment of AI tools. It is upon this unstable, untrustworthy technological domain of probabilistic AI, that Israel is basing its entire military

verification machines are which make inferences based on biometric or visual data-points, and how they regularly mistake identities and provide inaccurate results, when distinguishing people with darker skin tones and other non-European features. The tool is based largely on pattern identification and matching. That is to say, if two people look or dress similar, behave similarly, or frequent similar localities, they are probabilistically quite likely to be identified in place of each other by a tool, even if they appear radically distinct to the human eye. This is particularly common when the datasets that are used to 'train' machines are largely drawn from Euro-centric data. These machines would have far less success rate in being able to distinguish between two people from a different ethnicity or locality, and are more likely to make incorrect identifications. Even in our everyday world of commercial tools for identity recognition, many Black, Arab or Asian people who may have 'face-lock' enabled on a smartphone and a sibling who looks similar to them, can testify just how imprecise and inaccurate

generating around 100 military targets a day (compared to 50 targets a year that was possible to human analysts), ranking them based on threat-levels and extent of civilian casualties to be expected, and at least around 50% of those targets are bombed by the IDF on a daily-basis.

The Gospel is said to be generating around 100 military targets a day (compared to 50 targets a year that was possible to human analysts), ranking them based on threat-levels and extent of civilian casualties to be expected, and at least around 50% of those targets are bombed by the IDF on a daily-basis.

This means that what is called 'the human determination' is a pure rubber-stamp on what is essentially flawed 'intelligence' that is rapidly generated by the tool. In the +972 report, an insider source tells the journalists that the idea behind The Gospel is to go for 'quantity rather than quality' of sites to target. Another source called The Gospel a 'mass assassination factory'.

This also means that with each school, hospital, and residential building that is bombed by Israel in supposed search of a single Hamas operative, they already had a precise knowledge of the likely numbers of Palestinian civilians that would be killed too. Needless to say, this is a blatant and unabashed violation of the Fourth Geneva Convention, that is being sanctioned also by the United States.

The report by +972 magazine also reveals that the extent of targets that are being rapidly and daily generated make no

sense, when compared with past operations by Israel in Gaza. For example, during 3 weeks in 2014 or 10 days in 2021, when the Israeli Air Force struck around 100 targets per day, they were soon left with no targets of 'military value' and the operation was stopped. How is possible then, that after 2 months of non-stop bombing, Israel is still able to generate 100 new targets every day? This is where the genocidal insanity of the targeting systems based on artificial intelligence truly becomes visible.

One can assert with certainty today, that The Gospel only works to rapidly create indiscriminate targets all across Gaza, and they are being decimated by the IDF as evidenced by the magnitude of Palestinian deaths we have seen.

The machine logic of The Gospel is precisely the same dehumanizing, genocidal logic that was expressed by the Israeli defense minister who called Palestinians 'human animals'. We are witnessing the transformation of Artificial Intelligence as a tool for genocide, and the very existence of something like The Gospel in our world, is a question upon our humanity.

What does it mean to remain human?

The Gospel exists not so that Israel can target Hamas operatives with more precision, or any other propaganda points that might be served up by the Israeli state.

Instead, this AI tool exists only so that Israel can displace the moral culpability of knowingly killing innocent people away from itself and project it onto a directive from all-knowing, supposedly infallible Other. With the continued existence of a whole wing of the IDF dedicated to AI-based target creation called the 'Targeting Directorate', what we are witnessing is an appalling genocide that is increasingly automated. In this utterly sickening gameification of war, the only thing that remains is a destroyed Gaza and its children.

In our times, for us to remain human, and for us to be able to rescue what it means to be that for our future generations, we have to bring permanent justice at the face of this inhumanity and we must reclaim our own morality from the hands of machine logic.

For socialists across the world, this means at least two things. One, we must uncompromisingly and unconditionally continue to struggle with the Palestinians for their right to self-determination. Two, we must, with courage, continue to expose the genocidal war-crimes that are being committed by Israel under the watchful protection of US Imperialism.



New AI tools have contributed to the massacre in Gaza

AI tool that generates targets to attack based on mass extraction and sorting of data, likely using probabilistic models. This information, by itself, is sickening.

On the very outset, the deliberate choice of naming this tool as Hasbora (The Gospel in Hebrew), or the infallible Word of God, already reveals more than it hides. It is clear that the IDF places absolute trust in the 'truth value' of results that are generated by a tool that is, by definition, offering results that are likely but not confirmed. If Hasbora is the word of God, that God can

decisions of which 'targets' to bomb and decimate in Gaza.

Regardless of what combination of real-world data is possibly made available to The Gospel, or at what depth the machine learning happens, it is impossible for the tool to generate accurate results with any reliable degree of certainty.

Racism and AI

Black scholars of surveillance technologies, such as Simone Browne, have demonstrated just how inherently racist the technological design of identity-

the results often are, even up close.

While Israel might argue that there are human determinations of the AI-generated targets that precede any action being carried out, this does not diminish the problem at all. An IDF spokesperson proudly compares The Gospel to the war-mongering machine overlords in the movie *The Matrix*, and he is not far from the truth. The inhumane genocidal powers that are currently being unleashed by The Gospel are very similar.

The Gospel is said to be

Eyewitness: Protests in Argentina take on president Javier Milei

by: **Liam Winning in Argentina**

Thousand have taken to the streets of Argentina following the inauguration of far right president Javier Milei. An alliance of groups, including trade unions, human rights groups, and left organisations such as the United Left Front, called a demonstration on the 20 December.

The United Left Front is an electoral coalition made up of several socialist organisations such as the Workers Party (PO), the Movement of Socialist Workers (MTS), and most prominently the Socialist Workers Party (PTS).

Demonstrators did not bend to the orders to march on the pavement or cower to the brutal force used by the state.

Later that evening, there were spontaneous mobilisations of people banging pots and pans called Cacerolazo on street corners in neighbourhoods in cities up and down the country.

The Cacerolazo in the capital marched to the National Congress building and occupied roads in the early hours.

For the next three nights, Cacerolazo continued across the country. There is mounting pressure on the trade union federation, the CGT, who finally called a

general strike for the 24 January.

There were also demonstrations in workplaces, such as in train stations and railway worker protested privatisation in an exciting development.

The protests come as Milei is showing what kind of president he is going to be. Since his inauguration, the assaults on the working class have been severe.

The first of his attacks have been seen in the economy and the right to protest. Milei's government pushed through cuts to primarily

the transport and energy sectors.

Then his government announced a series of proposed laws that will use state force to repress protests and strikes, including blocking roads and highways, a tactic of protest movements used up and down Latin America.



The new laws would attempt to stifle any working class resistance against the crisis. Argentina suffers one of the highest and most persistent inflation rates in the world of over 100 percent and over 40 percent of the population live in poverty.

The working class have been sold down the river by the official reformist left and the Peronist parties who conceded to international capital, the IMF and the myth that “There is no money” or “No hay plata”.

However, the attacks have revived resistance on the streets. The resistance to the brutal class warfare of Milei's government is growing and isn't giving in to intimidation. The focus on workplaces is an important step.

An insurgent assault from below at the hands of the working class not only has the power to overturn the new laws but also to usher in a new era of revolt capable of challenging the system. In Argentina, all eyes are on the streets.

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Why does Socialist Worker matter today?

Amidst the horror of the Israeli genocide of Palestinians, it is obvious that the mainstream media serves the interests of the rich and will never tell the truth about the apartheid state.

Likewise, the multiple crises of capitalism from the pandemic to climate change to the cost of living crisis, are also bringing about a growing wave of workers fighting for better conditions through strikes and organizing in unions.

Socialist Worker and socialist.ca consistently report on these struggles.

We also agitate for action in support of Indigenous sovereignty, against imperialism and war, and to end oppression in all its forms.

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Toxic drug policy: BC government prepared to let thousands more die

by: Ben Ingoldsby

13,317 people, and counting, have died of unregulated, toxic drugs since the province of British Columbia declared a public health emergency in April 2016.

At the end of 2023, six people die each day in BC from unregulated, toxic drugs.

Drug toxicity and overdose is the leading cause of death for ages 10 to 59 in British Columbia.

“It’s unfortunate because they were providing essential life-saving work. But they were also breaking the law, which we will not tolerate.”

That was British Columbia Premier David Eby on October 24, 2023 as he responded to a query about the cancellation of a Vancouver Coastal Health contract with the Drug User Liberation Front, known colloquially as DULF.

The next day, October 25, the Vancouver Police raided the work spaces of DULF and arrested two co-founders, Eris Nyx and Jeremy Kalicum.

Why did DULF have their contract cancelled, their work spaces raided, and their co-founders arrested? Well, because during a poisoned drug crisis that has killed over 13,317 people since April 2016, DULF had the audacity to provide a safe supply of cocaine, methamphetamine, and heroin to the 47 members of their compassion club.

For over a year, DULF had been purchasing drugs on the dark web, sending those drugs to labs at the University of British Columbia and the University of Victoria for testing; then selling those drugs, at cost, to their compassion club members. They stepped up to provide safety and security for a group of people who use drugs. A group that the NDP government of British Columbia will only pay lip service to.

There are over 225,000 people in British Columbia who use unregulated, and potentially toxic, drugs according to the BC office of

the Chief Coroner. Fewer than 2.25% percent of those people have a prescription to receive safe supply in any given month. And yet, “Non-prescription models for the delivery of pharmaceutical alternatives are not under consideration,” according to BC’s Minister of Mental Health and Addictions. Jennifer Whiteside. The NDP have refused to consider any expansion of programs that would transition the province to a non-prescriber model for providing safe drugs to users. They continue to insist on the medical system, a profession that cannot help but reflect the classist

phetamine, up to a certain cumulative total. It was a pilot program with a lot of issues, but it was also potentially the beginning of a challenge to the status quo war on drugs. In the eleven months since then there has been a continued growing backlash against safe supply as well as burgeoning outrage towards public drug use. The proselytizing is growing in strength, in column inches, and falls from the lips of Federal Conservative leader Pierre Pollièvre, BC United leader Kevin Falcon, and former RCMP spokesperson turned BC United MLA Elenore Sturco, among others.

illicit drugs, expressly allows police to engage with people perceived as high or using in public, and rolls back the gains made under the province’s decriminalization program.

They did this without any plan to add more overdose prevention sites, provide housing for people who don’t have it, or to provide truly accessible safe supply. People use drugs in public because they are afraid they might die in private. Or because they don’t have a private residence to retreat to. The NDP has backed the emotions and prioritized the comfort of those who don’t use drugs because they need their votes and their economic contributions to perpetuate the system they have built.

Less than a week after the passage of Bill 34, Harm Reduction Nurses Association launched a legal challenge at the British Columbia Supreme Court. “It’s time to stop stoking fear and listen to people who have solutions – people who use/d drugs, harm reduction workers, policy experts, nurses and caregivers, all of whom are ready and waiting for this government to support policies and services that would see an end to this devastating public health emergency.” On December 29th, HRNA secured an interim injunction that temporarily blocked the implementation of the bill until at least March 31st. They won this battle, this injunction, and that is incredible. It will save lives. It is a victory for people who use drugs, especially those who also face intersecting traumas of homelessness, poverty, and racism. However, the war on drugs and drug users continues.

Garth Mullins is a member of the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users. He recently spoke to freelance journalist Dustin Godfrey for an article that was published in The Maple and said this about the advancement of drug user rights, “it gets advanced by us fighting in the streets, and where necessary, using civil disobedience to get us there. That means breaking unjust laws.”

Safe Supply Now.
Free DULF.



The war on drugs is killing people. Safe supply now!

and ableist attitudes of broader society, as the gatekeepers of morality and the arbiters of who is worthy to receive potentially life saving prescriptions.

On January 31, 2023 the province of British Columbia decriminalized the possession of some drugs, including opioids and metham-

Their regurgitated drug war rhetoric has succeeded in producing a moral panic that now threatens the lives of some of the most vulnerable members of our society.

On November 8, 2023 the BC NDP passed Bill 34 in response to that growing right-wing chorus. This bill criminalizes the public use of

...continued from page 8

As always, the government and corporations portray Indigenous communities as supporting all the development, but experience teaches us that it is not so easy.

In March a strong delegation representing the First Nations of Neskantaga, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Muskrat Dam, Grassy Narrows and Wapekeka, rose in the gallery of Queen’s Park to disrupt Ford’s happy talk about the Ring of Fire.

When Ford ignored a call to meet with the leaders, Neskantaga’s newly elected chief, Chris Moomias rose, pointed at the premier and declared: “No consent, no Ring of Fire. Doug Ford, come and meet me.”

Insultingly, Ford refused to even look at Moomias.

Not only does Ford face stiff resistance from grass-roots indigenous activists, tired of seeing their lands robbed of resources and left in environmental ruins. The very premise for the urgency of the industry – to power

“green” private vehicles, is dubious at best. Environmentalists point out that the carbon and methane released by exploiting the resources needed in the manufacture of EV batteries and cars would be worse for the environment than any of the questionable benefits of the cars.

EVs are intended to sustain the auto industry, not the environment.

Add to the mix the influence of the other

signatory to Treaty 9, the federal Liberals. Look for more phony photo-ops with smiling Ford and Chrystia Freeland, while behind the scenes they wrangle for control of and credit for any development.

But the first order of business to exploiting the region is being able to get there. Ford hopes the Supreme Court ruling will let him get his plans to build a network of roads into the region finally off the ground.

He is soon to discover that road building in environmentally sensitive peatland, to link communities that do not fully support him will be a bigger challenge than he thinks.

Indigenous activists are getting organized for the struggle. It is up to allies and environmentalists to get up to speed on the Ring of Fire, to expose the “greenwashing” of EVs, and get ready for struggles sure to come in 2024 and beyond.



Doug Ford refused to meet with Indigenous leaders to discuss the ring of fire

COP 28 talks a farce

by: **Brian Champ**

2023 has been the hottest year on record. The world has seen devastating wildfires, droughts, flooding and more extreme weather. The worst impacts are being felt by people in the global South and Indigenous people, but no area of the planet is immune to the unfolding crisis.

Climate justice activists worldwide have been clamoring for the rich economies most responsible for the historic carbon emissions driving global warming to pay up for the loss and damage experienced by those most impacted.

These losses have been estimated at \$400 billion (US) but only \$700 million has been raised - less than 0.2%. This is dwarfed by continuing annual global fossil fuel subsidies of \$7 trillion contributed by states worldwide.

For these climate meetings to be considered a success, they also needed to chart a path for the phase out of all fossil fuels. But the make-up of the conference has structural barriers to achieving this.

The COP28 president is Sultan Al-Jaber, who is the chair of the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) national oil company. Leaked documents on the eve of the conference showed that he had met with governments to discuss further oil and gas deals - which he later denied.

Despite the many scientific reports that have persuasively made the case, Al-Jaber claimed in the lead up to the conference that there was "no science" behind the calls to phase out fossil fuels to prevent the worsening of the already devastating climate crisis.

Almost 2,500 of the registered attendees are coal, oil and gas industry representatives - the most ever to attend the yearly climate talks. This is larger than all but two of the country delegations (Brazil and the host UAE). It is significant-

ly more than the number of representatives from the 10 most climate vulnerable nations combined (1,509) and more than seven times larger than all official Indigenous attendees (361).

The Canadian delegation this year included 35 fossil fuel representatives along with the oil industry boosting premiers of Saskatchewan and Alberta.

Liberal Environment Minister Stephen Guilbeault led the delegation and made a number of commitments. These included a paltry \$16 million (CAD) to the loss and damage fund, new regulations that would require oil and gas producers to reduce methane emissions by 75% by 2030 and new, "bold" targets to cap emissions from oil and gas production to meet Canada's 2050 net-zero goals.

While Danielle Smith bristled at these commitments and is vowing to fight them tooth and nail—earning for Alberta the label of "Fossil of the Day" on December 6th—they do not come close to the fossil fuel phase out that is needed.

Mandating the rapid phase out of fossil fuels is crucial because the official carbon accounting hides the problem of accelerating emissions as tipping points are reached. For example, Canada's unprecedented wildfires this year released a record 478 megatons of carbon into the atmosphere, almost a quarter of wildfire carbon emissions globally.

They aren't included in Canada's official carbon accounting (and equal 71% of the 672 megatons of carbon emitted in 2022) and undermine the rosy predictions of falling emissions.

And the final text of the agreement coming out of the UAE "Conference of Polluters" has dropped language around phasing out fossil fuels—instead it calls for "transitioning away from fossil fuels in energy systems, in a just, orderly and equitable manner, accelerating action in this critical decade, so as to achieve net zero by 2050 in keeping with the science."

While Sultan Al-Jaber, John Kerry and Steven Guilbeault hailed the deal, a spokesperson for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) facing the inundation of rising sea levels said there were "a litany of loopholes". These include the use of unproven carbon capture to continue oil production even beyond 2050. For their part, Canada has only committed to the "phase out of unabated fossil fuels" - giving the green light to further greenwashing of oil and gas production.

The 2050 timeline is also too long - we need much more rapid action.

As COP28 was meeting, Israel's genocidal assault on Gaza continued. Protesters at COP28 called for the end of Israeli settler colonial violence and the end of the economic and military support from countries like the US and Canada. Wars and military spending divert much needed resources from tackling the climate crisis, and climate justice demands that we stand up against colonial violence from Turtle Island to Palestine.

COP29 will be held in Baku, Azerbaijan which is another oil producing region. But it was also the a major centre in the revolutionary workers movement that spread outward from Russia after 1917. At that time revolutionaries linked the socialist movement with the movements against colonialism and imperialism. We must look to revive these connections and build mass movements from below to challenge the global imperial order that is wedded to the burning of fossil fuels.



The fight for climate justice will be won on the streets and in the workplaces

The coming battle over the Ring of Fire

by: **John Bell**

In October, the Supreme Court struck down the federal Impact Assessment Act, an attempt to regulate the environmental impact and sustainability of major resource extraction projects.

Despite their other setbacks, Doug Ford, his trained seal Tory caucus, and all their big business friends and donors must have been popping champagne corks. If there is one thing they all hate, it is regulation. Attorney General Doug Downey celebrated the ruling, "taking immediate legal action to bring certainty so that we can get shovels in the ground on infrastructure projects without delay."

"Ontario is using the legal tools at our disposal to assert our constitutional authority to move forward on our many critical projects without federal interference. As we do, we will continue to follow our robust and world-leading environmental assessment processes and respect our duty to consult obligations," said Downey.

All that from a government dedicated to cutting "red tape" and rubber-stamping big business developments of any kind. Remember the embarrassing Mississauga condo tower they okayed despite it being in the middle of a Pearson Airport flight path.

In this case the "ground" in the cross-hairs is the Ring of Fire, a region about 500 kilometers north of Thunder Bay, located in the Hudson Bay Lowlands. The region is highly environmentally sensitive peatland, holding huge concentrations of carbon that would

impact climate change if released.

The "ground" also happens to belong to Indigenous communities. These are the traditional lands of Cree and Anishinaabe people, designated Treaty 9, or the James Bay Treaty. The treaty, dating to 1905, involves both the federal and provincial governments as well as the Anishinaabe. Terms and history of Treaty 9 are contentious - it was essentially dictated by government commissioners and Indigenous people were denied legal advice during the "negotiations".

The Treaty 9 negotiation was the debut of Commissioner Duncan Campbell Scott, who essentially guided the federal government's policies of cultural and physical genocide into

the 1930s. He was instrumental in imposing Residential Schools. His typical rhetoric was paternalistic talk of assimilation, but the realities that he imposed were nothing short of genocidal:

"I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department...."

All this is a new political and economic issue because beneath the ground of this region lies a concentration of relatively rare minerals

and resources essential in production of batteries for the EVs of the future.

The Ford government has declared a mineral extraction bonanza in Northern Ontario. Ford is staking his hopes for big business and big profits on opening the doors for mining and resource corporations - Northern Ontario is "open for business"!

Alarming, Ring of Fire is being described as the "next oil sands." We know how well the tar sands worked out for both the environment and for the Indigenous communities in that region.

Multinational and Canadian corporations are tripping over each other to grab a share. New-filed claims have increased over 30% in the past year. Juno, a private Toronto-based mining corporation, has laid claim to 17,000 sites in the region.

The principle of fully informed consent for any development on Indigenous land is being utterly ignored by Ford. In fact, corporations do not even need to go to the communities to buy up their claims. Ontario has set up an on-line system allowing corporations to buy land on speculation, sight unseen. The process might not be legal, but don't underestimate Ford's use of his Notwithstanding Clause "get-out-of-jail-free" card to override any constitutional issues.

As always, the government and corporations portray Indigenous communities as supporting all the development, but experience teaches us that it is not so easy.



Thousands of Land Defence Alliance members and supporters march to Queen's Park

continues on page 7...