

FIRE THIS TIME

Issue 25 - August 2005

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The Newspaper of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice

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CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!
CALL FOR AN INDEPENDENT PUBLIC INQUIRY!



Demonstration against the apartheid wall, Gaza City, July 27, 2005.

Self Determination for Oppressed Nations!
Iraq, Palestine, Haiti, and Afghanistan, and Indigenous Nations in Canada



Demonstration outside of the Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, July 26, 2005.

The Workers of BC Resist!



Telecommunications Workers Rally, July 28th 2005.



Telecommunications workers on strike, Calgary, AB, July 21 2005.

Canada out of Afghanistan!



Canadian war drive shifts into high gear

Demonstration outside of the Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan. July 26, 2005.

A Call for an Independent Public Inquiry

By Ivan Drury

Since September 11th 2001, every bomb blast or plane crash that has set flame to the skies over the soil of so-called “great countries” has been taken as an opportunity to launch another offensive in the so-called “war on terror.” It took only one week for the Canadian government to realize that the subway bombings in London at the beginning of July could be the chance they needed to publicly launch their new, ambitious war plans in Afghanistan.

Thus, at a press conference on July 14th, the new Canadian Chief of Defense Staff, General Rick Hillier busted the ceremonial champagne bottle over the bow of a 2,000 strong Canadian troop deployment to Afghanistan. This announcement, and the enthusiasm with which Hillier trumpeted the charge to battle (uncharacteristic of the Canadian “peacekeeping” military), took many people in Canada by surprise.

“Our job is to be able to kill people,” Hillier bragged. “These are detestable murderers and scumbags, I’ll tell you that right up front. They detest our freedoms, they detest our society, they detest our liberties.” And “We’re not going to let those radical murderers and killers rob from others and certainly we’re not going to let them rob from Canada.”

A far cry from Canada’s “peacekeeping tradition”, no? You would think that at least *one* of the major political parties in Canada would raise hell over these words, no? No. Hillier’s words were not just imprecise, they were racist, warmongering lies. The Canadian forces have been doing their “job” killing people in Afghanistan since 2001. And the results of the NATO occupation (that Hillier himself had command over) have made it very clear to the Afghan people what “our” freedoms, society and liberties really mean:

Over three years of occupation has won Afghanistan the trophy of being the poorest country in all of Asia. Between 2003 and 2004 the life expectancy in Afghanistan has fallen by four and a half years to 42 years old. The country has graduated in the 2005 class of “worst education system in the world” with an adult literacy rate of less than 30%. The maternal mortality rate is 60% higher in Afghanistan than in the powerful countries

that have occupied it and 20% of all children die before kindergarten age – if there were any kindergartens to go to. This war-ravaged and chronically un-reconstructed country boasts such sweeping unemployment and de-industrialization that 60% of Afghanistan’s Gross Domestic Product is the production of opium. The celebrated September “election” is even on the verge of being called off due to a funding shortfall of \$31 Million that had been promised by a gaggle of imperialist countries, but must have been lost in the mail. On top of all this, the UN has reported that the Afghan government cannot be sustained without occupation military support because, on top of a host of “security” problems, Afghanistan’s economy is too weak to pay for a bureaucracy of its own.

The Broad Unofficial Coalition for War and Occupation

Mr. Hillier, (you’d hope that *even one* political party in Canada might’ve asked) what can these poor people possibly rob from Canada? Sure, they might be able to win back their land from the occupying Canadian forces, but wouldn’t that be helpful all around? Certainly, the occupation has not helped anyone so far...

Instead, every single major political party in Canada lined dutifully up behind Hillier and slapped him on the back:

Conservative Party, “Conservative MP Gordon O’Connor said Gen. Hillier ‘speaks like a soldier, not a diplomat. He’s starting to give the public an idea that the troops are about to go in a dangerous area and he’s trying to explain why they’re going there in the pursuit of terrorists,’ “ – Globe and Mail, July 16 2005

Liberal Party, “General Hillier is not only a top soldier, he is a soldier who has served in Afghanistan,” Paul Martin said Friday in Nova Scotia. “The point he is simply making is we are at war with terrorism and we’re not going to let them win.” - Canadian Press, July 16 2005

New Democratic Party, “Controlled anger, given what’s happened, is an appropriate response,” NDP Leader Jack Layton said. “We have a very committed, level-headed head of our armed forces, who isn’t afraid to express the passion that underlies the mission that front-line personnel are going to be taking on. A bit of strong language in the

circumstances, I don’t find that to be wrong.” – Globe and Mail, July 16 2005

In the August 1st Globe and Mail, there appeared a creepy photograph of Defense Minister Bill Graham standing stoically, eclipsed behind the right shoulder of an enraged General Hillier. This photograph sticks out as the perfect picture of the government’s approach to their strategic public relations shift from “peacekeeper” to warmonger. On this important political, military and economic shift, there was no debate in Parliament, no public consultation about the spending of millions of taxpayer dollars; the decision to ship out 2,000 Canadian soldiers to seriously heavy combat wasn’t even *announced* by a Parliamentarian. They stood Gen. Hillier (a common looking, working class-talking guy) up, pulled his string and let him go – and they stood back and watched. The government managed their secret unanimous decision to kill Afghan people in the name of Canadian dollars in the same way they drafted their plan: from the shadows.

Of course, because the government managed the move without debate or democratic process, and presented it casually through a stooge military man, there was little reaction from people in Canada. And, as they certainly expected, most of the criticism that did come was against the racist language that Hillier used, rather than against the government policy he was reporting. They laughed it off; he “speaks like a soldier, not a diplomat.” And with that, the issues, and any possibility of scandal, were neatly averted. Amongst all the so-called “democracies” in the world, only the Canadian government could so cleverly bury the unanswerable questions that they so desperately do not want to have asked:

Why is the Canadian military occupying Afghanistan? Why has the Canadian military budget been doubled? Why are 2,000 more Canadian soldiers being sent to kill Afghan people? How much is Afghan blood going to cost in taxpayer dollars? Who made these decisions? When were they discussed in parliament? Why don’t people in Canada know what the government is doing?

No major political party wants to hear these questions, because they know that we won’t like the answers.

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FIRE THIS TIME
MOVEMENT
FOR SOCIAL
JUSTICE

-ISSN 1712 - 1817 -
www.firethistime.net
August 2005
Issue #25

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cheques payable to
"Brennan Luchsinger" or
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(Canada \$15 , USA \$20, Interna-
tional \$30)

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Deepening Crisis of Military Democracy in Iraq:

By Andrew Malieni

"The insurgency could go on for any number of years. Insurgencies tend to go on five, six, eight, 10, 12 years. Coalition forces, foreign forces are not going to repress that insurgency. We're going to create an environment that the Iraqi people and the Iraqi security forces can win."

-US Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, June 2005

US imperialism is in a deep crisis in Iraq. The objective of invading Iraq was to gain control of its resources and establish it as a base for further expansion in the Middle East. However, the US is losing in Iraq. After two and a half years of occupying Iraq and over 150,000 Iraqis killed, the US has



Anti-US Protest, Baghdad, July 2005.

been unable to defeat the popular anti-occupation resistance.

With the war on Iraq costing the US around \$150 million each day, with the powerful and unconquered Iraqi resistance in the forms of strikes, demonstrations and armed resistance, with over 1,800 US soldiers dead, and amidst growing opposition to the war among poor, working and oppressed people within the US, splits are developing within the US imperialist ruling class on an exit strategy for Iraq. Some US congressmen have introduced and supported a bill in the US House of Representatives calling for a timetable to be set for the withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. President George Bush, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and many other representatives of the US ruling class, on the other hand, are opposed to any such timetable, with Bush saying that "setting an artificial timetable would send the wrong message to the Iraqis, who need to know that America will not leave before the job is done."

US Ruling Class Debates Preventing Another Vietnam

The US government and ruling elite differences are not based on ethical or human considerations. To withdraw foreign occupying troops from Iraq is not something that requires an "exit strategy" or timetable – the troops would only need to get into their planes and boats and fly or sail home. They are tactical differences and are conditional on the US establishing a reliable Iraqi proxy force to do the US military's job in guarding US imperialist interests so that the US government can cut its losses and move on.

Faced by the resistance of most of the Iraqi people, including not only armed struggle but also labor strikes, demonstrations and other forms of resistance, the US has so far been unsuccessful in setting up a stable US colonial puppet government and reliable Iraqi security force. The Iraqi government in Baghdad has only limited authority in Iraq. Elected under the 140,000 guns of the US occupying army, it lacks any significant base of support in Iraq, since its role is to serve the interests of the US corporations, interests that are entirely opposed to the interests of the Iraqi population, other than a small section of collaborators. It would neither survive nor exist without the protection of the 140,000 US occupying troops in Iraq. The opening session of the Iraqi "National Assembly" in March 2005, for example, was held virtually in a state of siege in the Green

Is the New Imperialist Strategy for the 21st Century working?

Zone, part of Baghdad the capital of Iraq. Checkpoints were set up throughout Baghdad and all of the delegates to the assembly were required to be searched before entry into the assembly hall. Even with all the measures that were taken, resistance fighters managed to fire several mortar shots into the Green Zone area. If the US is unable to fully secure one part of Baghdad, one can imagine what the situation is like for US occupation forces in the rest of Iraq.

Nor has the US been successful in establishing a dependable Iraqi army. Most people in Iraq who join the government army do so because of economic desperation or even, in some cases, to get weapons and join the armed resistance movement. Few do so because of any loyalty to Washington or its government. Indeed, at the most critical points, there is a major tendency towards desertion or even defection to the resistance. In the November invasion of Fallujah, a stronghold of Iraqi resistance to occupation, two-thirds of one of the pro-US Iraqi government army battalions that were sent to the city deserted. In Najaf three months earlier, an entire Iraqi

army battalion deserted. This trend is mirrored, although so far on a smaller scale, among US troops, the majority of whom also join the US military for economic reasons. According to the Pentagon, more than 5,500 US soldiers have deserted the US military. This is coupled with problems in the US of meeting recruitment quotas for the military and with a growing resistance movement facing the US in Afghanistan as well.

Military Democracy

All the pretexts offered by the US ruling class for the invasion of Iraq have been exposed as lies, from

weapons of mass destruction to the elimination of a brutal dictatorship and establishment of democracy. Not a single Iraqi weapon of mass destruction has been found, although the US has not hesitated to bomb cities into rubble or to use napalm and poison gases in Iraq. By the admission of the head of the Iraqi puppet government's own human rights board, who could be expected to underestimate, up to 60% of the 12,000 prisoners in Iraq had been subjected to torture, including beatings, electric shocks, and upside-down hanging. Former members of the secret police of the Saddam Hussein government find a welcome home in the Iraqi interior ministry. Pro-US police commandos roam the streets in Iraq and torture and assassinate public opponents of the occupation, including journalists and clerics. Modeled after the right-wing death squads in El Salvador, trained and advised by the US government in the 1980s, there is significant evidence these police commandos have killed at least hundreds of Iraqis, on top of the further 150,000 Iraqi people killed by the US. If we accept what the US government is claiming about returning "democracy" to Iraq, then given the objective conditions, this "democracy" has to be protected and maintained by more than 140,000 US/UK troops, jails, torture and assassinations. With this, the US political establishment has introduced a new "democracy" to the world: Military Democracy! No wonder Iraqi people say, NO THANK YOU!

Everyday Life is a Disaster in Hell

Malnutrition among children has doubled since 2003. The unemployment rate in Iraq is at 70%. Only 37% of Iraqi households overall are connected to a working sewage system; in rural areas it is only 3%. Of Iraqis that do have some access to electricity, that electricity supply tends to be quite limited. For example, in the capital city, Baghdad, electricity generally runs no more than six hours a day. If this is the case for a major urban center in Iraq, one can guess what the conditions are like in other parts of Iraq. The majority of Fallujah, for example, has no electricity at all. Only 54% of families in Iraq have access to safe drinking water, with many Iraqis forced to drink contaminated water. As a result, there have been outbreaks of cholera, a potentially fatal water-borne disease. Health officials have warned that it could become an epidemic. All of this is part of the "job" that Bush is talking about the US doing in Iraq.

Imperialists, who have subjected Iraq to over a

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US soldiers carry out house raids, Baghdad, August 3 2005.

Resistance! Struggle for the Rights of All Working People:

By Ivan Drury

In BC, flag waving fans of Telus are about as common as proponents of rush hour traffic or line ups in hospital emergency rooms, and through the last couple years most people in BC have grown as familiar with 45 minute waits on the phone to pay our phone bills (or beg for an extension) as we are with sitting in traffic or in an emergency room. It is the memory of hold music made to erode patience and monstrous phone bills that first come to mind when we hear about the Telus lockout, and this is no accident. Even before the full lockout began on July 21st Telus began an ambitious “public relations” campaign to spin the company’s well-earned negative image against the union workers.

According to Telus’s media story, well stated in an article in the ‘Business’ section of the Vancouver Sun way back in January 2004, “To survive in the digital era, industry leaders like Telus need to respond to change with unprecedented speed and agility, to allow the organizational equivalent of a 747 to perform fighter-jet maneuvers demands more than simple tinkering. It requires deftly and humanely trimming operations...” Of course, the writer (on behalf of Telus) argues in the main that these changes are being made by a “visionary management” and are opposed every step of the way by the “Jurassic” / “Bigtooth” / “small time” /



Support the Telus Workers Strike!

The key to understanding the Telus lockout is to look at the issue itself: the irresolvable conflict between Telus’s profit driven agenda and the rights of the TWU workers.

For five years Telus has refused to negotiate with the Telecommunications Workers’ Union (TWU), leaving Telecommunications workers in BC

growth” strategy. The press release issued by the company at the time defined growth as “most importantly, expanding our customer base beyond our provincial boundaries.” For this imperialist business plan, one that saw Telus quickly rise to the second largest telecommunications company in Canada, the company saw the TWU

company in Quebec and the national company Clearnet, thousands more nationally. However, horrified that such a growth in the union would strengthen the position of the workers against the company; Telus launched an offensive against the TWU. A series of legal battles took place in the labour board around the main question: the strength of the TWU against Telus, comparative to other telecommunications unions in Canada and especially on the question of contracting out jobs.

After much to-ing-and-fro-ing, the labour board ruled that while the TWU was to take over the union certification of all the companies Telus gained in Canada, their BC contract with the

company would not extend to their new members. Rather than recognizing the TWU’s collective agreement with Telus as applicable to all employees of Telus, the Labour Board ruled that every previously existing company’s contract with their employees was to remain the same; that the TWU was to merely take over the administration of these different agreements until a new agreement could be reached. However, despite the ruling from the labour board demanding it, Telus refused to hand over the names or positions of the thousands of employees it had gained in its \$6.6 Billion buy-out of Clearnet Cellular in 2000.

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BC Federation of Labour rally in support of striking telecommunications workers. July 23 2005.

“smokestack” union. Variations on this line run through all of Telus’s company materials: they, the “value creating” “growth oriented” company, are for technological progress. And, on the other hand, the Telecommunications Workers’ Union (TWU) is “unable to cope in a deregulated, global, market-driven industry,” and is therefore against progress. However, this media spin is just a fiber-optic neon curtain covering the same old landscape of the historical struggle between bosses and workers. The Telus lockout is not a matter of the union being for-or-against technological advance; it is a struggle of the profits and power of capitalists against the rights and lives of workers. It is also an important struggle that could play a major part in determining the future struggles of all working and poor people in BC.

Telus attacks on the TWU

and Alberta without a contract. On April 25th 2005 Telus began to “implement certain lockout measures in an attempt to encourage the settlement of a replacement collective agreement” that included cutting back wages, rolling back benefits and contracting out jobs altogether. Telus CEO Darren Entwistle announced that the company-imposed contract would come into effect in full force at 12:01am on July 22nd. Left with no choice, on July 21st the TWU responded to these attacks with job action, exposing the lock-out in full and setting up picket lines outside all Telus locations in BC and Alberta.

The roots of this lockout go back to the merger of Telus and BC Tel in October of 1998. At that time BC Tel was a larger company than Telus but the “merger of equal partners” took the name Telus because it was better suited to the company’s international “aggressive

– and especially the TWU in BC – as their greatest enemy.

Telus worker, A Proud History

This is because the TWU workers in BC had fought out and won incredible strikes and job actions against their former employer, BC Tel, throughout the 1990’s. The victories of these strikes had secured BC Tel workers the best protections against contracting out of any telecommunications company in North America. These collective agreement protections insulated telecommunications workers in BC against Telus’s drive to contract out call centres to other countries – most notably to non-union workers in India and the Philippines.

With the merger of BC Tel and Telus, the TWU gained thousands of members in Alberta and then, when Telus took over a major phone

Deepening Crisis of Military Democracy in Iraq:

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decade of bombings and sanctions, and then a second full-scale invasion and occupation, now have the arrogance to talk about “reconstruction.” But what exactly have these imperialist bandits actually done in terms of reconstruction? Of the \$18.4 billion that US Congress officially allocated towards reconstruction, only about a quarter of it has been spent over two years later, and most of it has gone towards construction of the Iraqi puppet police and military apparatus. As long as there are foreign imperialist occupiers in Iraq, any progression in the interest of Iraqis is hindered. Only with self-determination and independence can Iraq have any opportunity for genuine development and progress.

Nightmare of Vietnam is Coming Back

Driving the imperialist war machine is the economic crisis that is facing the US and other imperialist countries. In order to improve its position against its imperialist rivals like France and Germany, the US ruling class is forced to go beyond

its borders to plunder other countries and establish its domination and hegemony over strategically and geo-politically important areas. At the same time, the ruling class increases its attacks and exploitation of poor and working people in the US itself.

The victory of the Iraqi people and their resistance over US imperialism will be a victory not only for people in Iraq, but also for people in Afghanistan, Palestine, Haiti, and oppressed people everywhere. It would certainly be a victory for poor and working people in the US, weakening the US ruling class, and thus putting oppressed people in the US in a better position against their primary oppressor.

The anti-war movement in Canada, in solidarity with resistance to imperialism, must not only demand self-determination for Iraq, but also the withdrawal of Canadian imperialist troops from Afghanistan and Haiti and support self-determination for Indigenous Nations in Canada.

Justice in the Long Haul:

By Ivan Drury

Almost every night since the Vancouver Container Truck Drivers' Association (VCTA) strike began on June 24th, the evening news has featured shots of dismayed shopkeepers and frustrated representatives of shipping contractors. For the most part, except for nameless men at information pickets or scandalous images of smashed up scab trucks, the truckers have been invisible.

Even tonight, Tuesday August 2nd, four days after Federally and Provincially appointed labor mediator Vince Ready delivered his recommendations, two days after the VCTA passed a sweeping 90% vote to accept and the contracting companies unanimously rejected his suggestions, and one day after the

Container Truck Drivers' strike gains ground against contractors

An interview with Ravinder Garcha, officer of the Vancouver Truck Drivers Association (VCTA)

Vancouver Port Authority issued a 90 day remedy decision that nearly exactly echoed Ready's call, again, only to be rejected by the contractors, the song remains the same. Rather than point fingers at the contractors as greedy, uncooperative, stubborn extenders of a painful dispute (as they certainly would have if it had been the drivers rejecting

Ready's recommendations), many news stations repeated the same company refrain: that the truckers are tying up the port shipments with "unrealistic" demands for a "morally bankrupt" agreement. In a bizarre twist, even the federal government has cooperated with the Vancouver Port Authority's (VPA) move, suspending competition laws that could challenge the legality of the Port's solution for 90 days in order to allow the VPA, the truckers and the contracting companies "some time to find a long-term solution" as explained a Port Authority spokesperson.

Even BC Labor Minister Mike de Jong recognized the long-term problem behind this strike. On July 29, the same day that Ready delivered his findings, he said, in reference to 1999's similar strike-ending deal that collapsed more quickly than it had been made, "This is the second go-around, so the lesson here is that we can't apply a band-aid and have the same issues reappear." This apparent division within the ruling class is even odder when you consider that, if you are interested in

seeking out the source of this problem, you will definitely find the 1987 joint government-company trucking industry deregulation project at fault.

No one, not the Provincial or Federal governments, and certainly not the contracting companies, are discussing re-regulation as a possibility. So what is really going on? Could it be that the Ports and the government both think that the contracting companies have gone too far?

To be sure, none of them have the interests of the truckers at heart. For almost 20 years they have watched truckers' wages and conditions fall from that of a relatively highly paid industry across the board to an average wage of less than \$15 an hour (including union truck drivers who are not involved in this dispute) and to where too many truckers actually lose money by working because of the high costs of operating a rig and the low / unreliable pay of being an independent owner-operator. Neither of these parties that are now emerging as champions of "getting containers

moving again" lifted an eyebrow at the corrupt and unaccountable bureaucracy of contractors that have been stripping isolated truckers of their wages for nearly two decades. Yet any news of the poverty of trucking cannot come as a surprise to them: they, along with the contractors, engineered it in order to cut costs and "reinvigorate" trucking with the bitter medicine of free market deregulation.

If anything has taken them by surprise it is that the truckers, an unorganized and thought to be "unorganizable" scattering of independent owner-operators, organized themselves and have held container traffic at a standstill for over a month already. The unforeseen factor, the underestimated and forgotten workers, has emerged as a humble but impossible-to-dislodge wrench in the gears of the Port and, increasingly, all levels of business in Western Canada. Seventy-five million dollars a week does not disappear from the Canadian economy unnoticed. It

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Containers stack up at the Port of Vancouver.

Support the Telus Workers Strike!

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Telus workers' jobs in BC are protected from being contracted out to non-union workers, but not against being farmed out to other TWU members (or supposed members, as with the former-Clearnet workers) in Ontario or Quebec where the provisions against contracting out don't stand. Once moved out east where they are not protected, these jobs can then be contracted out to union-busting companies in Canada or Telus subsidiaries internationally. For the five years that Telus has refused to negotiate a new collective agreement with the TWU, they have not been idle. They have been frantically snatching up phone companies and contracting out jobs through this back door, unguarded by the TWU-BC contract, buying time and gaining what ground they can against the TWU, knowing that it will be much harder for the union to win back rights for workers than to protect rights already in place.

Lockout! And the TWU Strikes Back
"[Telus's actions are] insidious and designed to undermine the union bargaining committee."

A Chair of the Canada Industrial Relations Board in finding against Telus

In 2003, the labor relations board found that Telus had violated the Canada Labour Code by bargaining directly with employees over the head of the union. In 2004, the board passed this ruling again. However, in neither instance did the board press Telus with any penalty. Then, this spring the labour board forced Telus to give the TWU the names of all former Clearnet employees. The credit card that Telus had been using to buy time had finally maxed out, and they were forced to act. In response to the TWU's demand of wage parity for all Telus employees in Canada and a collective agreement in favor of all TWU members, including and especially the protections against contracting out, Telus began their lockout of TWU members in BC and Alberta.

On top of the struggle and gains of the

TWU against the company, Telus has broader economic reasons for locking out Telus workers now. Although Telus's profits grew by 49% between 2003 and 2004 (while employees wages grew 0%), the company's propaganda about an increasingly competitive marketplace is partly true. Telus is one of the hands of big Canadian capitalism that is reacting to an international economic crisis by reaching out into the international marketplace. Telus is therefore vulnerable to the vicious whipping winds of imperialism that can change direction with the cracking of knuckles. In January of this year "Telus International" invested in a call centre in the Philippines, where they boast of hiring only 5% to 10% of all applicants every month and have little to worry about in the way of unions. At the same time, at the same press conference in fact, Telus International also announced that they were establishing their world headquarters in Singapore to show "a strong endorsement of our key value propositions and a further boost to our status as a leading Asia-Pacific telecoms hub."

Telus, an Anti-Union, Anti-Labour Company

But all their "growth" is, in reality, high stakes gambling and investment. For example, immediately after Telus CEO Darren Entwistle bought Clearnet Cellular for \$6.6 Billion in 2000, the bottom fell out of the stock market and within 2 months of this investment, the value of all of Telus had fallen below the price tag of Clearnet. In a desperate bid to continue Telus's monopoly position in BC and Alberta, Entwistle responded by cutting a third of Telus's employees, mostly through buyout. Telus hopes to rake in billions through their imperialist adventures, but on the international market the stakes are even higher and Entwistle cannot afford to keep a loose cannon at home. In order to maintain monopoly in BC and Alberta, Telus must compete with the crawling giants (Sprint, Microcel, Rogers etc...) who are seeking a place in Telus's market. To do this, they must go "beyond provincial [and national] boundaries." But, at the same time,

to adventure abroad, they must make sure all is quiet on the home front. This means taking out the TWU.

Since the full lockout began, the struggle between Telus and the TWU has intensified. On July 21st, the labour relations board found again, for the third time, that Telus had violated the Canada Labour Code, and again neglected to penalize Telus. The company has held to its position that any contract with the TWU must be re-negotiated from scratch, while the union has stuck to its guns that any contract must be based on the BC-won collective agreement that contains the measures against contracting out. Going to any lengths to avoid this, Telus has continued to refuse to negotiate at all, including refusing TWU's request for binding arbitration. They have countered TWU's public information campaigns with slander, lies and even the censorship of a website that has been launched by TWU supporters, www.voicesforchange.com. However, even these company maneuvers are stumbling. On July 28

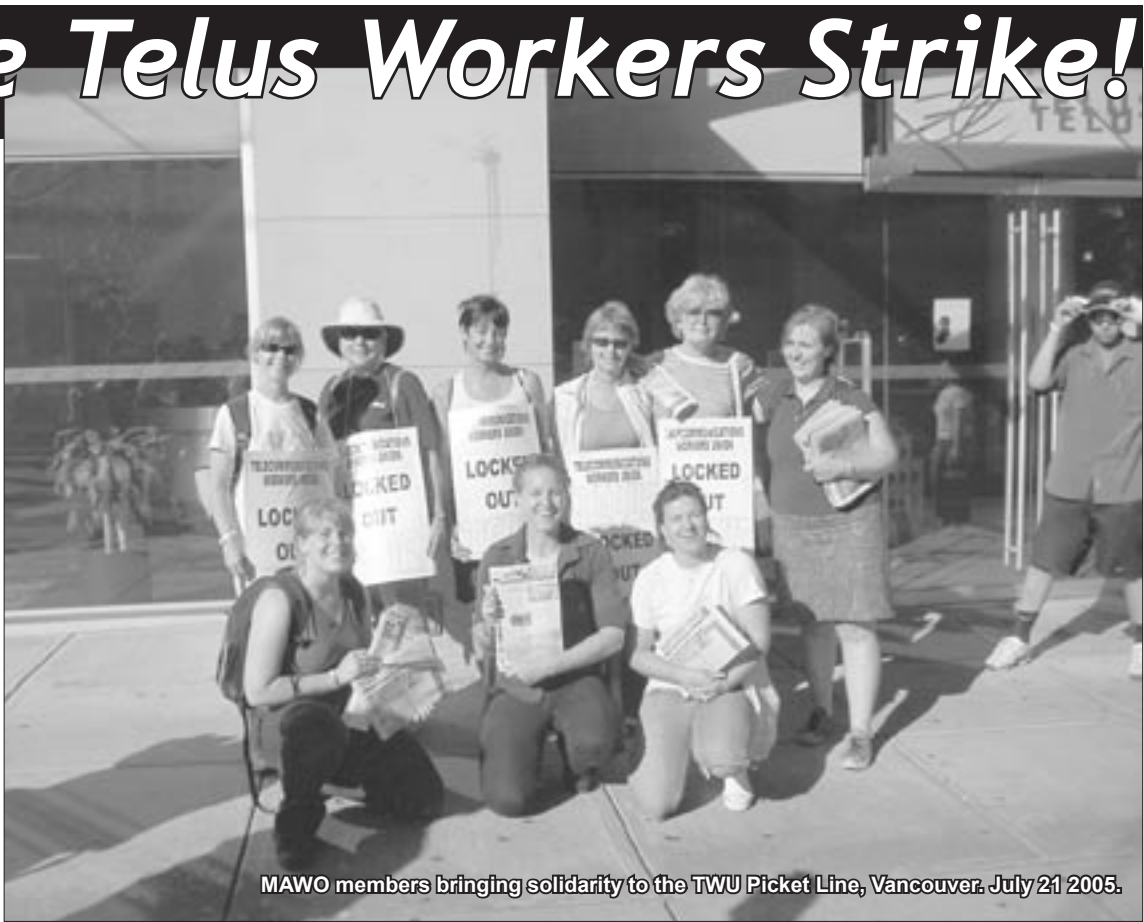
the BC Supreme Court ruled that Telus must lift the block it had placed on its Internet servers against the Voices for Change website.

Union and Workers Fight Back

Telus's goal is to increase profits by lowering wages. To do this they must break the TWU directly by refusing the union's collective bargaining rights. If this attack on the most fundamental of all rights of labour organizing succeeds, the implications for the labour movement overall could be staggering. This is the reason that the feeling at the picket lines and rallies in support of the TWU have a feeling reminiscent of the Hospital Employees Union strike in 2004; the attacks on the TWU are the opening cannons of a new level of attacks on all unions in BC, and therefore the struggle against these attacks is for the rights and future of the whole union and working class movement.

Picket lines are up at every Telus office in BC and Alberta, and many Telus

stores. The TWU, working people and the labour movement are responding to Telus's increasing attacks with an increasingly unified resistance that is visible at all these picket lines and the support rallies being called by the BC Federation of Labour. After all, the economic laws that are dictating Telus's "aggressive growth" policies (attacks on workers at home and abroad in the name of imperialist free market competition) apply to all capitalist business in BC, Alberta and the world. If Telus's direct attacks on the TWU's collective bargaining rights are allowed to pass, then it will effectively issue a license to all capitalists for open season on unions in Canada. All unions and all working and poor people in BC and across Canada must stand with the TWU now to demand their bargaining rights, an end to contracting out of union jobs, and the arch-enemy of big business attacks on workers everywhere, solidarity... forever.



MAWO members bringing solidarity to the TWU Picket Line, Vancouver. July 21 2005.

By Ivan Drury

On Thursday July 28th the BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) called an emergency rally in support of the Telus workers' struggle against the Telus lockout. This rally was organized as part of a call to action by the BCFED against the attempted ripping up of the Telecommunication Workers' Union (TWU) contract by Telus. In a press release issued the day of the rally, BCFED president Jim Sinclair called for "consumer action" by Telus customers in support of the TWU by "canceling their call features and canceling automatic bill payment."

The rally itself brought together over a thousand TWU members and supporters outside of the Telus skyscraper straddling the borders of Vancouver and Burnaby. Called out with just 24 hours' notice, people swarmed the steps and sidewalk outside the Telus building with TWU signs and flags from nearly every union you can think of. On the lips of every person present was the chant of determination to hold out "ONE DAY LONGER" than Telus.

The BCFED-organized rally is an important step in a struggle that is led by the TWU workers but is loaded with implications for the entire labour movement. The Telus lockout is a blow against the wages, benefits, job security and rights of all Telus workers, but also, it is an attack on the collective bargaining rights of the entire labour movement. The struggle for the rights of the TWU is the struggle of all workers against wage rollbacks, cuts to benefits, contracting out, and privatization and the sight of a thousand workers united in the streets is a welcome one indeed.

Just by walking through the crowd that assembled in support of the TWU, *Fire This Time* had the opportunity to interview ten people, rank and file workers as well as union presidents from different unions, about why they were there and what they think the struggle of the TWU means for working and poor people in BC. These short interviews capture the voice of people in BC and they show that when people come together in a struggle of shared interest, we also share our confidence, our hope and our belief in our ability to win.

Bruce Bell (TWU President)

Can you say a few words about what you think the significance of the rally is



TWU President Bruce Bell.

today for the strike and for the labour movement?

It's very important that the labour movement sticks together. We've seen lots of unions pushed around and it's now time for the labour movement to equal the sides and level out that teeter-totter, that pendulum has swung too far.

The bosses in Telus are going to be quaking in their boots after seeing the rally in the streets today... can you give us a picture of what it's going to take to win this strike?



BC Federation of Labour rally in support of striking telecommunications workers. July 28 2005.

Telephone Workers' Voices in the Streets

BC Federation of Labour demonstrates in support of the Telus workers' struggle An interview with the demonstrators

The strike has already captured a lot of media attention and I think it has captured, in a lot of ways, the hopes of a lot of people in the province. What do you think it has come to represent for TWU workers themselves?

We've got a leader whose motto is 'my way or the highway' and in this case he's met some people who are not going to give in to him, as opposed to some of the executives who are no longer working for him. We're out here for however long it takes.

I want to assure you that people all across British Columbia are here with you. Thank you.

Tina and Elise (locked out TWU workers)

What does the rally today mean for TWU workers?

Elise: For me, it means the support of all the union members and organizations. For me, it's the support from all the unions, that's why they're here.

Why are you yourselves on strike?

Tina: We want to fight against the contracting out of the bargaining unit. The wages are not the main issue, as the president of TWU said, what we are fighting for is job security. If we win here, all the unions of all the other organization will win too, they will have job security in the future also.

If you had one message to give to people in BC who wanted to support you, what would you say?

Support us! (laughs) Switch [phone companies]! (laughs)

Thank you very much.

Jim Sinclair (President of the BC Federation of Labour)

Jim, I want to ask you, what was the significance of the rally today for the struggle of the TWU and the labour movement overall?

Well, to start off with this is a very significant strike for the labour movement and for working people in this province. This is a demonstration called on very short notice and there are hundreds and hundreds of people from different unions and their supporters are here. And they're pumped and they're ready to fight this company because we know that if they get away with this then, like every other strike, they push these people back then the rest of us are going to pay that price too. And this is a strike, lockout, whatever... this is a struggle about whether or not a decent job with a decent pay cheque and respect is still possible in the global economy. Telus wants to take these jobs and send them somewhere else, they want no responsibility to people in this province and we're going to win. It's that simple, we're going to win this one.

Can you give a message from the BC Fed to unions, other union members and people in the province in general

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Striking TWU Worker.



Locked out TWU Workers.

By Brennan Luchsinger

In mid-August of this year Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon's unilateral "disengagement" will be carried out. The plan to withdraw 21 illegal Israeli settlements from the Gaza Strip, and four from the West Bank, is a move by the Israeli government designed to isolate Palestinians and cut them off politically and economically from the world.

The "disengagement" from the Gaza Strip, combined with the construction of the Apartheid wall around the West Bank and Gaza Strip, is a strategy to steal more land from Palestinians while enforcing the racist apartheid occupation of Palestine. While settlers and military forces are to withdraw from Gaza, the Israeli Defense Force (IDF) will remain in military control of the boundaries on land, sea, and air. In the West Bank, the apartheid wall continues to be constructed, seizing more Palestinian land and severing access to farms, water, and the livelihood of Palestinian people.

Amid international criticism Israel is trying to maneuver to gain legitimacy while maintaining its ability to continue its expansion of the occupation of Palestinian land. With token gestures like the unilateral withdrawal plan, Israel hopes to divert attention from the continued construction of the apartheid wall and expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank. The plan is to create the appearance that Israel is granting "concessions" to Palestinians, while reinforcing its position, and continuing the suppression of Palestinians in Gaza, and the West Bank.

This plan resembles more of a transfer of military might than anything else. Gaza is often referred to as the world's largest prison, and this new plan is nothing more than a restructuring of that prison. No longer will Israel's prison guards patrol the corridors of Gaza, but they will keep watch from atop the walls and towers that will surround the prison.

Gaza: From World's Biggest Prison to World's Largest Penitentiary

The disengagement focuses largely on Israeli settlers leaving the Gaza Strip. Over 9000 settlers will be relocated, given free housing, and compensation ranging from 200,000 to 500,000 Israeli Shekels. But what will there be for Palestinians living in Gaza?



Palestinian youths protesting the apartheid wall. July 2005

Suffering through over 50 years of occupation, Palestinians live in some of the worst conditions imaginable. For the 1.3 million Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, daily life is a struggle. Lacking necessities like water and food, being forced to pass through Israeli checkpoints to go to work, Palestinians feel the direct results of

the racist attacks of the Zionist Israeli Government. According to a survey conducted by the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics in January 2005, 93.2 % of Palestinians living in the Gaza Strip suffer from a lack of food. The World Bank has also released statistics that unemployment in Gaza is crippling for Palestinians and has inflated by 44%. Of the total population of the Gaza Strip, 60% are

land perimeter of the Gaza Strip, will continue to maintain exclusive authority in Gaza air space, and will continue to exercise security activity off the coast of the Gaza Strip." What this means is that Israel will maintain military control on all sides of Gaza, even the air above it. Israel has also written a clause into the disengagement plan that they will retain the right to conduct military

prison-like military control of Gaza, also ruthlessly attacks the economic interests of Palestinians. With the new

four Israeli settlements, though the Palestinians in the area will remain under the despicable segregation of

Israel to Intensify Racist Attacks on Palestinians: Disengagement or Containment?



Palestinian youths throw stones at an IDF bulldozer preparing for house demolitions, Gaza Strip. July 31 2005.

children under the age of 18 and the life expectancy is continuing to drop.

The actual removal of settlers and military as planned by Israel is a strategy of containment. In removing Israelis and soldiers from Gaza while heavily arming and monitoring its boundaries, Gaza's reputation as the world's largest refugee camp is not changing. Instead Gaza is being subjected to tighter Israeli control and military suppression.

On July 28th Israeli Occupation Forces (IOF) revealed plans to reinforce the apartheid wall around Gaza with a complex of triple fences equipped with electronic sensors, new military bases, 22 foot high concrete walls, watchtowers, remote controlled machine guns, and hundreds of video and night vision cameras that will surround the Gaza Strip.

activity inside the Gaza Strip for reasons of "security".

What possibilities are Palestinians granted from this withdrawal? According to James Wolfensohn, US-appointed "envoy to Gaza" and the former president of the World Bank, "Much of the rubble, the cement and bricks, could be used in Gaza..." in reference to the rubble of soon to be destroyed Israeli settlements. Even though Palestinians in Gaza suffer from a severe crisis of housing, Israeli settlements are to be destroyed, leaving nothing behind except rubble. This is the goodwill that the Israeli government is exercising towards Palestinians, ensuring that they are subjected to the most abject poverty possible. Between September 2000 and September 2004 the demolition of Palestinian homes by the IDF has made 24,000 Palestinians homeless. Rafah, in the southern Gaza Strip, has been a central point of this destruction with an average of 77 homes demolished per month.

Isolation, Containment, and Attacks on the Rights of all Palestinians

Israel has also begun construction of a "Sea-Barrier to control the coasts of Gaza, extending 950 meters into the sea. This barrier is an extension of the apartheid wall and carries with it the same impacts intended by the Israeli government. With justifications of "monitoring terrorism" being given for the construction of this 'sea-barrier', Israel intends to block the only access Palestinians may have to the outside world. The possibility of building a seaport to increase trade is entirely unrealistic if it is to be subjected to the same regulations that Israel applies to the land boundaries of Gaza. These walls and barriers will only serve to enforce Israeli control over the region, creating more checkpoints and limiting the access of Palestinians to trade.

The withdrawal, while setting up a



Palestinians cross the Tufah checkpoint to make their way to Khan Yunis, in the southern Gaza Strip. July 29 2005.

the apartheid wall. For Israel the focus on the settlements in Gaza and the northern West Bank serve as a distraction in order to be able to strengthen more important areas and settlements like those in the south of the West Bank.

Just east of Jerusalem, Ariel Sharon has approved expanding Israeli settlements by another 3000 housing units.

For Palestinians living in the West Bank this "disengagement" plan means further theft of land, continued work on the Apartheid wall, and increased Israeli military presence enveloping the West Bank. In preparation for the "disengagement" the IDF has



seized 625 acres of Palestinian farmland near Burka. "I live off this land, we are seven in my family, and I'm not willing to give up my land..." said 35-year-old Palestinian farmer M u a t a s s e m Ghazal, in response to the delivery of an IDF order of the seizure of his land.

Divisions Within Israeli Strategy

Recently Israel has drawn international criticism for its refusal to remove over 100 Israeli settlements in the West Bank that were built without the approval of the Israeli cabinet. In addition, George Bush



A Palestinian woman passes through a checkpoint near the West Bank city of Tulkarem. July 6 2003.

divisions Israel maintains the taxes and tariffs on all import and export goods entering and leaving Gaza. These racist fees and regulations not only limit the development of trade within Gaza, but also limit access to basic necessities, like water and food.

Israel needs to protect their control of the Palestinian economy at all costs. This control is needed to ensure that no economic growth can happen for Palestinians. If growth were possible, it would bring great improvement in the living conditions of Palestinians and allow them to exert their rights more forcefully. In order to keep Palestinians in the poverty that creates for Israel a cheap pool of labour and endless resources to plunder and steal, Israel must maintain this stranglehold on the Palestinian economy.

Disengagement and the Racist Apartheid Wall in the West Bank

In the northern region of the West Bank Israel intends to relocate

criticized Israel for the construction of new settlements in the West Bank. Israel has responded to this with the "disengagement" plan, attempting to divert attention away from the ongoing expansion and to show that they are "willing" to participate in the US-backed road map to peace. (see FTT #5) But Sharon's "willingness" is transparent, as Israel is preparing the new offensive to take place in conjunction with the heightened imprisonment of Palestinians brought by the "disengagement" plan.

The US, however critical it may be of the expansion of settlements, is a staunch supporter and close ally of Israel and its occupation of Palestine. The reason there is criticism is due to the huge international and domestic pressure facing the US about its own military intervention in the Middle East.

Palestinians Protest Against Sharon's "Disengagement" Plan

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Middle Power Blues: Blowing up Canada’s place on the world stage

“There are powerful global economic forces at work, and economies everywhere need to make adjustments.” - David Dodge, Governor of the Bank of Canada, 15 April 2005

“Our old middle power identity imposes an unnecessary ceiling on what we can do and be in the world. Canada can make a difference.” - Canada’s International Policy Statement, May 2005

“Kandahar will be the acid test of whether or not we can bear the price of our latest goal,” - Nic Boisvert, Council for Canadian Security in the 21st Century, July 2005

The US invasion and occupation of Iraq deeply impacted the foreign policies of every imperialist country in the world, while, and through, destroying the lives of millions of Iraqis. Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the imperialist world had, for the most part, managed with an economic-imperialist model of pillaging the wealth of the people of the world. Through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund they privatized resources and deregulated industries in countries they didn’t bother sending their armies into. When they needed to put down an uprising in whatever country they were stealing from, they managed, most of the time, to do it with local hirelings. But then, at the end of the 20th century, all of that changed. The global economy was entering a crisis, slipping down from the New York high-rises towards the unknown depths of the Pacific Ocean. The US was losing their monopoly markets in Latin America and France and Germany were upping their investments in Iraq and throughout the Middle East. By the time the Twin Towers fell on 9/11, the US ruling class had already planned out its counterattack. While they were loosing the status of the most powerful country in the world *economically*, they still retained their title as the lone *military* superpower in the world. The invasion and occupation of Iraq re-wrote the rulebook of relations between imperialist rivals and the race for direct military control of the world (hegemony) was on.

Since then, Canada has been preparing its response and testing the waters of possibility for securing Canada’s “place on the world stage.” In his January 2005 Throne Speech, Paul Martin outlined the world economic crisis, “In our current age, the changes to the world’s economic, security and political landscape are increasingly seismic, the global faultiness more unstable and numerous.” And these concerns are echoed by the Royal Bank of Canada and the National Bank of Canada. Even in their whitewashed

reports on how the Canadian economy is performing better than the US, there appears an ever-present skepticism about the instability of the current economic position of Canada.

New International Policy Statement



In May 2005, the Canadian government produced a new “International Policy Statement” covering Defense, National Security and International policy all in one integrated document. Titled, in typical “Canadian” fashion, “A Role of Pride and Influence in the World,” the policy statement replaces the 20 year-old cold war-based “White Paper” on defense and clearly lays out the Canadian government’s “commitment to reinvesting in Canada’s international role.”

In the introduction to the International Policy Statement, Prime Minister Paul Martin explains why international policy is integral to a healthy economy. “From the ‘inside out,’ global markets for our goods, services and investments are a principle engine of our growth which could not be sustained by our relatively small domestic market of 32 million people,” and, “We are in the midst of a major rebalancing of global power. New nations are rising as military and economic forces. Many established powers are striving to maintain their influence through regional integration and new alliances.

In a world of traditional and emerging giants, independent countries like Canada -countries with small populations - risk being swept aside, their influence diminished, their ability to compete hampered. That may sound dramatic, but the stakes are that high. We will have to

we have a *practical policy outcome* clearly in view.” (*emphasis ours*)

Sort of spells out the focus and investment in Afghanistan, eh?

But despite the sudden change in publicly announced policy, none of this comes as

budget, increase the size of the military by 5,000 troops and 3,000 reserves and send 2,000 more troops into combat in Afghanistan – all without a word of debate publicly or even in Parliament.

On the most important question, the new deployment to war in Afghanistan, the government has not even taken credit for the decision! So who decided this? Hillier, all by himself? Canada is called a democracy because it has a Parliament that is responsible for the important decisions that will affect people who live in Canada. In simplest terms, the government of Canada is responsible for the management of the tax money it takes from workers in Canada. Governments rise and fall on the question of what they say they will do, and then do, with tax money.

The decision to send 2,000 troops to Afghanistan will have serious repercussions for the Afghan people and also for people in Canada. Hillier all but promised that Canadian soldiers will die in this mission. He swore that Afghan people will be killed by these soldiers; and he warned that “terrorists” may attack Canada because of this war drive. On top of this, billions of tax dollars will be spent, money that could go towards the healthcare, housing, welfare, etc... systems that have been cut away from working people in Canada.

It is precisely because working and poor people in Canada would not support this war drive that it was snuck through the back doors of Parliament. This undemocratic deceit and cover-up goes behind the backs of all poor and working people in Canada because the government and ruling class have decided unanimously, amongst themselves, that it is in *their interest* that Canada establish its presence in Afghanistan and “kill people” to do it.

The Canadian war drive in Afghanistan is a major issue for people in Canada. It spells out the continued killing of Afghan people and the further destruction of their country while promising nothing but drained tax dollars, British-style race terror against Arabs and Muslims, and escalating attacks on unions, poor people and Indigenous people in Canada.

Canada’s full-scale entry into the era of war and occupation must be heard as a call to action for the anti-war movement, unions, community and religious groups and all working, poor and oppressed people in Canada. For *our* interests and the interests of the Afghan people, we call for an urgent independent public inquiry into the illegal, illegitimate and undemocratic, extra-parliamentary deployment of troops to Afghanistan, and that we raise our voices together:

CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!
BRING ALL TROOPS HOME NOW!
STOP THE CANADIAN WAR DRIVE!
MONEY FOR LIFE, NOT FOR WAR!

Canada OUT of Afghanistan!

the pursuit of our interests.”

It would be useful to reprint the entire statement in quotation, but it is necessary to summarize. The meat and potatoes of the document is that Canada has earned “a reputation as a middle power” but that reputation is “no longer accurate” with the rise of other “giants” on the horizon. In order to recapture and hold (and *advance!*) its position as a middle-powerful country, Canada must “no longer spread ourselves thinly across multiple activities, or across every region. *Based on a clear understanding of where our interests lie*, we will focus on particular threats, particular partners, particular markets and particular institutions. Our goal is to have the capacity to take action, when and where

be smart, focused, agile, creative and dogged in

a real surprise. Canada as a nation state is itself built on the theft of land and resources of Indigenous people who are now walled in within Canada’s colonial borders. In order to change course from a history that rakes money from the lands cleared by smallpox and gunpowder, justice for those hundreds of colonized Indigenous Nations would first have

to be won. With this history still very much alive, it is not surprising that the government of Canada’s “interests” are opposed to those people who they occupy, kill, exploit and steal from in Afghanistan, Haiti and within Canada itself.

The Canadian Occupation of Afghanistan: Illegitimate and Illegal

Canada is the 8th largest economy and the 5th largest trader in the world and its adoption of an aggressive imperialist foreign policy will have grave repercussions on an international level. You’d think that at least the people who live in this apparently “democratic” country would have a say, or at least know about, the war and occupation plans of the government of Canada.

In the last three months the government of Canada has decided to double the military



Israel to Intensify Racist Attacks on Palestinians:

by burning tires to symbolize the smokescreen that Israel is trying to build around the theft of land and imprisonment of Palestinians. The Israeli military opened fire on this demonstration in an attempt to dispel resistance to the “disengagement” plan.

On July 31st Ariel Sharon threatened that the IDF will resort to “unprecedented measures” during the “disengagement”. Sharon said, “I explained to the [US] secretary of state that there would be responses of a different kind that will amount to very harsh measures, both during the withdrawal and after the evacuation from Gaza if there are terrorist attacks.” From Sharon’s statement, it is clear that Israel will use this disengagement to elevate its violent behavior towards Palestinians to new levels in Gaza and the West Bank, during and after the withdrawal.

Struggle, Struggle Until We Win!

Through the course of this disengagement, history will show that Ariel Sharon and the Israeli

government are unwilling and incapable of bringing peace. The creation of high security prison camps like Gaza and the West Bank is not a step towards peace, but a giant leap away from it. Israel must learn a hard lesson: that concentrating Palestinians into Gaza and the West Bank will not dampen resistance and will not crush the will of Palestinians. In the face of a shifting balance of forces in Palestine, the Middle East, and the world, we will see the heroic resistance grow on the streets of Gaza City and all Palestinian land.

In order for the slums of Gaza to be free from daily persecution and oppression, we must listen to the cries of resistance. We must amplify the demands of resistance all over the world until they resonate in the eyes, ears, and minds of the Israeli occupation, and we must join with our Palestinian brothers and sisters to bring an end to the unjust occupation of Palestine!

FREE PALESTINE! END THE RACIST OCCUPATION NOW!

From page 7

What is missing from clear view in this strategy is that Israel has the inopportune task of conducting this new aggression in the current overall framework and conditions of the Middle East. The political maneuvers of Israel and the ongoing attacks on Palestinians are carried out in a situation of changing forces. In Iraq, the US and UK are being rapidly devoured by the quagmire brought on by resistance to imperialism. Overall

in the Middle East the balance of forces is shifting away from the hands of imperialists. The resistance in Iraq is providing an example politically and physically for other oppressed people in the Middle East, just like the struggle of Palestinians and the First and Second Intifadas have been an example for oppressed people around the world.

On July 30th a three-week protest began in Zabuba, west of Jenin,

in the West Bank, against the disengagement plan and continued construction of the apartheid wall. On July 30th the people of Zabuba, west of Jenin, began a three-week protest against the disengagement plan and continued construction of the apartheid wall. This demonstration is planned to take place through the build up and execution of the “disengagement” plan. On July 28th from Marda to Qalandia in the West Bank Palestinians also launched protests against the “disengagement” plan

Zionist Logic: A New Form of Colonialism*



The Zionist armies that now occupy Palestine claim their ancient Jewish prophets predicted that in the “last days of this world” their own God would raise them up a “messiah” who would lead them to their promised land, and they would set up their own “divine” government in this newly-gained land, this “divine” government would enable them to “rule all other nations with a rod of iron.”

If the Israeli Zionists believe their present occupation of Arab Palestine is the fulfillment of predictions made by their Jewish prophets, then they also religiously believe that Israel must fulfill its “divine” mission to rule all other nations with a rod of irons, which only means a different form of iron-like rule, more firmly entrenched even, than that of the former European Colonial Powers.

These Israeli Zionists religiously believe their Jewish God has chosen them to replace the outdated European

create a “new weapon,” and to find a “new base” for that weapon.

Dollarism

The number one weapon of 20th century imperialism is Zionist dollarism, and one of the main bases for this weapon is Zionist Israel. The ever-scheming European imperialists wisely placed Israel where she could geographically divide the Arab world, infiltrate and sow the seed of dissension among African leaders and also divide the Africans against the Asians.

Zionist Israel’s occupation of Arab Palestine has forced the Arab world to waste billions of precious dollars on armaments, making it impossible for these newly independent Arab nations to concentrate on strengthening the economies of their countries and elevate the living standard of their people.

And the continued low standard of living in the Arab world has been skillfully used by the Zionist propagandists to make it appear to the Africans that the Arab leaders are not intellectually or technically qualified to lift the living standard of their people...thus, indirectly inducing Africans to turn away from the Arabs and towards the Israelis for teachers and technical assistance.

“They cripple the bird’s wing, and then condemn it for not flying as fast as they.”

The imperialists always make themselves look good, but it is only because they are competing against economically crippled newly independent countries whose economies are actually crippled by the Zionist-capitalist conspiracy. They can’t stand against fair competition, thus they dread Gamal Abdul Nasser’s call for African-Arab Unity under Socialism.

Messiah?

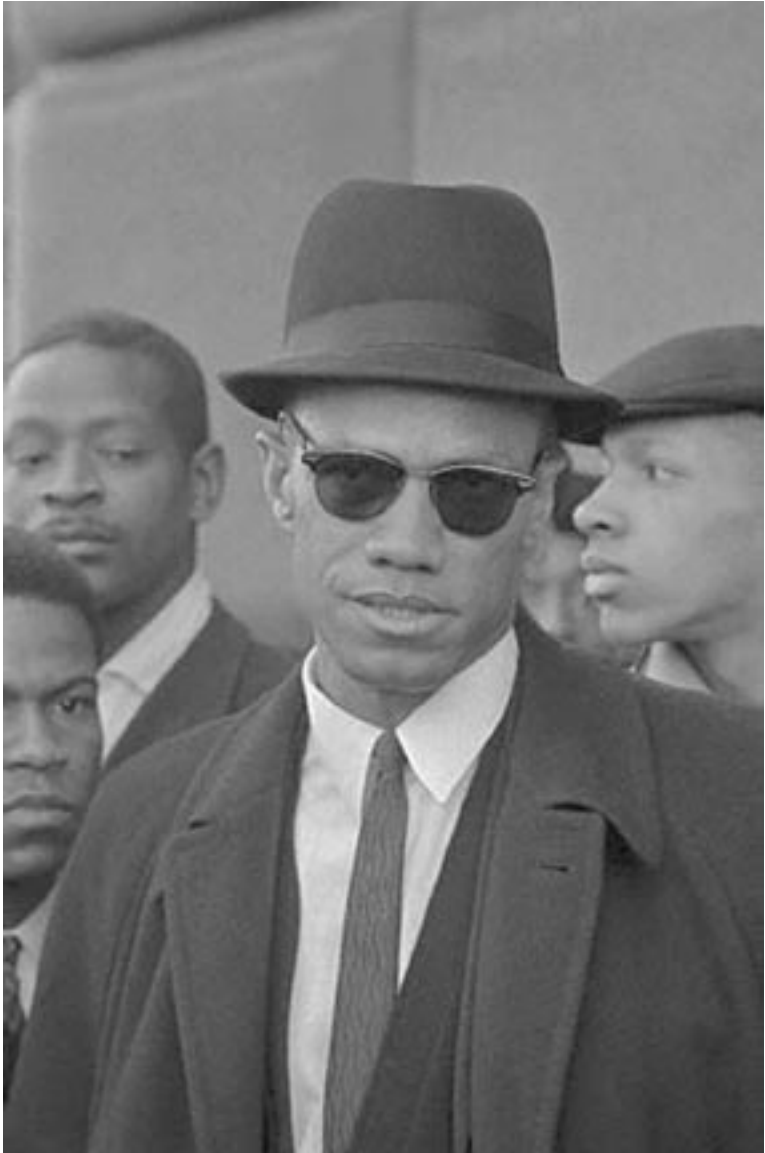
If the “religious” claim of the Zionists is true that they were to be led to the promised land by their messiah, and Israel’s present occupation of Arab Palestine is the fulfillment of that prophesy: where is their messiah whom their prophets said would get the credit for leading them there? It was [United Nations mediator] Ralph Bunche who “negotiated” the Zionists into possession of Occupied Palestine! Is Ralph Bunche the messiah of Zionism? If Ralph Bunche is not their messiah, and their messiah has not yet come, then what are they doing in Palestine ahead of their messiah?

Did the Zionists have the legal or moral right to invade Arab Palestine, uproot its Arab citizens from their homes and seize all Arab property for themselves just based on the “religious” claim that their forefathers lived there thousands of years ago? Only a thousand years ago the Moors lived in Spain. Would this give the Moors of today the legal and moral right to invade the Iberian Peninsula, drive out its Spanish citizens, and then set up a new Moroccan nation...where Spain used to be, as the European Zionists have done to our Arab brothers and sisters in Palestine?

In short the Zionist argument to justify Israel’s present occupation of Arab Palestine has no intelligent or legal basis in history...not even in their own religion. Where is their Messiah?

*The original title, “Zionist Logic,” has been modified. Taken from The Egyptian Gazette -- Sept. 17, 1964

MALCOLM X



colonialism with a new form of colonialism, so well disguised that it will enable them to deceive the African masses into submitting willingly to their “divine” authority and guidance, without the African masses being aware that they are still colonized.

Camouflage

The Israeli Zionists are convinced they have successfully camouflaged their new kind of colonialism. Their colonialism appears to be more “benevolent,” more “philanthropic,” a system with which they rule simply by getting their potential victims to accept their friendly offers of economic “aid,” and other tempting gifts, that they dangle in front of the newly-independent African nations, whose economies are experiencing great difficulties. During the 19th century, when the masses here in Africa were largely illiterate it was easy for European imperialists to rule them with “force and fear,” but in this present era of enlightenment the African masses are awakening, and it is impossible to hold them in check now with the antiquated methods of the 19th century.

The imperialists, therefore, have been compelled to devise new methods. Since they can no longer force or frighten the masses into submission, they must devise modern methods that will enable them to maneuver the African masses into willing submission.

The modern 20th century weapon of neo-imperialism is “dollarism.” The Zionists have mastered the science of dollarism: the ability to come posing as a friend and benefactor, bearing gifts and all other forms of economic aid and offers of technical assistance. Thus, the power and influence of Zionist Israel in many of the newly “independent” African nations has fast-become even more unshakeable than that of the 18th century European colonialists...and this new kind of Zionist colonialism differs only in form and method, but never in motive or objective.

At the close of the 19th century when European imperialists wisely foresaw that the awakening masses of Africa would not submit to their old method of ruling through force and fears, these ever-scheming imperialists had to

“

...the continued low standard of living in the Arab world has been skillfully used by the Zionist propagandists to make it appear to the Africans that the Arab leaders are not intellectually or technically qualified to lift the living standard of their people...

”

The Mapuche Struggle for Liberation and Self-Determination:

An Interview with Wladimir Painemal, a Mapuche leader and organizer

By Kasia Machelak

The Mapuche are a First Nations people who have a long history of fighting for autonomy and self-determination on their traditional territory in what is now Chile and Argentina. They have been struggling over many of the same issues that Indigenous people here fight for in Canada; land rights, recognition as a Nation and basic standards of living. This fight has been ongoing since Spanish colonization in the 1600's. Wladimir Painemal, the Sub-director of the Mapuche newspaper, Azkintwe, was recently in Vancouver as a delegate to the International Indigenous Youth Conference (IIYC). While in Vancouver, he made time to talk to Fire This Time about the issues affecting the Mapuche people. As a young leader Wladimir is connecting the struggles of oppressed people around the world, educating and organizing in the fight for Indigenous self-determination.

Fire This Time: Could you explain for us the history of the Mapuche Nation and what struggles have been waged?

Wladimir Painemal: The struggle of the Mapuche people has been going on for many, many years. In regards to fighting against the conquerors, there hasn't been a time of rest since the Spaniards arrived. First, Mapuche people concentrated on the resistance against the Spaniards, and then the resistance against the invasion of the Chilean State, an issue that continues today. The resistance against the Spaniards caused us the loss of many people and the loss of most of our territory. A people call themselves a people according to the territories they hold. The Mapuche people used to occupy 30 million hectares of land and they were reduced to 10 million hectares of land.

From 1810 to 1818, the period that Chile became independent from the Spanish Crown, and from 1810 to 1881, Mapuche people continued to be an autonomous Nation. When the Chilean State turned their armies against the Mapuche people, those 10 million hectares that remained as Mapuche territory were further reduced to 500 thousand hectares. From the late 19th century there's been a continuous annexation of land by different governments, further reducing the territory to 300 thousand hectares today.

The 200-year struggle against the Spanish was a success in our resistance. The Mapuche was the first Nation to sign treaties with the Spanish crown on a Nation-to-Nation basis. Those treaties were in place and were respected by both sides for about one hundred years. Unfortunately after the Chilean state became independent from the Spanish crown, they did not respect

the treaties.

In 1910 the first contemporary mass mobilization of Mapuche people began. It was triggered by the actions of a large landholder who branded a Mapuche person that crossed his land; this act infuriated the Mapuche people. From this came the creation of the first Mapuche organization

people continued to build alliances with the Chilean people. Mapuche people were in the forefront of struggle with other political tendencies that were resisting the Pinochet dictatorship.



Wladimir Painemal.

in the history of Mapuche struggle. From the time of the military defeat in 1881 to 1910 the Mapuche people began organizing to the point that, in 1910, there were many massive demonstrations and mass mobilizations.

The high point of mobilization happened in the time of the Popular Unity Government of Salvador Allende, from 1970 to 1973, when the Mapuche and Chilean people formed and built alliances. It was the first time that the state had cleared legislation of exploitation of land for the large landholders. During the Popular Unity Government there were many advances in terms of the liberation of land. Unfortunately, that came to an abrupt end with the dictatorship of Augusto Pinochet. During this time most of the land recovered by the Mapuche people was lost. It is worthy to say that the Mapuche people were the first group that organized resistance against the US-backed Pinochet coup-d'etat.

From 1978 onwards, the Mapuche

The Mapuche are still the group that is most impacted by imprisonment, torture and assassinations.

At the end of Pinochet's tyrannical regime, the process of coalition building and negotiations between organizations and political parties started. People wanted to bring about an alliance or coalition of group to run the government. Agreements were made by political tendencies who formed the government later, that the Chilean state would recognize: 1) the Mapuche people as a nation, 2) they would be signatories of the 169 Convention of International Labour Organizations, and 3) that they would be recognized in the constitution. One of these was actually followed up by the coalition party, but in 1997 an accord was reached that obliterated the gains of the Mapuche.

What triggered the break-up of the Mapuche organizations and political parties that formed the government was the fact that the coalition government that came after Pinochet kept all the institutions and laws

and privatization. The government wanted to open the door to forestry companies to come into Mapuche territory to plunder its resources. In 1997 there was a break-up between the Mapuche people and the coalition parties in government. One of the actions that were taken was that the trucks from forestry multinational companies were burned. This marked the point of a new era of mobilizations and struggle that remains up to this day.

FTT: Are the struggles of the Mapuche people in Chile and Argentina similar?

Wladimir Painemal: The struggles of the Mapuche in Chile and Argentina are similar. There are some differences of course, but mainly the common struggle is against the invasion of multi-national corporations on Mapuche territory. On the Argentinean side they are facing similar experiences, not only with multi-national companies, but also with individuals who are buying large tracts of land in the Patagonia area. On the Argentinean side, the repression against the Mapuche by the new Argentinean state military force was much more fierce than on the Chilean side. On the Chilean

side there was at least a process of negotiation. Many Mapuche communities were able to hold some of their land. On the Argentinean side it was complete genocide.

FTT: How has the current era of war and occupation by imperialist aggression effected or changed the struggle of the Mapuche Nation?

Wladimir Painemal: The main difference after September 11th 2001 is that the demands and the vindication of the Mapuche people are now considered terrorism. The fact is that the coalition government has kept most of the institutions and the repressive laws of the Pinochet time intact. One of these laws is the Anti-Terrorist law. It is perhaps one of the earliest Anti-Terrorist laws dictated by a government of any country. Since 9-11 the government has used this law against the Mapuche people and against the stated demands of the Mapuche people. They've used these against traditional and non-traditional leaders of the Mapuche Nation to deter them from organizing. The government has stated continually that the bulk of the demands that we have in place are considered a threat to internal security. They charge that Mapuche leaders, by putting forward these demands, are carrying out acts of terrorism.

Within the post-9/11 and "war on terrorism" context, we understand that, as Mapuche people, there is a need for us to co-ordinate and ally at an international level with groups that are being affected by similar threats. We understand that this type of attack on us is not only threatening the Mapuche people but all oppressed people around the world. What we want to do is bring down

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La Lucha Mapuche por Autodeterminación y Liberación

Entrevista con Wladimir Painemal, dirigente y organizador Mapuche

Por Kasia Machelak
Traducción Por Claudio Ekdahl
Edición Por Carlos Lopez

La Nación Mapuche es un Pueblo que tiene una larga historia de lucha por autonomía y autodeterminación en los países de Chile y Argentina. Luchan como otras muchas Naciones por el Derecho a sus tierras, reconocimiento como Naciones y el derecho a una vida digna. Esta Lucha se remonta desde la Colonia española en el siglo XVI. Wladimir Painemal estuvo recientemente en Vancouver como Delegado en la Conferencia Internacional de Jóvenes indígenas y se dio un tiempo para platicar con Fire This Time acerca de la problemática que atraviesa su Pueblo. Como líder joven, Wladimir esta presente en la lucha de los pueblos oprimidos del mundo, organizando y educando a la gente en la lucha por la autodeterminación indígena.

Fire This Time: Podría platicarnos brevemente la historia de la Nación Mapuche y acerca de su lucha?

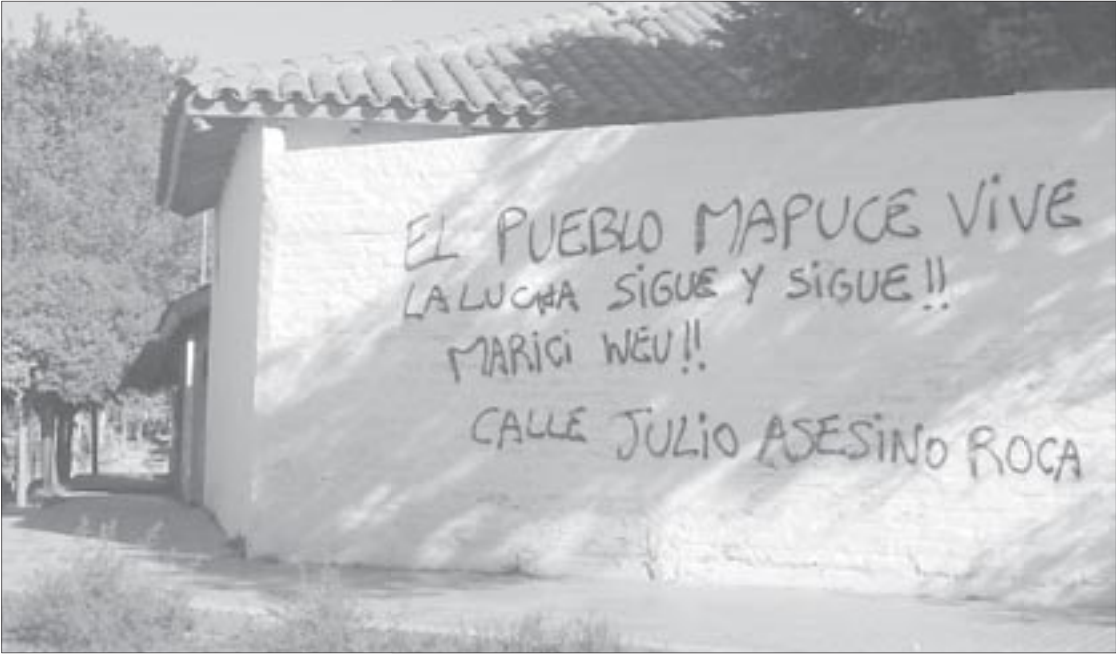
Wladimir Painemal: La lucha del Pueblo Mapuche se extiende desde hace muchos años. No hubo un momento de descanso en el proceso de resistencia en contra de la conquista española. Y posteriormente tuvimos la invasión del Estado chileno que es a lo que nos tiene enfrentados hasta el día de hoy. La resistencia contra el imperio español significo un costo muy alto de vidas en territorio mapuche que fue usurpado. Entendiendo que un pueblo se desarrolla en un área específico; el territorio mapuche fue reducido de 30 millones a 10 millones de hectáreas. Esta lucha de alrededor de 200 años que se desarrollo, implica un hito importante porque fuimos el único pueblo que logro establecer un tratado entre una Nación indígena del continente con una española. Esto fue vigente por mas de 100 años; solo hasta 1861 con el Estado chileno termina ese goce de autonomía que teníamos. Este es uno de los argumentos centrales que enarbolamos para mostrar que históricamente hemos ejercido la autonomía.

De 1810 a 1818 se genera la independencia de los criollos chilenos frente a la corona española. Hasta 1881 el Pueblo Mapuche se mantenía autónomo. Con la introducción del Estado chileno a través del ejército se pierde territorio de 10 millones a 500 mil hectáreas. Y desde ese año hasta la actualidad se continúa usurpando territorio. Actualmente se calcula el territorio Mapuche solo en 300 mil hectáreas.

En 1910 se genera la primera gran movilización del Pueblo Mapuche cuando un latifundista marca a fuego a un mapuche por pasar en su tierra, con el mismo fierro con que se marcan a los animales. Esto genera una enorme movilización que produce la primera organización Mapuche. Desde la invasión hasta 1910 los Mapuches empiezan a realizar una serie de movilizaciones no solo ligados al problema mapuche sino también concerniente a la lucha social chilena en general.

Esta participación política se refleja

en los acuerdos que se hicieron con la Unidad Popular del gobierno de Allende. Quien marca un hito en la recuperación y los derechos sobre el territorio Mapuche, además de que se genera una ley que permite la expropiación del territorio usurpado. Posteriormente con la dictadura militar de Pinochet hubo un retroceso; las tierras que habían sido recuperadas fueron nuevamente quitadas a los mapuches. Es el Pueblo Mapuche uno de los primeros sectores sociales que se oponen a la dictadura militar. En 1978, Pinochet crea una ley que permite la división de la tierra así fuera una sola persona



quien estuviera de acuerdo en esa división. Cuando se usurpaba y dividía el Territorio Mapuche, por Ley se decretaba que la tierra y gente dentro de estas divisiones dejaban de ser indígenas y mapuches.

En 1978 surgen los encuentros de las organizaciones Mapuches quienes con otras organizaciones políticas chilenas participan en contra de la Dictadura. Aunque es en 1983 cuando las organizaciones chilenas comienzan las grandes movilizaciones. Proporcionalmente, los Mapuches son los que tienen mayor cantidad de población detenida, desaparecida o ejecutada de acuerdo a los informes especiales de derechos humanos en ese periodo.

Los acuerdos que se logran a fines de la Dictadura Militar en el proceso de cambio al sistema democrático con las organizaciones y partidos políticos que asumirían el poder, significaban algunos avances en el reconocimiento constitucional, como el Convenio 169 de la Organización de Trabajo (OIT) respecto al derecho de los pueblos originarios a la autonomía y autodeterminación. Ninguno de esos Acuerdos se ha cumplido hasta el día de hoy. En 1997 estos “Acuerdos” son totalmente abandonados y rechazados por el gobierno.

El gobierno de la Concertación rompe estos “Acuerdos”, porque continua manteniendo todas las instituciones de la dictadura militar, y fundamentalmente el modelo económico que significaba abrir el país a las inversiones internacionales donde la explotación forestal se pudiera implementar y profundizar con mayor fuerza en territorio Mapuche. En 1997 en una movilización donde se queman



camiones de transportación forestal, se inicia un nuevo ciclo de lucha que continua hasta hoy, y a lo que

y no Tradicionales también, sean condenados por dichos y no por hechos. Es decir, las demandas de

y que han sido criminalizados en sus demandas por parte de sus gobiernos, para enfrentar esa estigmatización de luchas de resistencia que no son terroristas.

FTT: Podrías decirnos cuales son las demandas del Pueblo Mapuche?

Wladimir Painemal: Nosotros hacemos una división entre lo que son demandas y son reivindicaciones. Las reivindicaciones tiene que ver con lo que nosotros tuvimos y que nos fue robado, y esto esta asociado a nuestro territorio y a nuestro derecho de autodeterminación. Aquí incluimos la recuperación de nuestra cultura que el Estado Chileno usurpa hoy en día para adornar edificios o de “atracción cultural” al turista, etc. Respecto a las demandas; el Estado Chileno no tiene que hacernos ningún favor, porque tenemos Derechos: Educación, salud, etc. En Cifras los mapuches tenemos los mayores índices de mortalidad infantil y general, mayor pobreza, mayor desempleo. Entonces, estamos demandando la satisfacción de estos derechos; mayor acceso a educación, salud, empleos, etc. Hay que dejar en claro que esta es una deuda que el estado tiene con los Mapuches; con la invasión de su territorio, con la gran cantidad de muertos que causó. Sería como una indemnización por todo ese daño que ha causado a nuestro pueblo.

Otra demanda es el cumplimiento de la Rectificación Internacional

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el gobierno de la “Concertación” responde con la creación y aplicación de una Ley Antiterrorista.

FTT: La lucha del Pueblo Mapuche es similar en Chile y Argentina?

Wladimir Painemal: La lucha de los Mapuches en Chile y Argentina es la misma. Solo hay unas diferencias mínimas. En ambos lados estamos luchando contra las Transnacionales. En Argentina las transnacionales están realizando una gran cantidad inmensa de compra de Territorio Mapuche; hasta los actores de Hollywood están comprando en la Patagonia. El caso de Benetton es ejemplar, quien compro 900 mil hectáreas incluso con familias que Vivían dentro de ese territorio.

Cuando el Estado Argentino invade Territorio Mapuche, el ejercito realiza un genocidio de mapuches además de dispersarlos. Al menos en Chile algunas comunidades pudieron negociar con el estado y lograron conservar su territorio.

FTT: Como ha afectado a la Nación Mapuche esta nueva era del Imperialismo de guerras e invasiones, particularmente después del 11 de septiembre del 2001 y la aplicación de leyes terroristas.

Wladimir Painemal: Como Principio estamos en contra de las guerras del Imperialismo en el mundo. Pero no de las luchas que son para defender territorios o para defender a nuestros pueblos. Ahora, después del 11 de Septiembre, las demandas de los mapuches son catalogadas de terroristas. El gobierno supuestamente democrático esta aplicando una legislación de la Dictadura Militar que es la Ley Antiterrorista. Esto ha significado que muchos dirigentes Tradicionales

recuperación de territorio del Pueblo Mapuche son consideradas como amenazas terroristas que provocan terror. Obviamente les provoca terror a aquellos que usurparon nuestro territorio. Después del 11 de Septiembre y con la represión que el estado realiza en contra de nuestra lucha, entendemos que debemos de tener una respuesta con un mínimo de concordancia, de acuerdo y de información; con otros grupos y pueblos que también están luchando



Bring the Troops Home Now:

MAWO demonstration doesn't stop in the hot summer sun!

By Alison Bodine

On Saturday June 25, 2005 Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) held its 19th demonstration against occupation and for the self-determination of oppressed nations.

The program opened with Kelly White, a Coast Salish elder. White welcomed the rally to the unceded territory that Vancouver and the Art Gallery occupy and spoke against the war at home and abroad.

With a direct connection to the main demand of "Bring the Troops Home Now!" two ex-US soldiers contributed to the program. Adrian Swanston, a MAWO organizer, spoke first followed by Kelly Burnham, a former American soldier from the more recent era of war and occupation. Burnham spoke not only in support of US War Resisters in Canada, but also against decades of imperialist war drive around the globe.

Next, Tamara Hansen of Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) brought the case of Louis Posada Carriles. Carriles is an anti-Cuban Terrorist whom the US is refusing to extradite to Venezuela, where he is wanted for his crimes against the Cuban people and other crimes committed by him when he was in Venezuela. He escaped from prison in Panama and he is currently in jail in the US.

To end the program Sophie Ziner, an organizer with Mobilization Against War and Occupation, spoke to the demands "Self-Determination for Iraq! Hands Off Syria and Iran! No to War! No to Invasion! No to the Occupations of Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan, Haiti and Indigenous Nations in Canada!"

Thanks to the DJ's Rhiannon and Rico and Speeches Beyond, a performer at the Hip-Hop Festival Against War and Occupation the rally filled downtown Vancouver with outrage and solidarity on a "lazy" summer afternoon.



MAWO organizer Adrian Swanston



MAWO Action Hits the Streets

Demanding US/UK Out of Iraq

By Noah Fine

On July 16, over 150 people gathered around the Vancouver Art Gallery for the Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) demonstration demanding, "Bring the Troops Home Now!" "US/UK Out of Iraq!" "Canada Out of Afghanistan and Haiti!" "Self Determination for Oppressed Nations!" "No to Attacks on Iran and Syria!" and "End the Occupations of Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan,



MAWO July 16th Demonstration.

Haiti, and Indigenous Nations in Canada!"

The demonstration attracted oppressed and working class people from many different backgrounds and the speakers matched the crowd's diversity. The demonstration opened with MC's Alison Bodine and Nicole Burton outlining the situation of war and occupation around the world. They then introduced the first speaker, Dalal Assad who is an Iraqi woman activist and media activist. She spoke about the conditions facing the people of Iraq throughout the more than two years of continuous war and occupation.

Following this was Claudio Ekdahl, Latin American Solidarity activist and organizer for the Mapuche Defense Committee in Vancouver. He spoke on the Mapuche struggle and its connections to people in Iraq and people around the world fighting imperialism. He was followed by Noah Fine, an organizer with Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba, who spoke about the hypocrisy of the US "war on terror" and related it to US attacks on Cuba, including more than 40 years of blockade on Cuba.

To wrap up the speakers, Kasia Machelak, co-coordinator of Kwantlen Students Against War and Occupation (KSAWO) brought the understanding of the oppression and plunder of third-world countries by imperialist powers home to the occupation of Indigenous Nations in Canada and talked about the growing campaign from the US and EU against Iran and Syria.

MAWO Picket Line Against the Canadian War Drive Targets Canadian Forces Recruiting Center...two weeks in a row!



MAWO picket in front of the Canadian Armed Forces Recruitment Center. July 28th 2005.

By Kira Koshelanyk

On Thursday July 14th, 2005 General Rick Hillier, Chief of Defense for the Canadian government exposed for all the Canadian government's imperialist face and role in the occupation of Afghanistan. He spoke frankly as the mouth-piece for the racist war machine describing the Afghan people as "detestable murderers and scumbags", saying that the Canadian military "has to be able to go places and kill people" and clarifying, by announcing the deployment of 2000 more Canadian troops to Afghanistan, that those people would be Afghans. On Thursday July 21st and 28th Mobilization Against War & Occupation's (MAWO) "Operation: Canada Out!" campaign organized a response to the revving engines of the Canadian imperialist war drive by holding two emergency pickets targeting the Canadian Forces Recruitment Center downtown Vancouver.

The pickets dominated the sidewalk in front of the recruitment center with a large banner reading "Canada Out of Afghanistan!" The picketers circulated in front, holding picket signs and informational leaflets and newsletters to hand out. The pickets reached dozens of people who walked by, stopped to listen to antiwar statements made by community speakers, and signed the petitions demanding Canada Out of Afghanistan and Haiti. Protesters chanted almost continuously while picketing, making their presence not only highly visible but also audible for people downtown Vancouver.

On top of the "Operation Canada Out!" petition campaign (which has collected more than 7,000 signatures against the occupations of Afghanistan and Haiti), MAWO will continue with the series of protest pickets against the Canadian war drive to organize against imperialist war and occupation at home and abroad.

Petitioning in Defense of War Resisters

By Alison Bodine

War Resisters are American soldiers who refuse to fight in the war and occupation of Iraq and who have come to Canada demanding refugee status. MAWO began its War Resisters Defense Campaign in October of 2004 and has since gotten over 2500 signatures on a petition demanding that the Canadian government grant them asylum.

Soldiers are a majority working class youth and students who join the military under increased intense financial pressure. Because of this, it is important for students in Canada to take the leadership in organizing in defense of war resisters. A recent

step in this direction came with the initiative of students in MAWO to create the Student Network in Defense of War Resisters, a coalition with representatives from seven campuses across the Lower Mainland.

On July 2nd the Student Network in Defense of War Resisters got over 500 signatures on the war resisters petition in 4.5 hours. They discussed the campaign with countless people, making the defense of war resisters a real and visible campaign in the streets and homes of people in Canada.

The Canadian government denied Jeremy Hinzman refugee status because it supports the war on Iraq and continues to expand its role on the imperialist world stage like with the recent increased intervention in

Afghanistan. In its competition with other imperialist countries for a larger piece of the pie, it cannot afford to let active and vocal opponents of the occupation of Iraq stay in Canada. Therefore, it is most important to build mass support for their defense through petitioning and education, like with marches, rallies, forums and teach-ins everywhere from factory floors to union meetings, high schools and college campuses to churches and mosques.

For more information: contact warresister@mawovancouver.org or visit www.mawovancouver.org



MAWO- Vancouver Wields Hip Hop as a Weapon Against War & Occupation, and as an Instrument for the Unity of Oppressed People!

First Ever Hip Hop Festival Against War & Occupation In the World!

By Kira Koschelanyk

Throughout history, across borders and oceans, while colonizers crashed ashore, dove in from the sky, and ignited the ground underfoot, people under attack have had to fight to defend themselves and their dignity. Alongside this fight, is the fight to maintain and protect their culture, as culture plays an important role in the expression of the lives and feeling of unity of oppressed people and this unity is integral to their resistance. From the black ghettos in New York in the 70's to present day in occupied Palestine, this struggle has been a major point of unity for all people oppressed by colonialism and imperialism.

Through recent decades, hip hop culture has been the mercury rising in the thermometer of oppressed peoples consciousness and the common form of expression of dissatisfaction with a world ravaged by war, occupation and destruction. Hip Hop's recent explosion has its roots in the rising voices of slaves, people of color & indigenous people, youth, immigrants and refugees, all the way from Da Arab Mc's (DAM) in Gaza to native hip hop emcee, The Obese Chief in Hobbema, Alberta. In Vancouver in June of 2005, Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO) undertook the organization of the world's first-ever Hip Hop Festival Against War & Occupation. This unprecedented initiative was undertaken to unify hip hop as a global phenomenon of resistance, the protest music of this century, with the most important social movement of this century, the antiwar movement.

The festival hit the streets long before opening night on June 8th as MAWO organizers tested the idea, appealing to record stores, venues, community centers and artists for support. The jump-off started immediately with a tremendously positive response with six free venues, from downtown clubs to community centers and parks, to dozens of performers, from fast-rising local native talent like the *Sunday School Dropoutz* and *The Obese Chief* to internationally re-knownned Punjabi Hip Hop group, *Signia*. Support came from 23 endorsers like students unions, radio stations, hip hop record stores and record labels and even endorsement from the City of Burnaby. At the beginning of June, the Hip Hop Festival Against War &

Occupation held the number 2 spot in the Vancouver Sun's "Top Summer Festivals of 2005" calendar and received broad coverage in international and local media. This idea that started out in the hearts and minds of MAWO organizers was quickly taken up by people all over the Lower Mainland and the festival was organized through a connection with consciousness and support of masses of people. In the weeks before the festival, more and more people were drawn into the organizing. On the streets, where people live and work and in communities of color, immigrant and refugee communities and around high schools, there wasn't a lamppost untouched

by the brightly colourful Hip Hop Festival Against War & Occupation poster.

The result of this buildup came over six days, with all but one of the shows being all-ages, with more than 37 performers and more than 1,200 people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, all ages coming together under the banner of "Hip Hop Against War and Occupation". Testifying to the mass scale of the festival, the outdoor show on Saturday July 11th saw nearly 600 people out at Grandview Park who came to



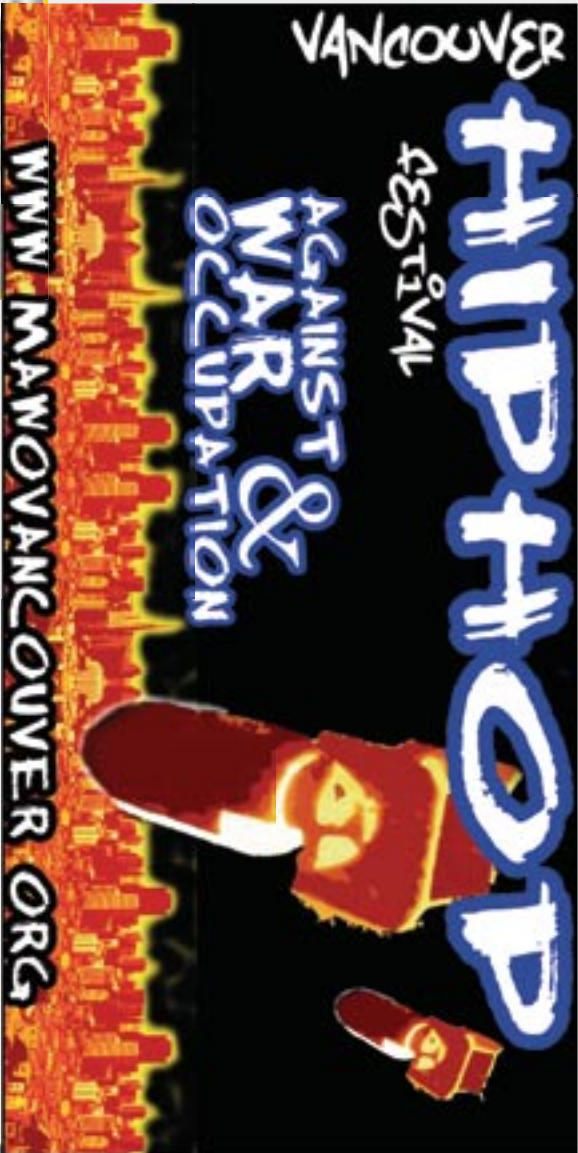
June 9th Hip Hop Show at El Cocal.



June 11th, Platino Latin Productions at Grandview Park, Vancouver

rap, watch, discuss, dance and add their antiwar message to the 8' by 21' graffiti wall constructed as a huge, interactive antiwar art display. On the final day of the festival a gathering of over 50 activists, artists, youth, students held passionate discussion on the significance of the festival and the important unity forged between hip hop, antiwar politics and movement building at the festival's closing forum. This discussion, and the presentations from organizers and performers, consolidated and cemented the resolve of artists and activists alike to push their unity beyond that day and the festival itself and build a diverse, inclusive and effective antiwar movement.

The Hip Hop Festival Against War & Occupation 2005 unified hip hop as the most popular form of cultural expression and resistance with the antiwar movement, the most important popular and social movement of today, strengthening both in the battle against the most dangerous and intense assault on oppressed people internationally: imperialist war and occupation. More importantly, the festival showed the strength of this unity and prepared the ground for the festival in 2006, and years to come as long as war and occupation exist, with the exponential potential for growth to an international level – taking this tool of expression, resistance and expansion bigger and further as our voices come together to say "No to War & Occupation!" "Yes to Self Determination!"



The graffiti wall in Grandview Park.



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the stigmatization that the struggle and resistance to the imperialist aggressions is a terrorist struggle.

FTT: Within the struggle of the Mapuche people going on right now, could you tell us what the issues and demands are?

Wladimir Painemal: We differentiate between what we consider our demands and what we consider vindication. Vindications have to do with things we had and

were lost. The vindications are centred on the recuperation of our traditional territories and of our self-determination. The recovery of our culture can also be included.

With regards to demands then, basically what we're stating is that we're demanding rights for the Mapuche people in Chilean society. Rights in regards to education, health, access to what the state should provide. We state that the Chilean state is not really doing us any favours by providing basic levels of education

and health. We see those as our rights. Particularly, it is important that we understand that the level of poverty, in terms of child mortality and mortality in general, level of education, access to

health, is worse for the Mapuche people. Within Chilean society the Mapuche have the highest levels of poverty. Another demand is the recognition of the Mapuche Nation as a Nation. We think that it is very important that the Chilean State recognize us in the constitution as a Nation.

FTT: What connections do you see between the Mapuche struggle for self-determination and the struggle for self-determination throughout the Americas, especially Canada?

Wladimir Painemal: I am going to speak in general terms because I don't have in-depth knowledge about the struggles of First Nations here in Canada. I am just becoming acquainted with the processes here and in Latin America as well. But the similarity is that with regards to land and resources, the state has taken away something from all indigenous nations. By all means we respect the decisions of each Indigenous Nation. We respect their demands and the way they approach these demands and how they reach agreements with the states. We respect their right to decide how to struggle for self-determination. There are different

The Mapuche Struggle for Liberation and Self-Determination

ways to approach the issue of self-determination and we hope that all will contribute to bring about progress in regards to the problems of oppressed nations.

FTT: What can poor, working and oppressed people of Canada do to support and help the struggle of Mapuche people for their self-determination?

Wladimir Painemal: In the first place, what I have tried to do in coming here is exchange information. I believe that it is important to be informed about the struggles that are taking place within First Nations throughout America. This is with the understanding that there are going to be differences, differences in the way that we approach the question of self-determination and in the way that we approach the question of being Indigenous. In practical terms, I mean working towards the development of international networks of solidarity. When I talk about networks, I mean it is very important for us, Mapuche people, to learn and to know what is going on with the different struggles and to be able to respond in co-ordinated manner when there are issues that require an immediate response.

In more concrete terms, as a delegate to the second international Indigenous Youth Conference, we proposed to organize the third International Indigenous Youth conference in the Mapuche territories. We believe it is very important for us to be able

to bring delegates from all corners of the world to our territories so that they can learn more about the Mapuche struggle. At the same time it is important for us to learn more about the different struggles are being waged around the world. Another aspect of how we can contribute here in Canada is through the work that my organization, Azkintwe, has embarked on. It is a project of communication. Hopefully in the future we will try to engage the international community in more political, concrete aspects of support and mutual support, but for now we are at the stage that we need to develop the means of communication, particularly within our communities. We have a website for our newspaper, *Azkintwe*. But what we are trying to do is get our paper in a printed version as often as possible, to be able to distribute around the Mapuche communities, as we know access to the Internet in rural communities is very minimal. Therefore we need to have written material in place so that we can do outreach in different communities. That is an aspect that I have been trying to gather support for from different organizations in Canada. I have been trying to develop some forums, for which we have collected some support and funds that I will take back to my organization. We hope, through this support, to be able to build a network of solidarity.

FTT: Thank you, Wladimir.



La Lucha Mapuche por Autodeterminación y Liberación

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del Convenio 169 de la OIT en el reconocimiento de nuestros pueblos Constitucionalmente.

FTT: Que Conexiones observas entre la lucha por autodeterminación de la Nación Mapuche y la lucha de autodeterminación de los pueblos indígenas en América y particularmente de las primeras naciones en Canadá?

Wladimir Painemal: Tengo una impresión general, pues desconozco a profundidad el proceso que se realiza en Canadá con las Primeras naciones. Respetamos las diferentes formas y vías que los pueblos utilizan para la demanda de satisfacción de derechos de las Primeras Naciones. Se respeta en tanto son pueblos distintos, procesos diferentes y propuestas ideológicas distintas también. Como avance de las Primeras Naciones en Canadá observamos que existe mas respeto del Estado Canadiense hacia

estos pueblos, situación que en Chile no existe. Independientemente de los problemas sociales que puedan tener, hay adelantos en los Pueblos del norte en Canadá con un nivel de autonomía que es importante reconocer.

En Latinoamérica, independientemente de los diferentes matices que presenta la lucha de los pueblos, encontramos convergencias de fondo, como la recuperación de los derechos respecto de la autodeterminación de estos pueblos. Esperamos que todas estas luchas tengan un buen desarrollo y del cual nosotros podamos aprender también.

FTT: Que podría hacer el pueblo de Canadá para apoyar la lucha de autodeterminación de los Mapuches?

Wladimir Painemal: En primer lugar, al estar aquí, lo que hacemos en este momento es el intercambio de información, de ideas y experiencia que tenemos. Mas allá de las diferencias del contexto de las relaciones que existan con el estado y

otras variables; lo que nos comunica es la lucha por nuestros derechos, con diferentes experiencias pero con ideas acerca de estos procesos, concebida en el respeto mutuo entre nuestros pueblos.

En términos mas prácticos, la generación de redes de solidaridad que nos permita estar al tanto de las luchas que existan en cualquier parte del mundo y por tanto solidarizarnos con ellas. Concretamente hemos propuesto que el 3er. Encuentro Internacional de Jóvenes Indígenas se realice en Pueblo Mapuche. Esto significara conocer nuestra realidad y para todos los que participemos, fortalecer nuestras redes de apoyo y solidaridad, además de abrir nuestra lucha hasta el último rincón del mundo. Por otra parte estamos tratando de tener un lazo comunicacional con otros pueblos a través de los medios con que cuenta el Pueblo Mapuche, como nuestra pagina de Internet y el periódico azkintuwe (http:



//www.nodo50.org/azkintuwe/) que esperamos próximamente pueda ser de acceso internacional en otras lenguas. Proyectamos también que próximamente las comunidades Mapuches puedan profundizar su propios instrumentos, primero que nada comunicacional, por ejemplo en nuestras comunidades casi no contamos con servicio de Internet lo cual implica un esfuerzo complicado mantenernos comunicados, y

posteriormente político. Este es un trabajo que me corresponde y he venido realizando; contactando con organizaciones que puedan realizar donaciones y mantener el periódico andando entre las comunidades.

FTT: Muchas Gracias Wladimir.

By Ivan Drury

It would seem that the great myth of Canada’s “proud peacekeeping tradition” has been laid to rest with the other fantastic Canadian legends like those of the Bigfoot and Ogo Pogo. With Canada spending three years walking the exposed ribs of Afghanistan and a year and a half knee deep in the bloody shores of Haiti, you’d think that General Hillier’s July 14th declaration of war on the people of Afghanistan would be only the etchings on the tombstone of a dead idea: however, old stories die hard.

Where does “peacekeeping” come from?

The whole notion of “peacekeeping” was born, according to legend, from the mouth of Canada’s Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs Lester B. Pearson in 1956 as a solution to the problem of Egypt’s nationalization of the Suez Canal. The “problem” for Canada, as well as for the US, France, Britain and Israel, was that Egypt dared to take control of its canal. The “solution”, as proposed by Pearson, was to buy time to avoid a premature war amongst competing imperialist powers and the USSR, and find a “political solution” that included helping Israel’s attempted land-grab. The result was that imperialist superpower was swiped away from the fallen England and France and concentrated in the hands of the US, who was left with only the USSR to contend with as a threat. Pearson was elevated as a hero and awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Pearson’s “peacekeeping” proved to be a valuable tool for Canada and other imperialist countries during the Cold War, but it did not die off with the Soviet Union. As Canada’s International Policy Statement says, “The West may have won the Cold War, but that victory has not ushered in an era of global stability.” This is because the “West” did not win the Cold War. No one won the Cold War, it just ended, because the cause of the Cold War remained: the irreconcilable conflict between the interests of imperialism and the interests of working, poor and oppressed people in the world.

Since the Cold War has ended, the “red menace” has only been replaced with the “terrorist threat”. Again, Canada’s International Policy Statement states, “apart from the direct damage and human suffering that result from [terrorist] attacks, terrorism has other long term consequences.” [...] “Security threats can diminish economic prosperity.” Cross reference that with Hillier’s blunt statement on the deployment of 2,000 Canadian troops to Afghanistan, “We’re not going to let those radical murderers and killers rob from others and certainly we’re not going to let them rob from Canada,” and you can see that the choice of “peacekeeping” or “war” is just a matter of tactics. The goal of the Canadian ruling class is to protect their interests – the pillaging of the wealth of the world and jockeying for position against their imperialist rivals. This goal is at the root of all foreign and domestic policy and all wars and occupations, no matter what they are called.

In today’s world, the real job of Canadian “peacekeeping” troops is to suppress the rising struggles of oppressed people wherever they peak. Through the lens of “Canadian interests” every national struggle or individual terrorist attack is an opportunity to advance Canada’s imperialist economic, political or strategic goals. At the same time, these risings also pose a real threat to the prosperity of the Canadian ruling class because behind every so-called “terrorist threat” is a potential mass movement of oppressed people looking for a window to throw Canada through, out of Afghanistan, Haiti and every oppressed nation in the world.

“Canadian Peacekeeping”, 1956 to present: A shattered dream

1492-present: The formation of Canada through the occupation of Indigenous Land

Although this long-term occupation pre-dates and encompasses the concept of “peacekeeping,” the Canadian wars against and subsequent occupations of Indigenous nations in Canada form the foundation of Canada as a nation-state. The genocide of Indigenous people and the criminalization and suppression of their cultures by the Canadian government still continues in an ongoing colonial war today.

Without the theft of Indigenous territory and resources through the murder or displacement of all Indigenous people, there would be no Canada.

1956: The Suez Crisis

Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lester B. Pearson, proposes a “peacekeeping” force that is sent to Egypt after Britain/France/Israel invade Egypt to try to stop the nationalization of the Suez Canal by Egypt. This first “peacekeeping team” served to help protect Zionist Israel.

1960-1964: The Congo

Canada participates in a UN force that is sent to the Congo. Through this UN force Canada is involved in the assassination of the popular Congolese

US troop deployments. Canada has since taken on the leadership of the international “elections” team in Iraq. Canadian corporation SCN-Lavalin is the principal supplier of bullets to the US military to use against Iraqis.

2004–Present: Haiti

Canada/France/US invasion of Haiti. After overthrowing and exiling the elected president, an imperialist puppet military dictator was installed. Conditions following the invasion are reported to be worse than under the Duvalier regime, one of the bloodiest regimes in the history of the Western Hemisphere. Today Canada has more than 100 RCMP officers in Haiti to train a local police force that acts as a death squad for the occupation

the US in carrying out its agenda, as it did in Afghanistan and Haiti, and as it does whenever a partnership with any imperialist country is in its own favor, but Canada does so in the pursuit of the economic and political interests of its own ruling class.

What Next?

Regardless of the paint-stripping benefits of the plainly announced Canadian war drive, working, poor and oppressed people in Canada must take it as a dire warning and call to action. This tough-talk from the government and ruling class of Canada really means one thing: they have terrible plans

Peacekeeper? a Shattered Dream Warmonger: a Bitter Reality

anti-colonial liberation leader and President Patricia Lumumba.

1954-1975: Vietnam War

Canada sends foreign aid to South Vietnam. Between 1954 and 1975, Canada is part of a “truce commission” in Vietnam. In this capacity, it conducts espionage to support the war against Vietnam.

Canada was the largest per capita military exporter during the Vietnam War. Between 1964-1973 Canada sold \$12.5 billion in ammunition and other war equipment to the US. As part of this arms dealing, the chemical weapon “Agent Orange” was tested for use in Vietnam in Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick and produced in Elmira, Ontario. Canada also provided areas in Alberta and Saskatchewan for the US to do test carpet-bombing raids prior to being carried out in Vietnam.

1991: Gulf War

Canada participates directly in the first Gulf War against Iraq. At least tens of thousands of Iraqis are directly killed, and 1.5 million more are killed by the destruction to infrastructure and the Canada-backed sanctions that follow.

1991-Present: The Balkans

Over 40,000 Canadian troops have been deployed on different occasions throughout the Balkans, including during the breakup of Yugoslavia and the period of mass ethnic cleansing and genocide that followed.

Canada participates in the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999, with thousands killed. Since then, Canadian troops have continued to do “peacekeeping” cleanup in Kosovo while Serbs and Roma people are expelled from Kosovo.

1992-1993: Somalia

The Canadian military is sent to Somalia in late 1992 under the direction of the UN. Thousands of Somalis are killed by the UN intervention. The Canadian military commits numerous atrocities. Somewhat like Abu Ghraib, a scandal erupts when one Canadian soldier’s pictures of Shidane Arone being tortured are released - depicting a 16 year old Somali boy who is tortured and killed by Canadian soldiers. There are also other cases of unarmed Somalis being shot dead by the Canadian troops.

1993-1996: Rwanda

The 1994 genocide in Rwanda flourishes despite Canadian “peacekeeper” presence. For many people, the episode calls into question the reality of the “peacekeeping” dream.

2001-Present: Afghanistan

During the October 2001 US invasion of Afghanistan, Canada was the first country to provide support, including warships, aircraft and troops. “Peacekeeper” troop activity increased in February 2002 when, as part of US controlled “Operation Apollo”, 850 Canadian troops deployed to Kandahar and heavy combat. Canadian “peacekeeper” troops upped their presence to 2,000 under NATO command in “Operation Athena” focused on “stabilizing Kabul” beginning in August 2003 and continuing still today.

In July 2005 an additional 2,000 troops were pledged (by February 2006) to return to “kill people” in Kandahar.

2003–Present: Iraq

Before the US / UK invade, Canada parks warships in the Persian Gulf, used as transfer and security point for

government.

Warmonger: A bitter reality

The catch with Canadian “peacekeeping” is that it never has anything to do with peace. It can’t, because as Paul Martin explained in Canada’s 2005 International Policy Statement, Canada’s economic and political position in the world depends upon free market access to international markets, resources and the “free flow of people, goods and services across national borders” in order to compete on the global market. In the same statement, he also recognizes that these very imperialist interests, and the resulting inequality of the global division of wealth, are what cause “unrest” and unpeace... or “war.”

The reality is that, because its interests are against those of the majority of the people of the world and because it is locked in a fierce competition with other imperialist powers in the world, Canada is a warmongering country. General Hillier’s bitter pill comments that should wake us from our “peacekeeper” dream are tough to swallow. Throughout nearly four years of Canadian occupation of Afghanistan and the invasion and occupation of Haiti, many trends in the progressive movement in Canada have grasped at crumbling maple leaves, desperate to hold on to Pearson’s lie. “George Bush is controlling Ottawa,” they say. “We have to protect Canadian sovereignty and our heritage of peacekeeping!”

Unfortunately, this Canadian nationalism is misplaced. Working, poor and oppressed people in Canada must not line up with the Canadian ruling class against the US – we must unite with each other and with working, poor and oppressed people around the world against US, Canadian, and all imperialist war drives. The government of Canada does collaborate with

to wreak tremendous destruction in the years to come. The Canadian war drive has begun with the deployment to Afghanistan but it will not stop there. With 5,000 more troops and 13 billion more dollars in its arsenal in only the last three months, the government of Canada is writing itself a blank cheque. The era of war and occupation that we have all found ourselves thrust into will doubtless provide them with constant fields of opportunity to “do more if we want to maintain influence in a more competitive world.” (Canada’s International Policy Statement, 2005) In his statement, General Hillier promised, on top of troops to Afghanistan, 100 armored vehicles to the Sudan. And at the end of July, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan reportedly approached Canada to send troops, on top of their ongoing RCMP presence, to Haiti to “bolster a planned UN rapid-reaction force” (Globe and Mail, Aug 1, 05) against the growing Haitian anti-occupation uprising.

No matter what specific countries or regions the Canadian ruling class has in its sights, the progressive movement in Canada must wake up from its dream of Canadian “peacekeeping”, rub its eyes and see that reality is a nightmare of war, occupation and destruction. We must, for the sake of the lives of millions of people around the world and the lives and rights of people in Canada, stand up together and oppose the Canadian war drive.



Soldier searching Afghan family, July 2005.



Anti-Occupation Protest in Kabul, May 12 2005.

THE MOMENT OF TRUTH?

By Ricardo Alarcon*

**Ricardo Alarcón is the Vice President of Cuba and the President of the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba*

It has been said over and over again for a long time now. Firstly, they said it themselves – Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González – to the very Court which, as part of the macabre farce, sentenced them with perverse severity. The voices of solidarity which, little by little were beginning to speak out around the world, denounced it time and again.

The Five young Cubans arrested in Miami in September of 1998 were the victims of a huge injustice. They hadn't harmed anyone. Their only crime was to fight against terrorism there, in the city that is a lair for terrorists. The trial against them was corrupt from the outset and riddled with scandalous violations of the law. From start to finish it was, in short, illegal. The Five innocent men, victims of a government's abduction, were more than just prisoners. The US authorities have an unavoidable obligation; to put an end to the unjust imprisonment, or rather, the official abduction, and free them immediately.

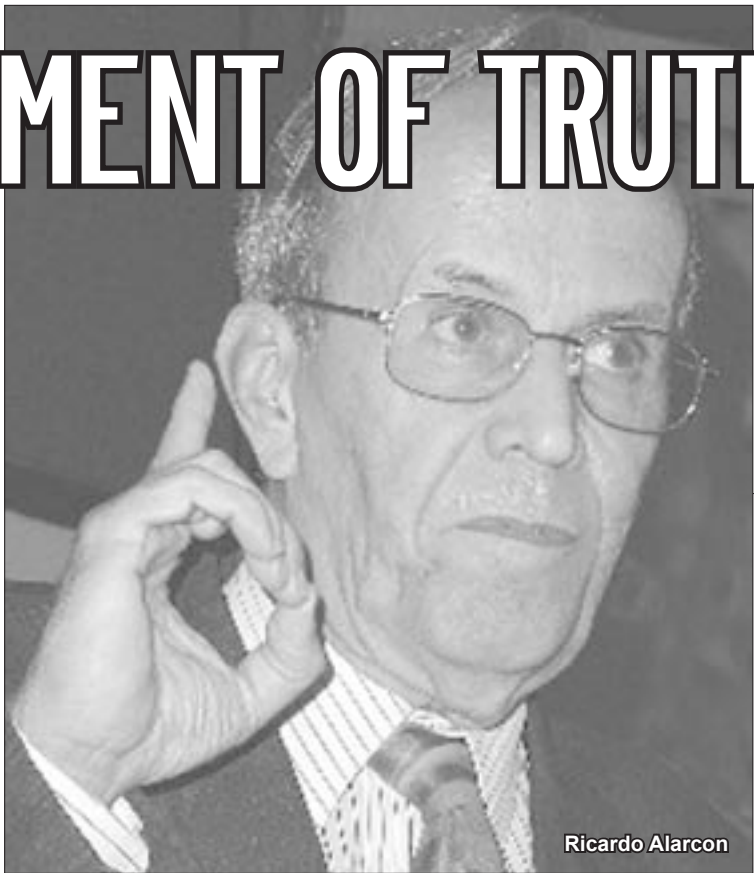
To inform the public of these facts, and in particular, let the American people know about them, has been extraordinarily difficult. The mass media of 'information' has, with disciplined uniformity, opted not to communicate information on this issue.

One of the most curious examples of 'globalization' is the redefinition of which issues constitute news and which don't. For example, the fact that the United States has officially expressed its support of terrorism and has repeated this conviction several times over the years, in writing and before a court of law, has never made the news. They have done this, letter by letter, in official documents issued by that Government and in numerous statements made by their district attorneys to the Court, all of which appears verbatim in the transcripts taken during sessions in the Court of Miami and in texts which have been made public, but which the American and European press have never reported on.

Nor have they ever deemed it pertinent to relate how the accused were denied access to supposed incriminating 'evidence', or how it was almost impossible for them to have contact with their lawyers, from whom this 'evidence' was also withheld. This never made the news.

Something else which wasn't considered newsworthy was the unusual, to say the least, fact, that generals, admirals, colonels and government experts all appeared before the Court, and stated, under oath, that the accused were innocent of the charges against them. The mass media based outside of Miami never found out about this, despite the fact that with incessant furore, the local pseudo-journalists insulted and threatened these persons, and that their testimonies have been available, in the trial transcripts, for five years.

What about the fact that with regard to the most serious charge the US Government itself acknowledged that they couldn't prove it and in the end, unsuccessfully requested that it be withdrawn? The fact that this request, an unprecedented one in American history, was rejected by the Court and the Court of Appeals, but that regardless of this Gerardo Hernández was later found guilty, without any hesitation, of the charge that no-one wanted to accuse him of? The fact that on this charge they also sentenced him to a second life sentence? None of that interests the communicators.



Ricardo Alarcon

What about the fact that all contact between the abducted Five and their families is restricted? Their visits reduced to a minimum? The fact that two of them are prevented from seeing their wives? The fact that a six year old girl is not allowed to meet her father? These are not matters to occupy the time of busy journalists, or even the imaginary defenders of human rights.

The case of the Five was conveniently ignored by the large corporations trying to monopolise information worldwide. However, in Miami, the so-called local media, those spokespeople for the terrorists who run the city as well as its radio, television and written press, did pay attention to this issue. They did so with the stridency that has made them famous. They went so far that the Court itself, as subjugated as it was by the terrorist mafia, felt obliged to protest and complain. Recall, if you may, the situation described by the judge: supposed journalists, brandishing cameras and microphones, following members of the jury through the passageways and up and down the steps of the Court building and out onto the street, to their vehicles, choleric, threatening. 'They, the jury are afraid, they feel threatened', admitted the judge. This is what is recorded in the transcripts and this is how the Miami press reported it. Outside of Miami however, there was an imposed silence. These events weren't reported either. The denouncement made by the judge, the anguish felt by the jury, the furore created by the 'journalists', all met with the same response: it wasn't happening, it wasn't news.

The news items that were reported, and repeated to the point of exhaustion, day and night, were Kobe Bryant's affairs, Martha Stewart's outfit, the comings and goings in Michael Jackson's bed and their visits to courtrooms besieged by avid 'informers'. There isn't precisely an absence of news about the law, the police and courtroom activity among American television networks, radio stations or newspapers, or among their European clones.

In this 'globalized' world, from the Himalayas to the Patagonia, many people are aware of the sexual liaisons of any celebrity you could mention, but millions of Americans are not allowed to know that their government protects terrorism in its own backyard and punishes with exceptional cruelty all those who are there fighting it.

That was the situation up until Thursday 14 July. Only time will tell if it just happened by chance or if this coincidence is to bring us a glimmer of hope, but it was on this very day and no other when the news began to circulate. The BBC information service based in London and the American press agency, Associated Press, whose dispatches would later be reproduced by other organs of the printed press and radio, announced each in their own way, that the UN had declared arbitrary and illegal the arrest of the Five Cubans and their subsequent trial.

This is relative to the report issued by



a panel of independent experts, the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention established by the Commission on Human Rights. It is the result of a long process of analysis, investigation and inquiries that included the Government of the United States.

In their conclusion the group underlined three main aspects: the 17 months of solitary confinement imposed on the Five at the time of their arrest, the limited access that the accused and their lawyers had to the evidence and the climate of strong hostility that they had to face.

It is worth noting that on three occasions the United Nations Group mentioned that the United States government had admitted in their communiqués to the serious violations that had been committed. As we see here:

'The Government has not contested the fact that defense lawyers had very limited access to evidence..., negatively affecting their ability to present counter evidence'.

'The Government has not denied that, the climate of bias and prejudice against the accused in Miami persisted and helped to present the accused as guilty from the beginning. It was not contested by the Government that one year later it admitted that Miami was an unsuitable place for a trial where it proved almost impossible to select an impartial jury in a case linked with Cuba'.

Taking this into account, 'The Working Group concludes that the three elements that were enunciated above, combined together, are of such gravity that they confer the deprivation of liberty of these five persons an arbitrary character', and 'the deprivation of liberty of Messrs. Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez, Fernando González Llort, Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar and René González Schweret is arbitrary, being in contravention of article 14 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights', therefore, 'the Working Group requests the Government to adopt the necessary steps to remedy the situation'.

How can this situation be remedied? What are the necessary steps that the United States Government must adopt? The answers are obvious. The entire process against the Five is null and void, invalid. The abducted Five must be freed immediately.

Since 12 September 1998, for 7 years now, that Government has been arbitrarily and illegally depriving five young men of their freedom. Worst of all they are doing this in order to protect the terrorist groups that operate with total impunity in the United States. So far they have managed this with the conspiratorial silence of the mass media.

Now we have the UN report and the fact that its content has been made public by some important media organs. Let us hope that the message will spread to the millions of people who have been refused their right to receive information. Let us hope that, finally, the moment of truth is upon us.

From: <http://www.rebellion.org>

“The entire process against the Five is null and void, invalid. The abducted Five must be freed immediately.”





Anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carilles.

¿La hora de la verdad?

Gobierno el hecho de que un año más tarde el mismo Gobierno admitió que Miami no era el lugar adecuado para celebrar un juicio donde estaba probado que era casi imposible seleccionar un jurado imparcial en un caso vinculado con Cuba”.

Sobre esa base “El Grupo de Trabajo llega a la conclusión de que los tres elementos enunciados arriba, en su conjunto, son de tal gravedad que confieren a la privación de libertad de estas cinco personas un carácter arbitrario”, declara que “la privación de libertad de los señores Antonio Guerrero Rodríguez, Fernando González Llort, Gerardo Hernández Nordelo, Ramón Labañino Salazar y René González Schwerert es arbitraria y está en contravención del Artículo 14 de la Convención Internacional de Derechos Civiles y Políticos” y en consecuencia “El Grupo de Trabajo solicita al Gobierno que adopte las medidas necesarias para remediar esta situación”.

¿Cómo remediar está situación? ¿Cuáles son las medidas necesarias que el gobierno de Estados Unidos tiene que adoptar? Las respuestas son obvias. Todo el proceso contra los Cinco es irrito, nulo, carece de validez. Los Cinco secuestrados tienen que ser liberados inmediatamente.

Desde el 12 de septiembre de 1998, hace ya casi 7 años, ese Gobierno priva de su libertad, arbitraria e ilegalmente, a Cinco jóvenes. El colmo es que lo hace para proteger a los grupos terroristas que actúan con total impunidad en territorio norteamericano. Lo ha logrado hasta hoy con el silencio cómplice de la

Por Ricardo Alarcon*

*Ricardo Alarcón de Quesada es presidente del Parlamento cubano

Se había dicho y repetido durante mucho tiempo. En primer lugar lo declararon ellos mismos –Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González y René González- ante el propio Tribunal que en farsa macabra los condenara con perversa desmesura. Lo denunciaron una y otra vez las voces solidarias que paso a paso se levantaban en todo el mundo.

Los Cinco jóvenes cubanos detenidos en Miami en Septiembre de 1998 eran víctimas de una colosal injusticia. No habían causado daño alguno a nadie. Su única culpa fue luchar contra el terrorismo allí, en esa ciudad que es madriguera de terroristas. El proceso contra ellos estaba viciado desde su origen y todo él plagado de escandalosas violaciones al derecho. Era, de punta a cabo, en resumen, ilegal. Más que prisioneros eran Cinco inocentes secuestrados por un Gobierno. Las autoridades norteamericanas tenían una obligación ineludible. Poner fin al injusto encarcelamiento –o sea, al secuestro oficial- liberándolos inmediatamente.

Dar a conocer estas verdades a la opinión pública –sobre todo permitirles a los norteamericanos enterarse de ellas- ha resultado extraordinariamente difícil. Los grandes medios de “información”, con disciplinada uniformidad, han preferido no informar sobre este tema.

Una de las manifestaciones más curiosas de la “globalización” es la redefinición de qué asunto es noticia y cuál no lo es. Nunca ha llegado a ser noticia, por ejemplo, que el gobierno de Estados Unidos, por escrito y ante un tribunal, hubiese expresado formalmente su apoyo al terrorismo y que lo haya reiterado varias veces durante años. Así, con todas las letras, en documentos oficiales emitidos por ese Gobierno y en numerosas declaraciones de sus fiscales ante la Corte, todo lo cual aparece literalmente en las actas de las sesiones del Tribunal de Miami y en textos que son públicos, pero de los que no se han hecho eco jamás los medios norteamericanos o europeos.

Tampoco han considerado pertinente dar cuenta de cómo se impidió a los acusados acceder a las supuestas “pruebas” inculpatorias o de que se les hizo casi imposible la comunicación con sus abogados y a

éstos también se les negó el acceso a esas “pruebas”. Eso nunca fue noticia.

Ni lo fue el hecho, por decir lo menos, insólito, de que ante el Tribunal desfilaron generales, almirantes, coroneles y expertos gubernamentales y que allí afirmaron, bajo juramento, que los acusados eran inocentes de los cargos imputados. Esa noticia nunca la descubrieron los grandes medios ubicados fuera de Miami pese a que el pseudoperiodismo local, en incesante algarabía, insultó y amenazó a esas personas y a que sus declaraciones se pueden encontrar, en las actas del Tribunal, desde hace cinco años.

¿Qué respecto al cargo más grave el propio gobierno de Estados Unidos reconoció que no lo podía probar y solicitó al final, infructuosamente, retirarlo? ¿Qué esa petición, sin precedente en la historia norteamericana, fue rechazada por el Tribunal y por la Corte de Apelaciones, y que, sin embargo, después, sin vacilación alguna, Gerardo Hernández fue declarado culpable de aquello por lo que ya nadie quería acusarlo? ¿Qué por ese cargo, además, lo condenaron a una segunda cadena perpetua? Nada de ello interesó a los comunicadores.

¿Qué se dificulte los contactos de los Cinco secuestrados con sus familiares? ¿Qué se reduzca al mínimo sus visitas? ¿Qué a dos de ellos, se les impida completamente encontrarse con sus esposas? ¿Qué a una niña de seis años no se le permita conocer a su padre? Esas no son cuestiones para emplear el tiempo de atareados periodistas ni siquiera de algunos imaginarios defensores de los derechos humanos.

El caso de los Cinco fue convenientemente ignorado por las grandes corporaciones que tratan de monopolizar la información en el planeta. Pero en Miami los llamados medios locales –voceros de los terroristas que dominan la ciudad y su radio, su televisión y su prensa escrita- sí se ocuparon del asunto. Lo hicieron con la estridencia que los ha hecho famosos. Hasta el punto que el mismísimo Tribunal, sometido como estaba a los dictados de la mafia terrorista, sin embargo, se vio obligado a protestar y a quejarse. Recuérdesse la situación descrita por la jueza: supuestos periodistas, blandiendo cámaras y micrófonos, persiguiendo a los miembros del jurado por pasillos y escaleras del edificio del Tribunal hasta la calle, hasta sus vehículos, coléricos, amenazantes. “Ellos, los jurados tienen temor, se sienten

amenazados”, confesó la jueza. Así consta en actas y así lo divulgó la prensa miamense. Pero fuera de Miami se impuso el silencio. También sobre estos sucesos. La denuncia de la jueza, la angustia de los jurados, el alboroto de los “periodistas” encontraron unánime respuesta: No existieron, no fueron noticia.

Noticias, repetidas más allá del cansancio, día y noche, fueron, eso sí, las aventuras de Kobe Bryant, el atuendo de Martha Stewart, los trajes en la cama de Michael Jackson, y sus visitas a unas Cortes asediadas por ávidos “informadores”. Porque noticias judiciales, de policías y tribunales, no es precisamente lo que falta en la televisión, la radio y los diarios norteamericanos ni en sus clones europeos.

En este mundo “globalizado”, desde el Himalaya hasta la Patagonia, muchos conocen las peripecias sexuales de cualquier famoso pero a millones de norteamericanos se les prohíbe saber que su Gobierno protege al terrorismo en su propio territorio y castiga con inusitada crueldad a quienes allá lo combatan.

Así estábamos hasta el pasado jueves 14 de julio. Habrá que esperar para saber si fue sólo el azar o si la coincidencia trae una luz esperanzadora. Pero fue precisamente ese día y no otro cuando comenzó a circular la noticia. La dieron a conocer, cada cual por su lado, el servicio informativo de la BBC de Londres y la agencia de prensa norteamericana Associated Press cuyo despacho sería reproducido después por otros medios impresos y radiales: La ONU declara arbitrario e ilegal el arresto de los Cinco cubanos y el proceso que se les siguió.

Se trata del dictamen emitido por un panel de expertos independientes, el Grupo de Trabajo sobre Detenciones Arbitrarias de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos.

Es el resultado de un largo proceso de análisis, búsqueda de información y consultas que incluyeron al gobierno de Estados Unidos.

En sus conclusiones el Grupo subraya tres aspectos principales: el confinamiento solitario durante 17 meses impuesto a los Cinco desde el momento de su detención, el limitado acceso a la evidencia por parte de los acusados y de sus abogados y el ambiente muy hostil que debieron enfrentar.

Conviene apuntar que en tres ocasiones el Grupo de Naciones Unidas señala que en sus comunicaciones el gobierno de



Gerardo Labanino, one of the Cuban Five.

Estados Unidos admitió las serias violaciones cometidas. Veamos:

“El Gobierno no ha refutado el hecho de que los abogados de la defensa tuvieron un acceso muy limitado a la evidencia...Lo que afectó negativamente su capacidad para presentar evidencia contraria”.

“El Gobierno no ha negado que...el clima de predisposición y prejuicio contra los acusados en Miami persistió y contribuyó a presentar a los acusados como culpables desde el principio. No fue impugnado por el

gran prensa.

Ahora tenemos el dictamen de la ONU y su difusión por algunos medios importantes. Ojalá que el mensaje pudiera multiplicarse hasta llegar a millones de personas a las que se ha negado el derecho a la información. Ojalá que hayamos llegado, finalmente, a la hora de la verdad.

Publicado en Rebelión (<http://www.rebellion.org>) el 20 de julio de 2005

Extradite Posada to Venezuela!

¡Extraditen a Posada a Venezuela!

By Noah Fine

June 13th, 2005 marked the day set for the immigration hearing of Luis Posada Carriles to claim asylum in the US from his crimes against Cuba. But for many people internationally this was a day to demand the extradition of Posada to Venezuela to be charged for his long



running and brutal terrorist attacks on the people of Cuba. With a callout for action from the A.N.S.W.E.R. coalition in the US, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) picked up this campaign with Cuba, against Posada.

Demonstrations littered the US against Posada on this day. We saw rallies in Washington, New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Chicago, Seattle, and Miami. With 13 endorsers from local solidarity, social justice, third-world, and student organizations this event was a success in bringing out over 150 people to the streets of downtown Vancouver to learn more about Cuba and the ongoing attacks it faces from US imperialism, generally through 44 years of the blockade and specifically through US-backed terrorists like Luis Posada Carriles.

Posada is a terrorist known internationally. He is a self-admitted terrorist responsible for many attacks on the people of Cuba, most notably that of his help in plotting the bombing of an Air Cubana tourist flight in 1976 killing 73 people. He has also

organized many attempts at assassinating Cuban president Fidel Castro.

Posada filed a request for asylum once he entered the US, which was immediately opposed by Venezuela from which Posada escaped from sentencing in relation to his involvement with the 1976 bombing. With mass mobilization in Cuba and Venezuela demanding his extradition, pressure built on the US government to take some form of action, resulting in his detainment

for having entered the US illegally and neglecting the fact that he is a known and proud terrorist. On June 13th, Posada had his first hearing for asylum and the verdict was postponed and the court date rescheduled for the end of August. Still to this day, the US fails to comply with the extradition treaty with Venezuela to which it is signatory, and refuses to bring this established and well-documented terrorist to justice.

The US “War on Terror,” or US Terror War?

Under the name of the “war on terror,” “liberation,” and “democracy,” the US has carried out war, occupation and ultimately created complete misery for the world’s poor and exploited. When we discuss attacks on Cuba, whether it is the case of Posada the CIA-trained terrorist, or the ongoing attacks Cuban people have faced since they won their revolution in 1959, we need to keep in mind these terms are part of the demagoguery which the US uses to justify its crimes against the people of Cuba. In other words, to put

it simply, WHAT IS BAD FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD IS GOOD FOR THE US RULING CLASS, AND WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE PEOPLE OF THE WORLD IS BAD FOR THE US RULING CLASS. Posada’s case once more proved that American democracy is nothing but democracy for terrorists like Luis Posada Carriles and all of the US ruling class terrorists like George Bush, Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld and all criminals alike in the US government.

This injustice, however, has not gone unnoticed. With demonstrations across North America, in Cuba and Venezuela, pressure against Posada and against the US is growing and we only saw a glimpse of this on June 13th. August 29th is the day set for the next hearing of Luis Posada Carriles, and the next day of action calling for his extradition. This day will be a true show of the international momentum that has been built against Posada and in support of the gains made in Cuba throughout 44 years of US attacks on the country. Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba has taken on this callout for action and will be holding a march and rally on Monday, August 29th to demand:

No Asylum for Anti-Cuban Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles! Extradite Posada to Venezuela! US Hands Off Cuba! Lift the Blockade Against Cuba! Free the Cuban Five Held in US Jails!

¡No Asilo en los E.U. Para Este Terrorista Anti-Cubano Luis Posada Carriles! ¡Extraditen a Posada a Venezuela! ¡E.U. Manos Fuera de Cuba! ¡Abajo el Bloqueo Contra Cuba! ¡Libertad para los Cinco Cubanos Prisioneros en los E.U.!

For more information, please check out www.vancubasolidarity.com



Free the 5 Cuban Anti-Terrorist Heroes from US Jails!

End the Illegal & Criminal Imprisonment of the Cuban 5!

By Ian Beeching

In this era, where terror is a prominent tool of imperialist powers, and where independence is intolerable to them, five Cubans stand in prisons across the US as heroes of all working and oppressed people in the world. After decades of terror against the Cuban people instigated by terrorist groups harbored by the United States and its agencies like the CIA, the Cuban government decided it had to act. Between 1994 and 1995, Cuba sent five unarmed men, Gerardo Hernandez, Antonio Guerrero, Ramone Labaniño, Reñe Gonzalez and Fernando Gonzalez on a mission to infiltrate and expose Miami-based terrorist groups such as Alpha 66, Omega 7, Brothers to the Rescue and Cuba America National Foundation, the financial backbone of all anti-Cuban terrorist groups. These groups are responsible for hundreds of terrorist attacks, which have taken the lives of thousands of Cubans.

The list of atrocities committed by these groups is long. They include the bombing of hotels in Cuba, assassinations, the spreading of disease, sabotage and attacks against Cuba supporters in the US such as the



Rally in support of the Cuban Five. Havana, July 2005.

bombing of the Lincoln Center in 1978 after a Cuban ballet. One of the most horrendous attacks was the bombing of a Cuban airliner, which took the lives of 73 people in 1976. The Cuban 5 were valiantly struggling against this

terror, putting themselves and their loved ones in mortal danger throughout the process.

In 1998, after having gathered sufficient evidence to expose the terrorists, Cuba released all the information that the

Cuban 5 had gathered to the FBI. Immediately following this, the Cuban 5 were arrested and put in solitary confinement for 17 months. It was not until 2001 that these men were convicted. After a seven-month show trial (one of the longest in American history), the Cuban 5 were sentenced to between 15 years and double life, each in a separate maximum-security prison, barred from ever seeing their families.

Recently, a United Nations working group declared the detention of the Cuban 5 as arbitrary and against international law. The decision was made on the basis that the five were not granted access to all the evidence against them, that the trial was partial and that the legal process was in violation of treaties that the United States had signed. This is a tremendously important decision to the case of the Cuban 5 and will be invaluable in the coming appeals process.

Another important development is the publishing of a book on the case of the Cuban 5 in the United States. The book is called *Superpower Principles: US Terrorism Against Cuba*. At a time when all information on anti-Cuban terrorism is overtly suppressed by the international media, this book

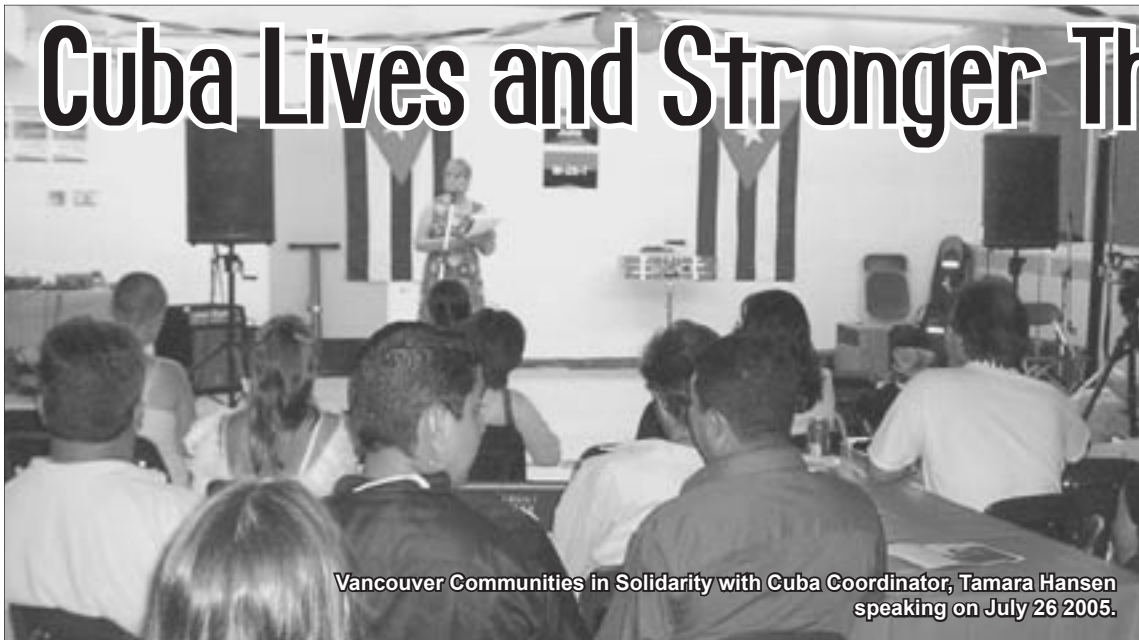
will play a pivotal role in informing people on the case of the Cuban 5. The book can be purchased at most major bookstores.

In Canada, it is our human duty to support the five Cuban heroes in US jails. On July 26th, the Vancouver chapter of the Free the Cuban 5 Committee joined with hundreds of people at the celebration of the beginning of the Cuban revolution organized by Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba. At this event, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver presented the Vancouver premiere of the documentary “Mission Against Terror,” a film exposing America’s terrorist war against Cuba through the case of the Cuban 5.

With over 2000 signatures collected by Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver demanding the immediate release of all five Cubans imprisoned in American jails, we call on all people concerned with justice and dignity to stand in solidarity with the Cuban 5 and sign the petition, which can be found at www.vancubasolidarity.com, or to email cuban5_van@yahoo.com to join the campaign in Vancouver. NO TO US-SPONSORED TERRORISM AGAINST CUBA, FREE THE CUBAN 5!

Vancouver Celebrates July 26 Movement:

Cuba Lives and Stronger Than Ever!



Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba Coordinator, Tamara Hansen speaking on July 26 2005.

By Tamara Hansen

It was a beautiful and hot summer evening at Trout Lake Community Centre when Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)'s July 26th Celebration began. Event MCs Colleen Glynn and Shannon Bundock opened the "Celebration of the July 26th Movement and the Gains of the Cuban Revolution". Speaking passionately about the attacks on the Moncada Army Barracks 52 years ago, Bundock said, "The revolutionaries, led by Fidel Castro, were set to change the miserable Cuban existence, they were set to do the impossible, they were set to rid Cuba of the US-backed dictatorship of Batista."

Ian Beeching then took to the stage on behalf of the Free the Cuban Five Committee-Vancouver. He spoke about the case of the five Cuban prisoners being held unjustly

in US jails. He also introduced the Vancouver premiere of the film "Mission Against Terror," a film directed by a Cuban and an Irish filmmaker about the lives and struggle of the Cuban Five.

Many people came to see this internationally renowned film, with VCSC organizers trying to make space for all of their guests as the room met its capacity of 150 people. After the film, Nelson Carpio of the FMLN-Vancouver brought solidarity greetings for Cuba on behalf of the group.

The musical portion of the program then began with an emotionally charged set by El Trobador Beto Fuentes, who performed social justice music from Latin America. Beto ended his performance with the Cuban classic "Guantanamera," which had everyone clapping and many got up to dance.

This energy was carried over to the

next performers, Latin American hip-hop sensations Platino Latin Productions (PLP). PLP kept the crowd on the floor dancing and shaking it. When they were joined onstage by Vancouver's most infamous Latino hip-hop artist, Che Pablucci, they inspired the room together with their hip-hop and reggaeton beats.

After PLP and Pablucci inspired the audience with their music, Vancouver City Councillor Tim Louis inspired the room with his words, saying, "The failed July 26th attack on the Moncada Barracks in 1953 and the victory of the Cuban revolution in 1959 showed us that with discipline, morale and energy, there is no defeat from which victory cannot be made."

Tamara Hansen then spoke about the importance of the July 26th movement and the gains of the Cuban revolution. She also introduced Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba's latest campaign against anti-

Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles. She encouraged everyone to sign the petition demanding the extradition of Posada to Venezuela, and invited everyone to the next international day of action against Posada happening on August 29th at 4:30pm at the Vancouver Art Gallery.

At this point, the band Juventud Rebelde was introduced, and during their set-up, the stars and stripes covered 'imperialist' piñata was brought out and the crowd was invited to take a swing at beating imperialism. Children, young people and the young at heart came to the front to strike back at imperialism and receive a sweet treat at the end when the piñata exploded.

Once Juventud Rebelde began they immediately lit up the stage and the dance floor with their wonderful and lively Cuban and Latin American music. Everyone was so excited that the band was forced to perform an encore at the end.

By the end of their performance it was 11pm on a Tuesday night and many people had to leave to get home and sleep before work the next day. Shannon and Colleen wrapped up the program and thanked everyone for joining Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC) for a fantastic night and promised to see everyone again next year!



Vancouver City Councillor Tim Louis.



Juventud Rebelde.



Che Pablucci with Platino Latin Productions.

Feelin' Reserved

My reservation
As I look into your eyes
I realize

That we're living out the white man's lies

There was no compromise

Just deceit

As I face to the feat

That was put here long before me

At times I find it hard to accept

I ask god "Is this is a test?"

If this is all we really have left

Cuz son's life is just getting started

And life is seeming harder

Just to try to stay above the water

I remember the days of way back when

We had no gang fights

We had no crack pipes

And Brother's got along in the families

What the hell went wrong with the families?

My reservation

I'm feeling the pain

The strain on my mental weighs heavy

Genocide makes me live my native life deadly

I hope you get me

If you don't let it marinate
The mind state of my people
We try to set that straight

We never brought residential schools to this place

We never brought alcoholic fluid to our tastes

We would never go n try change you

What you did to my descendents changed the elder's lives too

And all the time you knew

Now we feeling reserved

Living disturbed

Living a life

We never deserved

The native way of thinking

Ain't the way of the old

It's time to look into the future

Let our story unfold

I'm feelin' reserved

Man, that's how I'm livin'

I gotta do with this mic I was givin'

We gotta get by

No word of a lie

We gotta try to restore pride

The First Nations Rap/Hip Hop artists War Party are a talented and creative music group that reflects the life and struggle of Indigenous people in Canada. The *excerpt* below has been taken from the song "Feelin' Reserved" in their new CD "The Reign." War Party has recently worked with Chuck D from Public Enemy that will be featured on the upcoming release *The Resistance*. Their official web site: <http://www.warparty.cjb.net/>



Fire This Time Basis of Unity

Humanity today is threatened by war, economic crises, starvation, poverty and crime: all created by the drive of capitalists to maximise their profits at the expense of the people of the world. To oppose each of these crimes against humanity, we must focus all our work and action to build a foundation for and advance the interest of an overall struggle against international capital, its tools of working class division and its local institutions. The fundamental principle of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice is the unity and active solidarity of all poor and working people, locally and internationally. We must recognize that this principle is meaningless without active struggle because the pursuit of this principle goes sharply against the interest of the ruling class and they will use whatever means they have at their disposal to keep us divided and hostile amongst ourselves.

Fire This Time is a politically based action organization committed to building the social and political power of poor and working people in BC. We believe the only way to effectively challenge and threaten the government and their corporate agenda is through the organization of masses of people in motion in workplaces and in the streets. We are dedicated to mobilizing and unifying poor and working people against the Liberal Government and their anti-poor, anti-working people

legislations and policies. We are committed to organizing with working and poor people from the most attacked and exploited communities in the lower mainland and beyond: communities of colour, immigrants, refugees, "illegals", low-wage workers, disabled people, queer people, indigenous communities, unemployed people and low-income families. We oppose all forms of oppression and exploitation: from sexism to racism, from homophobia to colonialism and all other institutions, thought, beliefs, actions and behaviours that humiliate and demean people to bring hostility and division amongst us.

The goal of the Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice is to build a broad based movement to defeat the BC Liberal Government. Our work is to provide the tools necessary to unify and activate the working class in BC to build a strong and effective broad-based movement to oppose the BC Liberals and their attacks on poor and working people. This movement must be integrated in the wider revolutionary context of international struggle against capitalism and imperialism; although we are mainly engaged in local politics, in essence the scope of our work is internationalist. Supporting the struggles of oppressed people abroad weakens the hegemony and power of the capitalist class in other lands and consequently

weakens their rule at home, therefore aiding the battles of oppressed people in Canada. In addition, the practice of international solidarity solidifies the co-operation essential in building a world movement for social justice. The Liberal Government's agenda is part of a global restructuring program known as "neo-liberalism". To fight the BC Liberals is to fight neo-liberalism and global capitalism. We must expand on this both implicitly and explicitly to make the connections relevant to peoples daily domestic struggle, to overcome geographic division, and to make it clear that when we engage in struggle we do not struggle alone but alongside millions of working and poor people around the world. Within capitalist and imperialist globalisation there is no local struggle that does not have an international character. Every international is local and every local is international.

The Fire This Time Movement for Social Justice will support and engage with other progressive movements and struggles whether for immediate or long-term demands, locally, nationally and internationally. Our main goal is to end poverty and injustice through education, participation and direct action. We seek to reach a collective level of consciousness that allows oppressed people to think socially and act politically to achieve social justice by any means necessary.

about why it's important to support this struggle?

I want to say one important thing. If you believe in a society where we get decent pay cheques and we have a health care system where no one has to line up behind someone with money. If you believe in a society where every kid who gets born has every opportunity to be a decent good person who lives with creativity and opportunities, then you have to stand up for these people. Because the kind of society that Darren Entwistle wants is the opposite. He wants a corrupt, greedy, poverty stricken, despairing society where he creams the crop of the money for himself. That's what this strike is about, that's what the strike of the truckers is about, it's about working people getting their share of the wealth so our communities work.

Let me tell ya, I got nothing against the Phillipines, or India or any other place that Telus wants to go work there, but the customers are here, the jobs are here and they should stay here.

Thank you very much Jim.

Rennie Amundsen (TWU member, Telus credit services worker)

Rennie, what do you think the rally today means for the strike and for the labour movement?

Well this sends a really big message to Darren Entwistle and the entire board of directors of Telus that they need to get off this idea that they are going to break our union and start to negotiate a real contract, basing it on what we've had. We're not going to give them our jobs and we're not going to give them the right to destroy every union in this province.

There has been a series of attacks on public sector unions in British Columbia by the BC Liberal government, and this is one of the first huge open bore attacks on private sector. What do you think this switch signifies for workers overall in BC?

For the TWU it's a life or death situation. If the company wins, and we are forced back on their contract, all of our jobs will be gone within a few months. Our union would be destroyed and it would be open season on unions in this country. That's what will happen.

The Liberals got away with it in the public sector, and now the private sector is trying to get away with the same thing. They can destroy unions, they can attack them, they can put people out of work; exactly the union busting tactics from the US.

To speak to community groups and people who are not TWU workers, what would you say is necessary from supporters like us to win this strike?

Well, the union is calling on supporters to take the services off their phones,

disconnect those services and come out to the picket lines, come out to the rallies here. Come out to the picket lines, even if you just drive by and honk at us, it's a help, it really, really makes things different. And you know that management hates it when they hear that honking.

Thank you very much brother.

Vicki (TWU member)

What do you think of the lockout?

I'm a supporter of TWU and a supporter of our president Bruce Bell as



TWU workers on strike. August 4 2005.



Vicki, TWU.



Fred Muzin president of the Hospital Employees Union.



Jim Sinclair, president of the BC Federation of Labour.



TWU workers on strike. August 4 2005.

Telephone Workers' Voices in the Streets

Thank you very much.

Ken Hiebert (International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 500)

Can I ask why you are here in support of the TWU?

I'm not well informed on the specific issues, but even a group of workers who are better off, it's not in anyone's interest to see them pushed back. I know that sometimes people find it hard to identify with the workers who have achieved more in their contracts, such as the longshore workers or the telephone workers, but if they're pushed back, everybody gets pushed back and it won't help the poorer off workers in any way.

What does this mean for the labour movement?

This is not a routine strike, there is going to be a movement in support of the telephone workers, and that is very important.

Thank you very much.

Lilly Longcar (CUPE Local 1004)

Can you tell us which union you're with and why you're here in support of the TWU?

I'm with CUPE Local 1004 and I'm at the rally today to support my brothers and sisters and members of the TWU in their fight and the struggle against the scum employer Telus.

Can you tell us the significance of this lockout for other workers in the province besides TWU?

If Telus gets away with imposing a collective agreement on the TWU workers, then what's to stop other employers from doing the same thing? We have to win this, for everybody, not just for the telecommunications workers.

In your opinion, what is it going to take to win this battle?

I don't know what it's going to take, but I think we should do whatever it takes to win it.

Thank you very much.

Fred Muzin (President of the Hospital Employees Union)

Just over a year ago, there was a massive rally in support of the strike and struggle of the HEU. Now, just over a year later, the TWU, which is private sector, is on the hook in a lot of the same ways that the HEU was. Can you explain the significance of this struggle and why it's important to support it?

I think it's tremendously important to show that the public in BC is not buying the corporate agenda. The corporate agenda believes in privatization and contracting out regardless of whether it's public or private sector because, quite frankly, they believe that all services should be private for profit.

The fact that 15 months after the government ordered us [HEU] back to work by legislation and rolled back our wages, the fight and the militancy and the numbers of people who are coming out to say 'this is not the way we want our society in BC to operate' is tremendously significant.

The energy is there and the people are sending a very clear message that it's not if we win, it's how long it's going to take and we will be here until that day comes.

You gave a very clear message of that in your talk today, in a very strong and confident speech. Can you tell us why the HEU is supporting the TWU workers?

The contract is being broken by Telus imposing a contract, disregarding the collective bargaining process. We had our bargaining truncated 15 months ago, we had four days of legal job action and then the government didn't negotiate anything on the incredibly legitimate issues. Instead they imposed a longer work week, and a 15% wage roll back regardless of the work we do. All the problems are still there, they're still festering, there're lots of issues that have to be addressed and they can only be addressed by both parties sitting down in good faith and using the collective bargaining process. That's not happening here, it didn't happen in our dispute and it's just a matter of time before that comes back to haunt the captains of industry.

Could you give us an idea of what it's going to take to win this fight and what this rally today meant for labour?

It's going to take a lot of people inflicting some economic damage on the company. What they care about is their share price and they have no regard for service for the public. They have no regard for the workforce, which in any service industry is your number one investment, the investment you have in your people, so it's tremendously significant that these numbers of people are willing to stay the course, to fight the fight and inflict that economic pain until the company understands that without economic justice for everybody, not just Darren Entwistle, there will be no peace and there will be no adequate service levels for the public.

Thank you very much Fred.

Fire This Time encourages all our readers to support the TWU by going by picket lines and offering support and participating in the consumer action called by the BCFED, canceling all 'extras' on your Telus phone account.

For more information on the Telus lockout of the TWU and for ways that you can support it see:

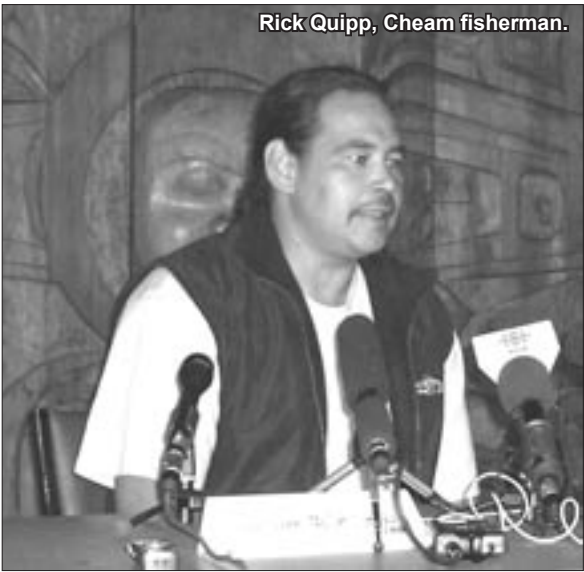
<http://www.twu-canada.ca/>

and for information on the consumer action see:

<http://www.bcfed.com>

The Same Old Colonial Rule:

BC Liberals Increase Attacks on Indigenous Rights



Rick Quipp, Cheam fisherman.

By Aaron Mercredi

"We are standing up for our human rights and our Indigenous rights."
-Nicole Manuel at July 15th press conference

On July 15th, Nicole Manuel, a young Secwepemc mother of two was released from Allouette Correctional Facility for Women after serving 30 days of a 45-day sentence for defending her inherent right to Secwepemc territory. The incident in question was a 4-hour roadblock on August 24, 2001 at Skwelkwew'welt, which prevented access to the Sun Peaks Ski Resort. Four other Secwepemc people, Trevor Dennis, Rose Jack, Mark Sauls, and Rod Anderson are still serving their sentences for their participation in the roadblock. Sun Peaks ski resort was built on

unceded Secwepemc territory, near Kamloops, which has never been surrendered or handed over to the government of Canada. Family, friends and supporters arranged a press conference at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre for Nicole the day she was released from prison. Nicole's father and spokesperson for the Indigenous Network on Economics and Trade (INET), Arthur Manuel, opened the press conference by explaining Canada's brutal role in suppressing Indigenous people's sovereignty over their land and resources. In its own colonial Supreme Court of Canada, Aboriginal title and rights are recognized. "In the constitution of this country, it recognizes and acknowledges Aboriginal treaty rights," Art Manuel said. "Yet when our young people go out

and exercise those rights, they are thrown in jail. And when Canada throws our young people in jail, what they're doing by depriving them of their liberty, they are violating their human rights. Canada is no different than any other country in the world that throws people in jail for their own self-interest and their own political purposes." Nicole Manuel spoke next, thankful to be out of prison. She talked about the attacks that the government has made on her and other Secwepemc defenders. "The one main thing that I spent my time thinking of is all the incidents at Sun Peaks, at Skwelkwew'welt, all the experiences of my children. They were there. They experienced things that you think would only occur in war-torn countries. They've had their house

demolished. They've had to return home to find their house torn right to the ground. They've had their churches, their sacred sweatlodes, demolished and burned. They've had to witness, their mother, their aunts, their families, arrested and jailed. The places where they gather their food, their berry-picking spots, totally desecrated. Nothing left. And these are interests that the government is protecting at the cost of our freedom. And we're the Indigenous people of this land. This is our homeland." Rick Quipp, a fisherman from the Cheam Nation, who has been involved in Cheam struggles over fishing rights against the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, explained that the struggles of Indigenous people against the

Continued on page 21

From page 5

took one month of this loss for the Ports (big capitalism) and the government itself to find the cog in their machine that they could knock back a couple inches to dislodge the workers wrench and get the machine rolling again. This cog, the contracting companies, is one of their own.

And sure enough, late Tuesday August 2nd, having heard the calls of bigger business, who themselves were acting under pressure exercised by the VCTA, the contractors have come to heel. Going back on their less-than-day-old unanimous decision, half of the contracting companies have decided to abide by the 90-day ultimatum laid down by the Ports and accept Ready's deal for 90 days, or stay off the Ports. Surely the remaining companies must follow, or be left behind.

This is a tremendous victory for the truckers. VCTA organizer Ravinder Garcha explained, "Basically, it's what the VCTA wanted. We wanted a little bit of a raise in the rates for our containers; standardization of invoices, a fuel surcharge has been put in place, a lot of things that have been a big headache."

This victory has demonstrated that the only path that will advance their wages and conditions is struggle, and their example will be a lesson for all working people in BC. Only through uniting with other working people against the contracting companies, capitalist business and Provincial and Federal government can working people guarantee our own wages, conditions and futures. For the VCTA themselves, this principle of struggle will lead through the 90-day period to a working and workable contract with the contractors and the Ports. In one form or another, their struggle continues, and Fire This Time is proud to stand with them.

In this struggle, the voices most seldom heard have been the voices of the most important players, the truckers and the VCTA themselves. On Tuesday August 2nd, Fire This Time spoke with VCTA organizer Ravinder Garcha just after he got out of a meeting to decide how the VCTA will meet the non-cooperation of the Contractors.

FTT: What do the majority of the Truckers in the VCTA think of the deal that Vince Ready has proposed?

Ravinder Garcha: They think it's great! We had a vote on that a couple days ago and we voted 90% in favor of agreeing to his recommendations. At the same day, a couple hours later, the companies disagreed with it. But as of today, roughly 20 companies have signed that agreement, so you will see trucks on the road tomorrow.

FTT: Why did some reject the

recommendation at first and others have accepted it now?

Ravinder Garcha: The companies that rejected it didn't give any reasons whatsoever. The Vancouver Port Authority (VPA) had stepped up a little bit and said that if the companies do not sign the referendum that's been passed on by Vince Ready - the VPA has recognized it - and if the companies don't recognize it, then they won't be allowed on the port.

FTT: Minister Mike De Jong talked about this being a short-term solution and that there needs to be a long-term solution. What do you think the Port's decision means for truckers in the long term?

Ravinder Garcha: They've given us a 90 day window, and hopefully the task force that will be in place for the next 90 days will have some sort of a system in place for us to monitor trucks coming into the port and will hopefully put and end to all the BS that has been going on for the last 10 or 15 years.

For 10 years or so now the fuel prices have been going up, companies have been undercutting us, they've been trying to come up with reasons that we do not get bonuses for all the hard work we do and eventually, now our costs are exceeding our revenues. The biggest reason for the downfall in the last 15 years is undercutting; new companies opening up and undercutting. If there was a can that was worth \$100, it's gone down to as low as \$50 right now, almost a 60% decrease in the container rate just so somebody can open up a company and make a quick buck.

FTT: What do you think the long-term solution is going to be?

Ravinder Garcha: Hopefully the long-term solution is the one Mr. Ready proposed to us and to the owners. It's a two-year contract right now, and hopefully in those two years we'll be happy with it if we get it, then hopefully the BC economy and the public doesn't have to feel our pain and our suffering. We're the ones who get hit the hardest. A lot of guys have been working for free and a lot of guys got kids, wives, no money and it's hard. We've been surviving on almost nothing.

FTT: Are all truckers going to be going back to work in the next couple days?

Ravinder Garcha: Only the ones that have the owners that have signed on to the Port's decision, that's roughly 20 companies, around 200 drivers or so.

The biggest players in the game have not signed up, but hopefully they will by Thursday 8am, which is the deadline for signing up... because there'll be no one going into the ports who has not signed Vince Ready's referendum.

FTT: Some trucks running will

Container Truck Drivers' Strike Gains Ground Against Contractors

definitely act as economic pressure against the companies that are refusing the deal.

Ravinder Garcha: Definitely. If an owner sees other companies running he's gonna be threatened by that other company that's running because they were the ones that were smart enough to say, 'enough is enough, I'm ready to give the guys what they deserve.' It took them five weeks, but we respect that. Even though it took them five weeks, they've signed up and they're saying they're ready to go, and they're going. They'll put pressure on other companies to go to work, because there's gonna be a lot of work that's up for grabs.

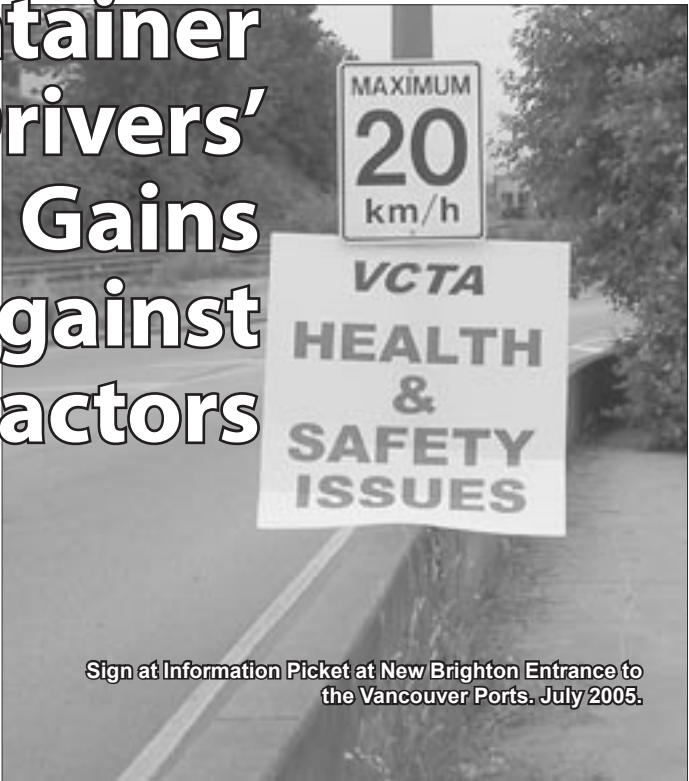
But out of respect for our brothers we're not going to be pulling any loads for any customers who already are on a working relationship basis with other brokers who have not signed. Also, we're not going to work until all the lawsuits against us have been dropped - Hudson's Bay, Walmart, Westfair foods and more. We want those lawsuits dropped before we go to work.

FTT: What are those lawsuits about?

Ravinder Garcha: These lawsuits have been set up against the VCTA, against us as 'unknown persons' but we didn't do nothing! We just didn't provide services to the broker. It goes through the broker! Why are these big companies going after us? We're just drivers!

FTT: Well it sounds like this proposal is going to make life more livable for truckers.

Ravinder Garcha: All truckers are 100% in support of how everything is going. Oh yes, it'll be a different thing to drive a truck now. You know how BC is always advertising on TV about new jobs, new initiatives. You see a young guy standing beside a truck, trying to sell the driving industry. We're the only port in Western Canada; you've got one in Seattle and one down in LA there. We had support from the west coast, we had money coming in, people donated money for our cause. We had \$100 here, \$100 there; it was all appreciated and



much respected.

There was a big strike in 1999 and it was supposed to solve everything and in two weeks everything fell apart. Now we have the VCTA set up, we have lawyers, we have Ken Halliday, we have Mr. Sinclair, we have the help of a lot of people that we needed in this game. If we weren't in this game everything would just be on pause as it was for these last few weeks.

Hopefully this will make the life easier and will attract new drivers into our industry so we can put any negative stuff that has ever been talked or said about any truck driver behind us. We weren't to blame for it and now the public knows that the brokers are the ones who have held up the work. We voted 90% for Vince Ready's deal and they voted 'no' and now 20 or so have said 'yes' and we've got half of them to go. I hope that by Monday I will see all the trucks on the road, all my brothers on the road. A lot of them got kids and families and they haven't taken them anywhere for any type of vacation, wives that are sick and tired of their husbands not being at home and hopefully this puts an end to it.

FTT: Great news. Congratulations on a long and successful struggle.

Ravinder Garcha: We still have some work to do, and some things we have to work out here and there, but 80% has been resolved and the rest we're hoping to solve ASAP.

FTT: Thank you very much for taking the time to talk to us.

Ravinder Garcha: Thank you.

The Same Old Colonial Rule

From page 20

government of Canada are universal "...whether it is to fish or to hunt or to pick berries to survive," he said. "Then we go in to courts facing the corporation of Canada, the government saying that we can't and they will not put up with us. They institutionalize us for things that we believe are our right to do." Messages of support and solidarity were brought both from Professor June McCue, from the First Nations Legal Studies Department at UBC, as well as from Tara Scurr, a BC-Yukon organizer with the Council of Canadians.

BC Liberal Government continues Colonial Attacks on All Fronts

All over the province of BC, the rights of indigenous people are being trampled. This is most clear when we look at the outright theft of Indigenous land and resources and the vicious repression of resistance to this theft and plunder. In the case of Sun Peaks Ski Resort, more and more Secwepemc land has been stolen since its initial development, and if Sun Peaks and the government of BC have their way, this will continue on into the future.

In 1997, the BC government approved a \$70 million expansion of Sun Peaks, inflating the resort from 4,000 beds to 20,000 beds, and developing previously untouched Mt. Morrissey. This expansion now totals \$285 million; an expansion that is going through without the consent, or even the participation, of the Secwepemc people who hold title to all of the territory onto which Sun Peaks is spreading.



Since developments began, Secwepemc people have set up the Skwelkwew'welk Protection Centre at the entrance to Sun Peaks and have continued to assert their inherent rights to their land. The wave of repression that the BC Liberal government has brought down on the Secwepemc defenders has resulted in over 54 arrests of Secwepemc people, mainly youth and elders.

Secwepemc people are not the only ones who have responded to attacks by the provincial government by directly using their land in the face of massive developments.

Since 2000, St'at'imc people have set

up a permanent camp in their territory near Melvin Creek, located between Mt. Currie and Pemberton. Known as Sutikahl, the camp was set up to assert St'at'imc rights to their land and to stop the BC government and corporate plans to build the \$500 million Cayoosh Ski Resort in the untouched alpine mountain area. For the last 5 years, St'at'imc people have occupied the threatened territory despite government and corporate plans to go ahead with the deal.

The interests that the government is trying to protect when it attacks the rights and sovereignty of Indigenous people over their mountains are the same interests they are protecting when it attacks members of the Cheam First Nation over fishing rights on their waters. Recently, members of the Sto:lo Nation and Cheam Nation had their fishing nets seized by Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) officers and were threatened with charges for harvesting salmon in their unceded territory. Cheam people have resisted attacks on their waters many times within the last few years and have confronted the DFO directly to defend their sovereignty. This new wave of attacks is a continuation of suppressing Indigenous rights over this

area of the Fraser River.

Hypocrisy of the BC Liberal government

The hypocrisy of all the attacks being waged by the governments of BC and Canada in regards to land disputes within BC is that almost this entire province, 97% of it, is unceded Indigenous territory. Almost all of the land was not handed over in any treaty, or surrendered to the Canadian state. Land that doesn't belong to Canada does not belong to BC, and the provincial government does not hold legal jurisdiction over unceded Indigenous territory. We see the government dealing with this by trying to push through the treaty process, and trying to get Indigenous nations to sign over what they have left, so that it can consolidate the territory within BC. While the BC government is trying to push through land deals on paper, we see this consolidation of land taking place in its most naked form through the direct theft of Indigenous land and resources and suppression of Indigenous people who defend their sovereignty over their territories.

The Right to Fish, the Right to live off the Land are Inherent Rights of Indigenous People

British Columbia, like all other provinces within Canada, is facing an economic crisis. It is dealing with this crisis by

attacking all marginalized, poor and working people within its borders. For working people, this means cuts to social programs, cuts to welfare, attacks on unionized and non-unionized workers. For Indigenous people, this means a continuation of denying their self-determination, while speeding up the theft and destruction that have been caused by the colonial governments of BC and Canada since they were formed. For Indigenous people to assert their rights to their land and resources, it is really a matter of survival. To put food on the table, to gather resources from their land, these are essential rights that Indigenous people hold to survive as people and as nations. The government is directly attacking these rights and the only way to fight against it is by doing what Indigenous people have been doing when coming under attack: fighting back and asserting their rights to their land. Non-Indigenous people need to recognize that these rights are inherent to Indigenous people whose land is occupied by Canada and BC. In recognizing this, we need to support Indigenous peoples' resistance to the theft and destruction of the government of Canada and their call for self-determination.



Department of Fisheries and Oceans Officers run-down Mi'kmaq fishers, Burnt Church. Summer 2000.

By Aaron Mercredi

"We are rhetorical peacekeepers, not practical peacekeepers any more."

- Douglas Bland, head of the Defence Management Studies Program at Queen's University.

On July 14th, Chief of Defence General Rick Hillier announced the deployment of 2000 more Canadian soldiers to Afghanistan by February 2006. Unlike in the past, when leaders in Canada's military have masked Canada's role in Afghanistan as a 'peacekeeping' project, Hillier stripped away the 'heroic' and benevolent Canadian disguise, and told it like it is. He said, "We're not the public service of Canada, we're not just another department. We are the Canadian military and our job is to be able to kill people." It is obvious from Hillier's remarks that Canada is not a peacekeeper, but this has always

waters and dropping their nets.

These wars, waged by Canada from its very foundation, are wars over the land and resources of Indigenous people. From 'settling the West' in the late 1800s, to 'maintaining law and order in Oka,' behind the modest language that the colonial government of Canada uses to paint a bright and happy history of Canada lies the cruel reality of its actions against Indigenous people to expand and consolidate the Canadian state and to create capitalist profit.

Canada is imperialist, Here and Everywhere

The drive for profit, for land and resources, that makes Canada attack Indigenous people here at home is the same drive that has intensified the Canadian war drive on Afghan people. The invasion of Afghanistan by the US in 2001 marked the beginning of a new era for oppressed people globally, an era plagued by war and occupation. This era is characterized by imperialist

other names can be used to demonize them and delegitimize their struggle because they defend themselves against ruling class attacks and because they oppose the interests of the ruling class of this country.

There are more similarities between Indigenous people here and people in Afghanistan than the government of Canada want us to believe. Is it any surprise that according to Statistics Canada, after hundreds of years of colonization and war, Indigenous people have the highest levels of poverty among all Canadians? Is it any coincidence that according to the United Nations, after 3 ½ years of military occupation of Afghanistan is now the poorest country in Asia? When looking at life expectancy, the same similarities exist. The effect that colonization has had on Indigenous peoples' health in Canada has resulted in higher health problems and a considerably lower life expectancy compared to other Canadians. In

Intensified War in Afghanistan by Canada:

Extension of Genocide to Afghanistan: An Indigenous point of view

been an obvious reality for Indigenous people within Canada who have suffered war, genocide and never-ending attacks from all arms of the colonial government of Canada.

Occupation Force At Home

What the Canadian military is doing, by sending in more trained killers to suppress the people of Afghanistan, needs to be looked at from the perspective of its colonial roots. Killing Indigenous people in order to pave the way for Canadian expansion was the first order of business for the Canadian military once Canada had confederated. It was an 'errand of peace' that sent the Canadian military in to the Red River Valley to suppress the sovereignty of the Metis. Fifteen years later, the military would be sent in once again to suppress the displaced Metis and the Cree of the area. It was this mission that killed many Cree, locked up Chiefs Poundmaker and Big Bear up in prison, and hanged Louis Riel, the leader of the Metis. The creation of the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP), which later became the RCMP, was the creation of a military occupation force to deal with Indigenous people and to expand and enforce on them the colonial sovereignty of Canada. Besides clearing the way for Canadian expansion, the NWMP was used to enforce treaties on different indigenous nations. Each nation had their own experience with the colonizers, and many experienced from the British and French before Canada was established.

The brutal nature of the Canadian military has been shown to younger generations of Indigenous people. In 1990, the Canadian military laid siege, alongside the Securite Quebec and the RCMP, to a group of Mohawks who were protecting their sacred land against the expansion of a golf course in Kanesatake. In 1995, the RCMP used brute force and government sanctioned para-military operations against no more than 18 sundancers who were occupying their unceded territory at Gustafsen Lake. In 2000, the waters of Burnt Church, Nova Scotia heated to the boiling point as Canada's Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) transformed the area into a war zoneramming fishing boats and assaulting Mi'kmaq fisherman to suppress their inherent right to fish on their ancestral territory.

Even closer to home here in BC, this same war over the waters has been waged against the Cheam nation by the DFO intensely over the last few years. The DFO continues to attack and suppress Cheam fishing rights, continues to intimidate, and continues confiscate nets and press charges against Cheam people who do fish. Despite this, members of the Cheam Nation continue to fight back against this by going back out on to their

countries, like Canada and the US, directly invading and occupying third-world countries to steal resources, exploit the people who live there, and increase their own hegemony in the area; all to compensate for the economic crisis they are facing at home. In Canada, we see this with the massive cuts to social programs, wage rollbacks for workers, and in the increase of attacks on immigrants and refugees. We are also witnessing Canada taking a stronger role in consolidating Indigenous land within its colonial borders.

The attacks on September 11, 2001 were not the reason for the US invasion of Afghanistan; they were used as a pretext for invasion. Planes crashing in to the twin towers gave the US every excuse it needed for attacking third world countries it accused of harbouring terrorists. Although Canada helped out initially, it stayed relatively quiet, at least for the first little while. In February 2002, the first major wave of soldiers was sent to Kabul, and by February 2003, even more soldiers were sent to 'free up' American troops to fight in Iraq. By February 2005, Canadian General Rick Hillier became the head of the ISAF occupation forces, strengthening Canada's role in the occupation of that country.

We can see the pattern that the Canadian government and ruling class have created of slowly and carefully moving in to make sure a piece of the pie is saved for them. It has been making great leaps forward in the same direction by taking part in the overthrow of the democratically elected leader of Haiti, and taking part in the brutal occupation of that country that is using the RCMP to teach new Haitian death squads their tricks of the trade.

All Are Related

"These are detestable murderers and scumbags, I'll tell you that right up front. They detest our freedoms, they detest our society, they detest our liberties...we're not going to let those radical murderers and killers rob from others and certainly we're not going to let them rob from Canada."

-General Rick Hillier, July 2005 - comments about the Afghan people.

"...and the armed occupation of Gustafsen Lake is the action of a handful of violent extremists..."

-Ujal Dosanjh, September 1995 - then Attorney General of BC

According to the government of Canada and the ruling class in this country, people who resist the theft of their land and resources, who resist the murder of their people, who resist against attacks on their sovereignty are one and the same. They are 'terrorists,' 'scumbags,' 'extremists,' and whatever

Afghanistan between 2003 and 2004, the life expectancy dropped 4 ½ years under the military occupation. Canada is responsible for this low standard of living through military occupation and by denying self-determination.

This is a War on Oppressed People Around the World

On July 20th, only six days after General Hillier held the press conference announcing the increased war in Afghanistan, the Supreme Court of Canada passed a judgement on the long-standing war that the government of Canada has been waging against the Mi'kmaq nation, whose territory makes up all of Nova Scotia and part of New Brunswick. The judgement ruled that the Mi'kmaq could not harvest trees on their territory without a permit from the government of Canada, despite the fact that the Mi'kmaq maintained these rights in the treaties of 1760 and 1761 with the British. In spite of this, Canada still refuses to acknowledge Mi'kmaq sovereignty over their territory. As Canada steps up his arsenal abroad, just as throughout history, it is keeping pace at home.

We need to ask ourselves what a victory for Canadian imperialism in Afghanistan would mean for Indigenous people in Canada? What good would it do? A Canadian victory in Afghanistan, if anything, would boost the confidence of the Canada to not only spread its military force out to plunder more countries abroad, but to also take more confident steps at home to directly take the land from Indigenous people. A defeat in Afghanistan, having Canadian troops completely exhausted, demoralized and immobilized would weaken Canada's ability to carry out its war against Indigenous people at home and put Indigenous people here in a better position to fight back. This is the connection that exists between Indigenous people and Afghans. When a colonial government whose policy has always been warfare against Indigenous people extends that warfare abroad to Afghanistan, Indigenous people and Afghans are bonded by a struggle against a common enemy. The struggle of Indigenous people here is expanded to wherever the colonial imperialist government attacks abroad. That is why when we see the city of Kandahar burning from rocket shells on the CNN, we have to think about Oka. That is why we need to see Herat as the next Burnt Church. That is why Mazar e Sharif will be the next Gustafsen Lake. That is why we need to see the Mohawk flag in the eyes of all the young people being dragged away to interrogations and detentions. Indigenous people here need to recognize these connections and oppose this war and destruction just as if it was happening at home.



Afghan children pass through a NATO checkpoint outside Kabul. July 29 2005.

Building an Anti War Movement:

By Alison Bodine & Noah Fine

September 11, 2001 marks the beginning of a new era of war and occupation. Under the mask of a “war on terror,” imperialist countries have begun to directly invade, plunder and decimate the entire world, particularly oppressed nations and countries. In their rivalry for resources and complete hegemony in the Middle East and Latin America, Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Palestine, Syria, Iran, and oppressed people living in every part of the globe have all stood in their path of destruction.

Whether it is to bring “democracy,” the liberation of women or to eliminate the danger of weapons of mass destruction, the governments of imperialist countries have proven nothing but that they are liars, hypocrites, and in fact they are the terrorists they claim to be fighting. The disastrous situations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Palestine, and Africa are the best proof of that.

All of these atrocities from imperialist countries have been delivered at the wholesale cost of hundreds of thousands of lives. The occupiers, UN, NATO, or otherwise are the direct source of instability, the direct source of lower life expectancy, house raids, rape, murder, lack of schools, of housing, food, and medicine. In short, they have made the world today a more miserable place to live in.

It is the responsibility of an effective antiwar movement to reverse this situation, to declare that there is no such thing as free elections under the guidance of 140,000 US troops. It is our responsibility to state that the racist media campaign against Iran is nothing but preparation for intervention in that country, and that there is no other solution for an end to terror and destruction than an end to the occupation and colonial practice!

When we listen to the demands of people around the world with whom we are fighting in solidarity, we hear one clear and distinct sound; a sound that must be reverberated around the world wherever there is action being done for social justice. It is these demands that we echo that are the barrier *and* solution to imperialist plunder: **End the Occupation! Self-Determination for occupied and oppressed nations!** These are the foundational and basic program that we borrow from the cries of all people living under occupation who have been fighting for their lives, dignity, freedom and against foreign imperialist occupiers.

The demands of people living under imperialist occupation share a common ground. Their demands are a result of the concrete situation in which they live, a situation that has been created by their oppressor. Whether it’s the people of Haiti demanding the return of their first democratically elected president, Jean Bertrand Aristide; the people of Palestine demanding the rights to their land; the return of the over 6,000,000 Palestinian refugees around the world and an end to Israeli occupation; the people of Afghanistan demanding a complete withdrawal of foreign occupiers and an end to the US imposed puppet government; the people of Iraq demanding their rights and freedom from the occupation or the demand of the Indigenous Nations of this land for sovereignty, dignity, and the basic human rights they had before the colonial occupation and theft of their land; they all have the same characteristics and solution. All of these cries, although products of their individual environment, are directly linked to two basic and essential demands that connect them to struggles happening around the world: **End the Occupation! Self-Determination for All Oppressed**

Tasks and Perspectives



Nations!

In February 2003, before the war on Iraq began, millions of people hit the streets under the demand of “No War in Iraq.” This showed the amazing potential of human beings to stand in solidarity with oppressed people and join them in the fight against war and occupation. Yet the war on Iraq still happened and when the bombing was over and the US/UK began to establish themselves as a long-term occupying force, the anti-war movement was not prepared to respond. The leadership of the anti-war movement lost its clear and immediate goal and had not developed a program able to extend beyond invasion. Building an effective program takes an understanding of the struggle of oppressed people, of history and the ability to think and act effectively, promptly and with consistency in program, demand, slogan and execution of action with potential and actual allies.

Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO) responds to the leadership of the Iraqi people and resistance, and all oppressed people under occupation, with a program for an effective anti-war movement in Canada. Through consistency, education, mobilization and organization MAWO has been able to form a movement with oppressed people in the leadership. Building a movement requires work in the streets, making the war at home and abroad an issue that affects the daily lives of every person in Canada. As the government of Canada moves further to the right, and exposes itself as an imperialist country that has never acted in the interests of oppressed people anywhere, attacks on oppressed people at home will increase and it will become harder to ignore the reality of Canadian imperialism. The gears are shifting and our day-to-day work of forums, films, and cultural events has and must reflect this change.

In January 2004 MAWO launched the “Operation: Canada Out!” campaign in order to take on Canadian imperialism in Afghanistan. “Operation: Canada Out!” is a mass education and petition campaign. The campaign was expanded in March 2004 to include “Canada Out of Haiti!” to expose Canada’s role in the invasion and occupation of that country. There are over 7000 signatures on the petitions demanding “Canada Out of Afghanistan!” and “Canada Out of Haiti!” This means that thousands of discussions and debates have been conducted among people in Canada.

In response to the government of Canada’s recent push towards a higher level of involvement in the occupation of Afghanistan, MAWO organized 2 consecutive weeks of pickets in front of the Canadian Forces Recruitment Centre downtown Vancouver. Although important in many aspects of the anti-war movement in Canada, this campaign was not taken on seriously by any other organization.

Afghanistan is Canada’s Iraq!

When Canada first stepped foot in Afghanistan, as part of the NATO occupation, the force was 2000 troops strong and brought a promise to reconstruct the destroyed country, but nothing ever changed. Canada got its piece of pie in the Middle East, but it was not enough for Canada to stop there. In February of 2004 Canada took another leading role, this time in the invasion of Haiti. Since then the RCMP has had the ongoing responsibility of training the Haitian police, the most forceful oppressor of the Haitian people.

The Canadian anti-war movement

has been focused comfortably on exposing the US/UK war drive. But when it comes to what directly affects the people of Canada, war and occupation by Canadian colonial state, it has been somehow silent. The response of the anti-war and progressive community to the new course of Canadian militarism is worrisome and astonishing. With the doubling of the military budget, the announcement of the deployment of 2000 more troops to Afghanistan and the recent racist war mongering quotes from Gen. Hillier, the government of Canada has dropped its veil of “peacekeeping.” There is no longer any excuse to ignore the reality that Canada is a colonial imperialist country. Is there a difference between General Hillier of the Canadian army and General Richard Meyers of the US army, who said the same thing about the people of Afghanistan two years ago? Gen Hillier has, in fact, done the anti-war movement in Canada a huge favour. No one who claims to be fighting for an end to war and occupation, or even for abstract “peace”, has any other choice than to shift gears to a major campaign against Canada’s destructive role in Afghanistan. Gen Hillier’s comments and Canada’s increased role in Afghanistan are just preparation for joining, in the broadest sense, the US’ “war on terrorism.”

The government of Canada has never been and is not today a neutral or progressive body. Founded on the continuous suppression of Indigenous Nations, Canada has now a leading and strategic role in the imperialist endeavours of its partners and competitors. The government of Canada has been hard at work for over a century building a racist campaign to neutralize any hostility it would face from people in Canada. It has hidden its colonial roots and clouded its imperialist strategy under the softer characterization of “peacekeeping”.

As the Struggle Began, it Must Continue...

We have witnessed only the beginning of this “war on terror,” or era of war and occupation. It is only a matter of time before the privileges that we in Canada gain from the oppression of the global poor will be privileges we lose and we will truly begin to share the oppression of people around the world. We see these constant moves of the government of Canada further to the right, whether it is through its place on the imperialist stage or with the strike of the TWU against the reactionary policy of their bosses. Here in Canada we must connect and act as an essential part of the international anti-war movement. We must take examples from the war abroad and connect them to the particular struggle of people at home. We must continue tirelessly alongside the people of oppressed nations to progress the struggle of working people and build the foundation we need in order to tip the balance of the scale in favour of oppressed people. We must bring the consistency we see in Iraq against occupation to the streets we walk everyday, wherever we are. This means constant mobilization, it means shifting our gears to a Canadian anti-war movement, against the Canadian war drive, all while maintaining a thoroughly international perspective.

Canada Out of Afghanistan! For an Independent Public Inquiry!

Canada Out Of Haiti!

End the Occupations!

Self-Determination for Oppressed Nations!

EMERGENCY PICKET AND PROTEST
against intensified war in Afghanistan & the Canadian War Drive

CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN!
CANADA OUT OF HAITI!

NO TO HILLIER'S RACIST WAR MONGERING!
Canada: "Peacekeeper" or "Terrorist Killer"?

Self-Determination for Indigenous Nations in Canada!



Canadian soldier confronts children during patrols
- Kabul, Afghanistan, July 2005

3pm - 4:30pm
Thursday August 11
Canadian Forces Recruiting Office
(1070 W Georgia St)

Organized by: Mobilization Against War & Occupation (MAWO)
www.mawovancouver.org | info@mawovancouver.org | 604.322.1764

US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!
OUT OF IRAQ!

CANADA OUT OF AFGHANISTAN & HAITI!
ISRAEL OUT OF PALESTINE!
USE OUR HANDS OFF IRAN & SYRIA!



SELF-DETERMINATION FOR IRAQ, PALESTINE,
AFGHANISTAN, HAITI, IRAN, SYRIA &
INDIGENOUS NATIONS IN CANADA!



RALLY & MARCH!
SATURDAY 3PM
AUG 20TH
Vancouver Art Gallery
(Robson St. @ Northby St.)

Organized by Mobilization Against War and Occupation
Anti-Government Resistance | Toronto | Vancouver | Seattle | 604.322.1764

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION
US/UK OUT OF IRAQ!

Self-Determination for Iraq, Palestine, Afghanistan,
Haiti, Iran, Syria and Indigenous Nations in Canada!
No Invasion! US/EU Hands Off Iran and Syria!



Bring All Troops Home Now! Stop the War at Home & Abroad!

3PM
SATURDAY/SEPTEMBER 24
@ the Vancouver Art Gallery
(Georgia St. & Howe St.)

MOBILIZATION AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION (MAWO)
www.mawovancouver.org | info@mawovancouver.org | 604.322.1764

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF ACTION
DIA INTERNACIONAL DE LA ACCION
No Asylum in the US for Anti-Cuba Terrorist Luis Posada Carriles!
No Asilo en los EE.UU. Para Este Terrorista Anti-Cubano Luis Posada Carriles!
EXTRAÑITE POSADA TO VENEZUELA!
EXTRAÑITE A POSADA A VENEZUELA!
US Hands Off Cuba!



MONDAY AUGUST 29TH
@ 4:30pm

Vancouver Art Gallery
Robson St.

¡E.L. MANOS FUERA DE CUBA!
¡Mano al Buzo Contra Cuba!
¡Libertad para los Chicos Cubanos Prisioneros en los EE.UU!
Vancouver Communities
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www.vancouvercuba.com

From the Series: Resistance, Rebellion and Revolution in Latin America
Collective La Surrada Presents
México
The Rebel South
Guerrero, Oaxaca and Chiapas
Information Night of the Struggle and Resistance



Guest Speakers:
• José Gudiño from Oaxaca, Popular Indigenous Council, Ricardo Flores Magón.
• Eric Delaney, Building Bridges Human Rights Project
• Group of Relatives and Friends of Political Prisoners in Mexico
Thursday, Aug. 28th at 6:30 pm
MFI - HARBOUR CENTER
West Hastings, Conifer Policy Room, (rooms 1-1000)
Vancouver, B.C.

VANCOUVER IN ACTION

9/11: RECLAIMING HISTORY & RESISTANCE

Thursday September 8th 2005
6:30 PM: 11'09"01
7:30 PM: Chile: Obstinate Memory
ROOM 2270, SFU HARBOUR CENTER
By donation. suggested 4\$ for one film, 6\$ for both films.
Part of Envisioning Peoples Struggles.
778-552-2099 or eps2005@resist.ca

REMEMBERING HIROSHIMA

60th Anniversary Commemoration & Concert
Friday August 5th 2005
7:30pm (crafts at 7pm)
National Nikkei Heritage Centre
6688 Southoaks Crescent, Burnaby, B.C.
(Kingsway at Sperling)
Sponsored by:
Vancouver City Peace and Justice Committee
World Peace Forum Society
StopWar.ca

NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND WAR

Thursday August 11th 2005
7:30pm
Vancouver Public Library (350 West Georgia Street)
Organized by StopWar.ca

PRISON JUSTICE DAY MEMORIAL RALLY

Wednesday August 10th 7pm
Claire Culhane Memorial Bench. Trout Lake
(15th & Victoria), SE Corner. East Vancouver.
Speakers include ex-prisoners, prisoners rights activists, plus poets and performers.
Everyone Welcome. Rain or Shine.
Prison Justice Day Committee:
pjd@prisonjustice.ca
www.prisonjustice.ca
info@prisonjustice.ca

"TAKE BACK THE NIGHT"

September 16th 2005
7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Vancouver, British Columbia Lost Lagoon,
Stanley Park Take Back the Night
Sponsor Vancouver Rape Relief and Women's
Shelter Take Back the Night is a women only,
international protest against male violence
against women. Contact Vancouver Rape Relief
and Women's Shelter at 604.872.8212

JUSTICE FOR PRISONERS PUBLIC FORUM

Tuesday August 9th, 6:30 pm
50 East Hastings (Vandu Office)
Organized by Anti Poverty Committee
http://apc.resist.ca

ACTION ACROSS CANADA

TORONTO

How Unions Matter Conference

Friday, 28 October 2005
– Saturday, 29 October 2005
(9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.)
Ramada Inn (300 Jarvis St.)
Toronto ON
For more info contact Daphne Paszterko
Centre for Research on Work and Society
tel: 416-736-5612
paszter@yorku.ca

Toronto Youth Against Hate Conference

Anti-Racist Action (ARA) 2005 conference
August 5th – 7th,
21 Sussex, Toronto, Ontario
For more info contact 416-929-2296
Sponsored by ARA Toronto and others

International Day of Action

Troops out of Iraq and Afghanistan
Let the War Resisters Stay in Canada
Rally and March
Saturday, September 24
1:00pm
US Consulate, 360 University Avenue Toronto
Organized by the Toronto Coalition to Stop the War
For info see: www.nowar.ca

OTTAWA

No to Bush's Wars
End the occupation of Iraq
Stop Canadian Complicity
Saturday September 24 12noon
Ottawa City Hall (Laurier / Elgin)
Organized by: Ensemble contre la guerre - Together against war
www.nowar-paix.ca/sept24

ACROSS CANADA

War Resisters Summer of Resistance Tour

August 2 2005, 7 pm,
Gabiola Island Women's Institute.
For info email Ann Buttrick,
buttrick@telus.net

August 3rd 2005, 7:30 pm
Duncan, BC
Mercury Theatre, Brae Street
For info email Lynn Wytenbroek,
lwytenbroek@shaw.ca

August 4th 2005
Victoria, BC: 7:00 pm,
University of Victoria, David Strong Bldg., Rm C112.
For info email Valerie Lannon,
vlannon@pacificcoast.net

August 6th 2005
Salt Spring Island, BC:
For info email grier@saltspringwireless.com

August 19th 2005, 7:00 pm
Thunder Bay
The Lakehead Unitarian Fellowship at 129 S. Algoma St.
For info email Bob Manson at
rmanson@tbaytel.net
See: www.resisters.ca for more information



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