

**FIRE
THIS
TIME**

We are realists... We dream the impossible - Che

In Solidarity with Six Nations -pg 6



MAY 1ST WORKERS DAY

Workers of the World:



May Day March Havana, Cuba. May 1 2005

UNITE AGAINST WAR & OCCUPATION!

By Ivan Drury

One week before Mayday this year, four soldiers died in a roadside bombing in Southern Afghanistan. The government of Canada responded by announcing that flags would not be lowered to half-mast, but rather that the deaths of these four men would be recognized in the same way that all “casualties of war” are recognized – on November 11th. It was in this way that the government itself – and not just a ‘loose cannon’ military officer - first recognized that Canada is at war in Afghanistan. The other main accolade afforded to the deaths of these four men was the announcement, on Wednesday April 26th, that media coverage of the return of dead soldiers to Canada from Afghanistan would henceforth be banned... A serious and long war they are planning it to be.

Politically, socially, morally, economically, and materially, the government of Canada is preparing for war drive of such a level that the ruling class of Canada can, in the words of last year’s ‘International Strategy’ document, “break out of Canada’s historic middle power status” and compete with the “emerging giants.” This war drive is going to have an effect every working person in Canada and we as working class people must take a side. Faced with an endless Canadian war drive that will take the lives of untold numbers of Afghan people and wreak havoc upon the democratic and civil rights of working people in Canada, the working class must respond.

Whose war is this anyways?

WORKERS OF THE WORLD Unite Against Imperialist War and Occupation!



BC Teachers Federation rallying in front of Parliament
October 17 2006.

A lot of talk about the “National Interests” of Canada. These quotes listed above barely scratch the surface of the library of the number one catch phrase of the government of Canada. But they beg the question

evicted from their home because the real estate value went up: the interests of monopoly capitalism are *contrary* to the interests of the international working class.

CANADA: Stephen Harper claims that Canadian troops are in Afghanistan upon request from the Afghan government... a government that operates under complete control of the US, and

May 1st International Workers Day: A PARTIAL TIMELINE

By Kira Koshelanyk

In the 19th century, as industrialisation grew faster and sped up in the United States’ developing and consolidating capitalist economy, workers came to suffer under inhumane conditions under pressure of increasing productivity, something that is inheritate with capitalist mode of production. Workdays lasted up to 20 hours long and without any protection or standards for workplace safety.

The demand for a universal shorter workday was at the heart of the early workers movement. At the founding convention of the National Labour Union (NLU), in 1866, the following resolution was passed:

“The first and great necessity of the present, to free labour of this country from capitalist slavery, is the passing of a law by which 8 hours shall be the normal working day in all states in the American union. We are resolved to put forth all our strength until this glorious result is attained.”

In 1884, in Chicago, the fifth trade union congress decided that from the first of May 1886 on, people would work 8 hours a day. From 1886 to 1889, there were many strikes in the USA on the first of May. May 1st 1886 saw national strikes in the United States and Canada for an eight hour day. In Chicago, police attacked striking workers, killing six people.

The next day, at a demonstration in Haymarket Square to protest the police brutality, a bomb exploded in the middle of a crowd of police,



Winnipeg general strike.

“Canada is in Afghanistan today at the invitation of the Afghan government. We are there to: defend our national interests”

From the Government of Canada website, under the section: “Why we are there”

“You have put yourself on the line to defend our national interests...”

Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his address to the Canadian troops in Afghanistan during his surprise visit March 14th 2006

“We are in Afghanistan because of our national interests. (...) we are not going to let the terrorists stop us.”

Gordon O’Connor, in response to the deaths of 4 Canadian soldiers in Southern Afghanistan, Saturday April 22nd 2006

– Whose “National Interests” are they talking about? Canada is a country of many nations. Indigenous nations certainly have their own specific national interests. So does the nation of Quebec. But “Canada”?

When Stephen Harper and Gordon O’Connor talk about “National Interests,” they are talking about the strategic interests of Canadian monopoly capitalism – the interests of the handful of super-rich people in Canada. They are not talking about the interests of the working class in Canada. They are certainly not talking about the interests of the working class or of oppressed people in Afghanistan. This should not come as a surprise to any working person in Canada who has ever been on strike, been ‘downsized’ or laid off for ‘productivity’, or been

Capitalist interests / Capitalist warfare

In order to understand the position of working people in Canada to the Canada’s occupation of Afghanistan, we must first identify the *class* character of Canada’s war in Afghanistan. The class character of this war is central to understanding whether or not working people should support or oppose this war. We will attempt to answer this question by contrasting Canada’s war in Afghanistan with another sort of war, that we argue was a working class war, Cuba’s war in Angola:

CUBA: When Cuba sent troops to Angola to help fight against the invading army of South African apartheid, they went upon invitation from an independent government.

could not exist without the support of occupation forces. The same government that was installed by the US occupation forces after they, with the support of Canada from day one, invaded and overthrew the government that they had previously propped up, funded, and supported.

CUBA: Volunteer Cuban troops fought in Angola against an invading army that aimed to smash Angolan sovereignty.

CANADA: Canada is part of the invading army that smashed the sovereignty of Afghanistan, and the occupation means to keep it smashed. Their enemies are the “terrorist” Afghan people themselves.

CUBA: Cuba offered advice and political, military, and material aid to the Angolan government based on mutual respect and consent, based on the needs of Angola as identified by the independent Angolan government.

CANADA: According Stephen Harper, the secondary goals of Canada’s occupation of Afghanistan are to impose “Canadian values” on Afghanistan. The mandate for this value ‘exchange’, according to Gordon O’Connor, “requires a long-term commitment from Canada, NATO and the United Nations,” not the Afghan people.

CUBA: When the invading imperialist army was defeated in Angola, Cuban troops left... and took nothing but their dead with them.



Melbourne march for the 8-hour working day. 1900.

killing eight of them. The State of Illinois arrested eight anarchist trade unionists in attempt to frame up the workers who were fighting for the eight hour day, and four of these workers were executed. In Paris in 1889, the International Working Men’s Association (the First International) declared May 1st an international working class holiday in commemoration of the Haymarket Martyrs.

The foundation of May 1st as the International Worker’s Day is really the foundation and beginning of the internationally co-ordinated and unified workers’ movement. The unified and general demand pushed by workers in the National Labour Union (which later became the American Federation of Labour) and the Knights of Labour for an 8 hour workday was adopted by unions and organizations all over the world. May Day has held a very important place in the struggle of workers for unity across borders and for common rights and common goals. In honour of May Day 2006, Fire This Time has compiled a partial timeline of some significant May 1st actions throughout history and across the world. Though it does not comprise each and every action in honour of the International Workers Day, we hope to give a picture of how May Day actions have reflected class struggle worldwide. Also shown, is the promise of the future for the rising of the working class for freedom for all poor, working and oppressed



CANADA. The clearest projections for the term of the Canadian occupation of Afghanistan, beyond “long-term”, are 20 years to “stability.” There are no plans for the withdrawal of Canada’s troops. Regardless, a new Afghan “law” of “Domestic and Foreign Private Investment in Afghanistan” includes the guaranteed “right” of foreign corporations to set-up shop in Afghanistan and take *all* profits home with them with complete tax waivers for up to 8 years... except in those cases where a “longer term maturation” of investment applies, then a further exemption can be granted.

At the bottom, Canada's war in Afghanistan is a capitalist war because Canada is a capitalist country. The ruling class of Canada, the class that owns the vast majority of the property, factories, businesses, resources and shops, is capitalist. The class that makes the laws, controls the courts that oversee the selective application of these laws, determines the distribution of goods and services, decides on the policies and practices of all ministries – from welfare to housing to police to healthcare to child care, is capitalist. And the class that decides where, when, and whether Canada goes to war, is the capitalist ruling class. When the representatives of this class speak of “National Interests” they are speaking to their constituents in the capitalist ruling class who measure their interests in interest rates and “maturation” of investment.

Our war is against imperialist war and occupation

Opposed to this, the interests of the working class are the same in Afghanistan as they are in Canada. Working people all around the world have our own war to fight. Perhaps the most pronounced similarity between working people in Afghanistan and working people in Canada is that we share an enemy in the Canadian ruling class. The ideas and goals of the Canadian ruling class have nothing to do with *us* – they are alien to us. We do not prosper when they conquer a new colony, and we do not yearn for their advancement on the “world stage” or anywhere, on rails



Barriers to working class involvement in the anti-war movement

Today the majority of the working class in Canada is uncertain about what Canada's war

the leadership of the working class, and the interests of the working class in reality. The NDP not only failed to denounce and oppose the Canadian war drive in Afghanistan, they failed to even bring the deployment of 2,000

International Workers Day Timeline

people from poverty, misery and exploitation
and for real human dignity.

May Day commemorates the historic struggle of working people throughout the world, and is recognized in most western countries, except the United States and Canada.

May 1, 1886 - In New York, Chicago, Baltimore, Washington, Milwaukee, Cincinnati, St. Louis, Pittsburgh, Detroit and other major cities across the USA, workers walk out for May Day. In Chicago, six demonstrator killed by Police. One day before Haymarket event.

First “May day” General Strike organized in the United States 200,000 workers put down their tools and took to the streets across the USA.

July 1889 – International Workers Congress: A meeting of 400 international delegates at the Paris Marxist International Socialist Congress adopts May 1, 1890 as the universal day of action to fight for and win the 8 hour work day.

May 1, 1890 – First International May Day Demonstrations held in the US and most countries in Europe including half a million demonstrators in London. Demonstrations were also held in Chile, Peru and Cuba as the movement and actions to demand 8 hours of work a day spread internationally.

May 1, 1918 – USSR

Following the victory of the Russian revolution, masses of workers and peasants participated in the lively celebration and street demonstrations in Moscow. The event was planned and organized by the Arts Board of the Moscow Soviet with elaborate costumes and decorations covering the streets and squares. Similar celebrations were held across the USSR.

May 1, 1930 – San Salvador, El Salvador
The devastation caused by the economic crash in the advanced industrial countries in

greased with our blood.

When Telus profits are increased, it is because concessions are squeezed out of the Telecommunication Workers' Union and job security is lost for working people. When Kabul is 'secured' for business it is because the resistance has been crushed and driven out of the city. When they triumph, it is at our defeat. And also, when they stumble, we advance. When we step forward, they step back. When working people win an 8-hour workday, or women's right to vote, or the Six Nations re-claim even a small portion of their land, the capitalists lose profits, investments, developments, and political control begins to slip away from them. And the weaker *they* are, the stronger *we* can be.

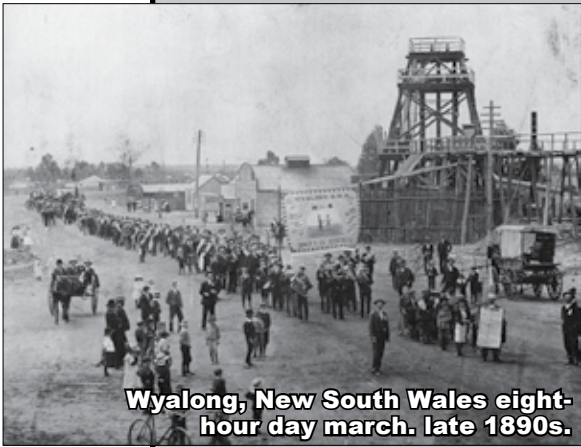
It is here, in this international class struggle that as working people in Canada we find our proper place in the anti-war movement.

in Afghanistan means for them. They do not go to anti-war protests, are not involved in the anti-war movement, and do not actively oppose the occupation. Many even support Canada's Afghanistan investment. Part of the reason is the incredible political work that the capitalist ruling class has done to sow confusion amongst working people with abstract conceptions of "National Interests", "the proud legacy of Canadian peacekeeping", "liberating the women of Afghanistan", the "Muslim-extremist-terrorist threat" and other lies. Another major part of the reason is the support of the imperialist war drive by the organizations of the working class – through direct support by the words and actions of the NDP, Canada's labour party, and the implicit support of the labour leadership by silence of words and lack of action.

It speaks volumes about the working class movement in Canada that there is such a chasm between the words and actions of

troops to a combat mission out as a public issue when the decision was made. It was only after the decision was implemented, after deployment was done, and after the lives of *Canadian* soldiers were lost – *seven months after* the deployment was announced – that the NDP even asked for a “debate” in parliament.

Of course, the debate that resulted from this token demand was a joke. No party, including the NDP, involved in the parliamentary “take note debate” opposed the occupation of Afghanistan. No member of parliament argued for an end to the occupation. The strongest line that the NDP could manage to drag out was to ask for another debate in 2007. The response from



this period seriously impacted the economy and livelihood of Salvadoran peasants and workers. These events prompted the formation of the Federación Regional de Trabajadores (FRTS--Regional Federation of Salvadoran Workers). In April 1930, the FRTS collected 50,000 signatures on a petition for a "worker's law" that would guarantee farm contracts and minimum wage. On May 1st 1930, 80,000 peasants and workers marched on San Salvador demanding a minimum wage for farm workers and rights for the unemployed. This organization and mass protest set the stage for further worker and peasant organizing with the formation of peasant and farm workers unions fighting, increasingly militantly, against government repression and corruption in the years that followed.

May 1, 1959 – Cuba
The Cuban militia of armed workers and peasants paraded through all the streets of Cuba, numbering over 500,000 in Havana. The march was a show of united force, of the strength of those who would continue to fight and defend the revolution. It was also in celebration of the January 1, 1959 triumph of the July 26th movement, led by Che, Fidel and others. A new instrument of the revolution made its debut: the blue shirts and trousers of the militia, the uniform of common labourers became the symbol of the new revolutionaries.

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If you would like to help with a donation, please make cheques payable to "Shannon Bundock", or "Brennan Luchsinger."

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BC Teachers Federation rallying in front of Parliament. October 17 2006.

the Prime Minister was that there is no need to debate the mission in Afghanistan – but that he’d be willing to debate *future* missions in *other* countries!

With the NDP, the party of the labour movement, supporting Canada’s imperialist adventure in Afghanistan - the absence of the labour movement in the anti-war movement is hardly surprising. But anti-war consciousness is developing organically amongst more and more layers of the working class and oppressed people all the same. The response of the majority of the labour leadership to the emergence of this anti-war consciousness

mean that young people are the definitive or ultimate deciders of change. The anti-war movement in the US in the 1960’s became a movement capable of building off the victories of the Vietnamese resistance and contributing to ending the war only when the working class joined the movement en masse in the early 1970’s – after the distinctly student movement had exhausted. The same was true in France in 1968, when the student movement was joined by the labour movement to bring France to the brink of revolution. The same happened in France this year, when a youth protest

also modeling this imperialist suit today with their escalation of threats against Iran while bogged down in an inescapable quagmire in Iraq. When this war drive does ignite massive and effective, or potentially effective opposition amongst working and oppressed people in Canada, they will turn their guns against the democratic rights and lives of working people in Canada. It is a terrible, blood-drenched path that the Canadian ruling class drives their tanks along; and they must be stopped.

The working class is a powerful mass when animated, and an unstoppable force when

has been to attempt to steer it towards benign campaigns that can co-exist with, rather than combat the major issue of war and occupation: thus marches for “peace”, demands for “Canadian sovereignty” against “deep integration” with the US, against “national missile defense” and anything else that does not directly address or oppose the Canadian capitalist ruling class’s war in Afghanistan. Despite these maneuvers, anti-imperialist consciousness is still growing, slowly, unevenly, and with difficulty, but still growing and indeed putting huge pressure on the labour leadership to respond. The ugliness of imperialist war, and the obvious contradictions of this war with the interests of working people are too blatant to divert from the eyes of all people all the time. Questions, then doubt, then opposition are bound to come up in the minds of honest working people.

The anti-war movement is a working class movement

In the vacuum left by the absence of the leadership of the labour movement from the anti-war movement, independent sections of the working class and oppressed communities in Canada have come together to organize against the Canadian war drive. On the forefront of this fledgling movement have been young people and students. Youth and students especially are historically the barometers of social change. Young people are more sensitive to the attacks of the ruling class because they are doubly oppressed by their youth as well as being mostly working people. This, combined with their relative freedom to act independently against social injustice because they do not have as many day-to-day concerns, personal pressures, responsibilities, and small personal investments in the illusions of capitalist ‘stability’ as older working people, means that young people have often formed the front lines of class struggle in history.

But this position on the front lines does not

movement was joined by the working class in a series of nation-wide days of action and political strikes that forced the government to back down on their reactionary anti-young worker law. In all cases, young people and students instigated the movements, but the key ingredient to bringing change was in the movement of the working class from passive observation and abstention from the movement to conscious and collective action united with these students and young people.

In the name of their “National Interests” the imperialists will spill as much blood as necessary to secure their position in Afghanistan – as their counterparts in the US have clearly demonstrated in Iraq. And when they are unable to conquer Afghanistan thoroughly enough to guarantee their “Interests”, and there is no possible way that Afghanistan will be ‘enough’ anyway, they will embark on a new adventure. The US is

in motion. The interests of this class run completely against the interests and projects of the Canadian capitalist class – including their war in Afghanistan. The foundation of the completely necessary anti-war movement is being laid today by young people, oppressed people, and other independent elements within the working class; but this movement opens its arms to the involvement of the working class as a whole. When working people learn to think socially, as a class, and act politically, as a class, we will emerge from our fragmentation as an unstoppable force. There is no better place to begin today than to target the central campaign of Canadian imperialism and unite in defense of our brothers and sisters in Afghanistan. When we move, united, we will emerge as the only force that can overturn the bloody “National Interests” of the capitalist ruling class, end the occupations of Afghanistan, Iraq, and Haiti and set the foundation for a movement against capitalism itself.



International Workers Day Timeline

May 1, 1979 – Tehran, Iran
1.5 million march in Iran to mark the International Day of the Worker. The energy, spirit and consciousness of Iranian people against imperialism and exploitation was very high in this period immediately following the triumph of the February 1979 revolution and kicking out the Shah of Iran and US imperialism.

1983 – British Columbia, Canada - Operation: Solidarity
Though the actions didn’t take place on May 1st, the “Operation: Solidarity” movement of 1983 played a large role in the history and development of class struggle in British Columbia. Over 60,000 workers marched on the Social Credit government convention and 100,000 took part in job action in protest to the government’s attacks on public and private sector unions and workers.

May 1, 1985 – Vancouver, Canada
May Day demonstrators marched to and rallied at the US consulate to protest US intervention in Nicaragua as part of their demands on International Workers Day.

May 1, 2000 – London, England
As part of the rising anti-globalization movement that swept the world during this period, several thousand protesters descended on London for the May Day demonstrations.

May 1, 2000 – Cuba
Millions of people took to the streets here May 1 in one of the largest celebrations of International Workers Day ever in Cuba. Over one million Cubans participated in Havana alone, and millions more turned out in every province of the country.

May 1, 2004 – Vancouver, Canada
Over 10,000 march for May Day in the largest May Day march in Vancouver in decades. May Day 2004 took place during the momentous strike of the Hospital Employees’ Union of

BC. The HEU membership walked out on April 25th 2004 demanding wage increases and protection against the contracting out of jobs. A massive wave of solidarity swept British Columbia as other unions and the HEU members defied the BC government’s back-to-work legislation (Bill 37 passed on April 27th).

Major Cities in the USA

New York, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Boston, Detroit, Atlanta, San Diego and other major cities in the US see protests of thousands on the International Workers’ Day calling for an end to the US occupation of Iraq and the siege on the Iraqi city of Fallujah.

May 1, 2005 – Vancouver, Canada
The independent, ad-hoc “May Day Organizing Committee 2005” organizes a rally and march of over 1,000 people downtown Vancouver.

May 1, 2006...
Between May 2005 and May 2006 major labour battles have been fought, particularly in British Columbia. From the strike of the Telus workers, the Vancouver Port Container Truck Drivers and the Canadian Media Guild over the summer of 2005 to the HEU walk out coinciding with the strike of the BC Teacher’s Federation in Fall 2005. These strikes have made class lines increasingly clearly drawn for workers in both the public and private sector.

The government of BC, based on necessity, is following the federal government of Canada and all imperialist countries in trying to roll back the protections and wages of all workers to maximise their own profits in the face of a deepening economic crisis. These attacks are carried out at home against workers and abroad for the plundering of resources in third world countries. This May Day 2006 workers of BC, Canada and all lands must unite against these attacks and attacks on our brothers and sisters abroad, workers under attack by imperialist war in Iraq, Afghanistan, Palestine, Haiti and workers in Iran, under threat of US intervention in their country!



By Thomas Davies

“Now when [the bosses] try to threaten that they are going to close the company, we the workers are no longer scared, we can count on the backing of the president, we can count on the constitution and the laws and the [National Union of Workers, UNT], because now we have an organisation at a national level that supports and defends the rights of workers.” - Oswaldo Villegas, General Secretary of Sutraprec, in the Yaracuary-based Polar Alimentos food plant

“There is no turning back” – Hugo Chavez Frias, President of Venezuela

The bell has rung in another round in the fight for Venezuela. In one corner is the current champion – the mass revolutionary process which finds its official beginning in the 1998 election victory of Hugo Chavez. In the other, the combination of an enraged national bourgeoisie and on its last legs, the mad-bull fighter of US imperialism. The current champion is not one person, but millions of poor and working Venezuelans fighting in increasing unison for their futures. In this, a backbone has formed through the leadership of Hugo Chavez and the exciting development of working peoples’ organization and victories. This backbone has been crucial not only in the creation of the “Bolivarian Revolution”, but is especially in the coming make-it-or-break-it rounds of consolidating and extending their victories.

Workers in Venezuela have a history of struggle which stretches back long before Chavez’s landslide election victory. In more recent times, the massive 1989 “Caracazo” uprising against poverty and neo-liberal attacks by the IMF was instrumental in exposing the brutality



march flooded the streets, while not even 1,000 marched with the CTV.

Chavez + Workers = Venezuela Progressing

With Chávez at the helm, exciting new examples in workers control have emerged with amazing results. In January of 2005 The government expropriated bankrupt paper company Venepal (now Invepal), restarting the factory under

workers with the skills to push forward these changes.

The profits of the state-owned oil company PDVSA now flow into social programs instead of the pocket of American businessmen. Sixteen companies - including Chevron and Shell – were



and for the first time, universal healthcare, including the medicine, and in a few years, all Venezuelans will have free access to an excellent healthcare service. More that a million seven hundred tons of food are channelled to over 12 million people at subsidized prices, almost half the population. One million gets them completely free, as they are in a transition period. More than 700 thousand new jobs have been created, thus reducing unemployment by 9 points.”

Add to that the October 28 V declaration that Venezuela is now a “Territory Free of Illiteracy” after teaching more than

of the US-supported government of President Carlos Andres Perez. Over 4,000 murders by the government could not suffocate the seeds of change sowed during the uprising.

CTV No, UNT Yes

However, for 40 years business elites and their American friends did control the movements of organized labour through the dominant Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV). The structure lacked any participation from rank and file workers, and its bureaucrats collaborated with management as independent union activists were fired and murdered.

The leadership of the CTV then even joined the business federation to support the 2002 failed military coup against Chavez, led a 63-day economic stoppage in an attempt to force Chavez’s resignation, and then plunged the country into the devastating management-led oil stoppage which cost more than \$10 billion in economic losses. Oil production was cut from 3.1 million barrels a day to 25,000 barrels. Their saboteurs poured sand into the pipes, locked computer access, and stole hard drives containing exploration maps and reports.

The response of Chavez and the workers of Venezuela? Thousands of retired and foreign workers rallied to save production and defeat the oil stoppage, the saboteurs were all fired, and the pro-Chavez labour leaders founded the new National Workers’ Union (UNT) on April 5 of 2003. Since that day, the UNT has made huge advances in the genuine organization of working Venezuelans. Last year’s May Day rally provided a good look at the new balance of forces: half a million supporters of the UNT

a system of “cogestion” which means literally “co-management” The process guarantees workers’ increasing control over the decisions which effect their lives and is a step forward for the lives of all poor and working Venezuelans.

In a speech to the National Assembly where Venezuelan President Chávez announced the decision, he also called for state control of all basic industry, and for the conversion of state run



enterprises to co-management. CNV, a factory that produces valves for the oil industry was the second such factory, and the big electrical company Cadafe is also moving towards workers’ control as well as several other factories. Chávez has also proposed the creation of a network of worker-recovered companies, and has pushed the idea of “a school in each factory” to equip

forced to agree to terms giving PDVSA at least a 60 percent state stake, and the government recently seized fields operated by two European oil giants - France’s Total and Italy’s ENI - after the two companies refused to convert their contracts to joint ventures with the state by April 1.

“This country does not allow itself to be blackmailed,” said energy minister Rafael Ramirez. “Our sovereignty isn’t

1.5 million people to read under a Cuban modeled program, and you have a population making great strides in all important areas of human rights.

What has been the response of the United States to all of this? Condoleezza Rice called in February for an “international united front” against Venezuela and made false claims of a “truckers strike”.

Workers and Peasants More and More in Charge

What was the response of the energized workers of Venezuela? The UNT declared in a public statement, “The U.S. Empire’s intention of promoting an International Front against Venezuela is rejected by the Venezuelan workers... The UNT calls all Latin American unions in order to prepare an international response by workers to this imperialist attack targeting Venezuela. We also call US workers and their unions to reject this attack and manipulation that the US government wants to carry out against workers and Venezuela.”

So as the fighters step into the ring for another round of this crucial battle, the poor and working people of Venezuela stride confidently into the ring, knowing the match is still far from over, and calling on people around the world to echo the demands made by the UNT as part of their public statement:

LET’S REJECT THIS NEW IMPERIALIST ATTACK!

LET’S DEFEAT THE SABOTAGE ATTEMPTS AGAINST OUR COUNTRY!

BOLIVAR’S HOMELAND MUST BE RESPECTED!

THE ISSUE IS SELF-DETERMINATION FOR INDIGENOUS NATIONS! HANDS OFF SIX NATIONS LAND!

By Aaron Mercredi

Six Nations Under Attack

At 4:30am on April 20th 2006, over 150 heavily armed Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) officers launched a violent assault on Indigenous people who were occupying reclaimed Haudenosaunee territory at Caledonia. 16 people were beaten and arrested for defending Rotinoshon'non: we territory against illegal housing developments on their land in a 200 year old outstanding land claim with the government of Canada.

Since February 28th, Rotinoshon'non: we people and supporters have been camping out on the Haldimand Tract at the entrance to the Douglas Creek Estates, which is an illegal 71-lot subdivision being built by Henco Industries on Six Nations territory.

My Land Is Not Your Land

The land being developed has never been handed over to Canada. It was recognized by the Crown as Six Nations territory in the Haldimand Declaration of 1784. In this Declaration, the Crown agreed to protect the Six Nations' interests in the land, 6 miles on both sides of the Grand River from its mouth to its source. This agreement has been violated for over 200 years, as more and more land was stolen by the government of Canada. The Six Nations reserve today sits on only 5% of its original land base. The governments of Canada and Ontario are

resort from 4,000 beds to 20,000 beds, and developing previously untouched Mt. Morrisey. This expansion now totals \$285 million; an expansion that is going through without the participation, or even the consent, 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 Skwelkwek'welt 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

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.

Six Nations Heroic Resistance

In an attempt to intimidate the camp members at Six Nations, in March, Henco Industries obtained a court injunction to have Six Nations camp members forcibly

across Canada. In support of the people who are on the front lines, solidarity has been spreading. Under the direction of the Clan Mothers at the Six Nations Territory, a series of actions were organized in solidarity with the Six Nations. These actions were held in support of the Six Nations demands for an immediate cessation of all construction by Henco industries on Six Nations territory and for resolution to the current standoff to be conducted on a nation-to-nation basis. On April 11th and 12th, support actions took place on the streets of North Battleford, Montreal, Toronto, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Victoria. In the early morning of April 21st, bonfires were lit and the CN Rail line was blocked on the Tyendinaga Mohawk Reserve on their territory in Eastern Ontario, costing CN millions of dollars in losses and damages.

And The Struggle Continues...

After the initial raid on the camp at Caledonia, hundreds of community members and supporters poured in to the area to reinforce the strength of the resistance. Today, they remain there and are setting an example for Indigenous people all over the country who live with the same conditions as people at Six Nations every day. They continue to face threats of more violence by the enforcement agencies of Canada. From other examples of Indigenous resistance, from Oka to Gustafsen Lake, violence and media manipulation are central tactics of the government in dealing with land disputes, and Six Nations has escalated to a boiling



supporting this colonial construction against the will of the Six Nations people.

Despite the illegality of this development, Indigenous people and their supporters are being criminalized for standing up against the theft of more Six Nations land. Along with the OPP, RCMP officers have set up an operating base at a nearby school.



The BC Connection

Like in Ontario, the rights of Indigenous people all over BC are being trampled. Unlike Ontario, the majority of this province was never surrendered to government of Canada through treaties. This is most clear when looking at the outright theft of Indigenous land and resources and the vicious repression and criminalization of resistance to this theft.

In 1997, the BC government approved a \$70 million expansion of Sun Peaks Ski Resort near Kamloops, inflating the

government has brought down on the Secwepemc defenders has resulted in over 54 arrests of Secwepemc people, mainly youth and elders.

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 theft of this St'at'imc land.

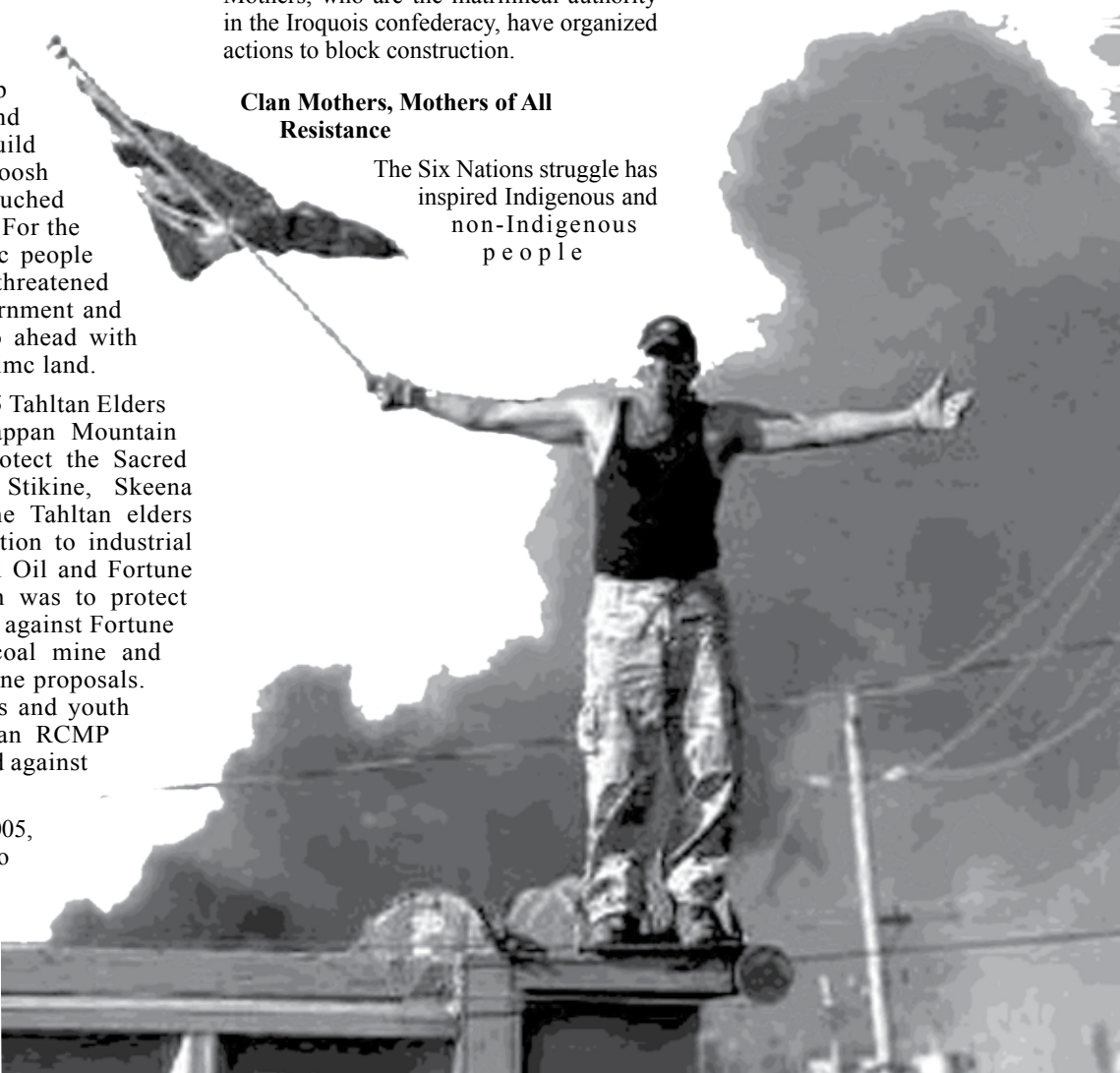
In September 2005, 15 Tahltan Elders were arrested at Klappan Mountain in the struggle to protect the Sacred Headwaters of the Stikine, Skeena and Nass Rivers. The Tahltan elders are in serious opposition to industrial development by Shell Oil and Fortune Minerals. This action was to protect their lands and people against Fortune Mineral's open pit coal mine and Shell's coalbed methane proposals. The 15 Tahltan Elders and youth were arrested when an RCMP injunction was granted against the Tahltan blockade.

In the summer of 2005, 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

removed by the OPP. A revised court injunction states that those who refuse to vacate the property are guilty of criminal and civil contempt and will be fingerprinted and photographed as part of a probation order. Despite court orders and growing police intimidation, the camp has grown and gathered support across Canada. The Clan Mothers, who are the matrilineal authority in the Iroquois confederacy, have organized actions to block construction.

Clan Mothers, Mothers of All Resistance

The Six Nations struggle has inspired Indigenous and non-Indigenous people



What Is Canada Doing in Afghanistan?

By Nita Palmer

Saturday, April 22 – The early morning news of the deaths of four more Canadian soldiers in a roadside bomb explosion near Gumbad, Afghanistan was another wake-up call to people across the country: Canada is at war. These deaths were the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th deaths of Canadian troops in Afghanistan since the invasion of the country in 2001. Eight Canadian troops plus one diplomat have been killed in Afghanistan since the Government of Canada stepped up its war drive with the deployment of 2,000 more troops to the Kandahar region of Afghanistan in August 2005.

Life in Afghanistan Under Canadian Guns

“Canadians are assisting in the establishment of legitimate and effective security structures, a police force, a military and a judicial system. As well, they are assisting Afghans who have suffered decades of poverty, tyranny and abuse by supporting and facilitating the humanitarian projects that are needed there.” – Gordon O’Connor, Minister of National Defense

According to Gordon O’Connor and other Members of Parliament in Ottawa, Canadian Forces are saving Afghans from a life of misery. However, both UN statistics and accounts from Afghan people show that the opposite is the case. A UN report released in



According to the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan (RAWA), *“There is a high rate of women committing suicide and an ever expanding cultivation and trafficking of narcotics, all while billions of dollars of foreign aid and public resources are squandered away. Unemployment and homelessness is on the rise. Opening of Kabul Serina Hotel [a recently opened 5-star hotel in Kabul] and other hotels of this type in a country with the lowest rate of income per capita in the world doesn’t mean development”* (March 8, 2006). This is the type of “reconstruction” that people in Afghanistan are seeing at the hands of the Government of Canada.

Operation Archer: Protecting the Interests of the Canadian Ruling Class

At first glance, it would seem as though there is a fundamental contradiction between the government of Canada’s claims of “liberating the Afghan people” and fighting for “peace, democracy, and freedom”. However, scratch the surface a little and you will find the reality of the

SOLIDARITY MARCH & RALLY IN VANCOUVER SPARKS MESSAGE OF UNITY AND STRUGGLE



By Aaron Mercredi

On April 25th, over 700 Indigenous people and supporters rallied at the Vancouver Art Gallery in downtown Vancouver in support of the people at Six Nations. The rally was held to show the federal government and Ontario governments that Six Nations does not stand alone in their struggle and that this is a very old account that has to be settled. After the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) invaded the reclamation site, beat, tasered and

the Squamish Nation, who brought his family forward for a war song. Following this, Lindsay Bomberry of the Onondaga Nation of Six Nations spoke about how her whole life has changed through this experience and that the people of Six Nations are standing up for what is rightfully theirs. “We were treated as a nation. That is how these treaties were first written. That is the initial agreements that were first made. And that has not been honoured. It is an agreement that has been broken.” She went on to say, “We are not criminals



2005 shows that the unemployment rate in Afghanistan is at 78%. 80% of people live below the poverty line. Opium production in Afghanistan has also skyrocketed. In 2001, there were 8,000 hectares of opium-producing land in Afghanistan. As of 2005, that number had risen to 104,000 hectares. Today, Afghanistan produces 90% of the world’s opium – representing 52% of Afghanistan’s meagre gross domestic product. The enormity of this trade in Afghanistan also requires people to work these opium fields, and many men, women, and children have been forced to enter this brutal trade in order to scrape together enough money to survive.

Even while fighting “insurgents”, the government of Canada has also rested the occupation of Afghanistan on the laurels of supposed reconstruction of the country. However, people in Afghanistan are asking: what reconstruction? *“I don’t know of any real reconstruction in Afghanistan. Afghans are living in tents in Kabul, schools in Kabul don’t have chairs, tables, or books,”* Ramazan Bahsardost, an Afghan member of parliament, was recently quoted as saying.

interests represented in the occupation – and the reason why the quality of life in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate.

Canada’s Department of National Defense website headlines its section on “Rebuilding Afghanistan” with the claim that the top two priorities of Canada’s role in Afghanistan are to “defend ‘our’ national interests”, and to “ensure Canadian leadership in world affairs”. Clearly, these interests have nothing to do with the Afghan people. They also have nothing to do with the interests of working people in Canada, who see no profit from the occupation of Afghanistan. Why then, is the government of Canada increasing its domination in Afghanistan? In small part, it is for the economic benefit that Canada’s wealthy elite and Canadian

arrested 16 activists and community members on April 20th, solidarity spread across Indigenous communities throughout Canada. Only one week earlier, there were coordinated actions in Toronto, Montreal, North Battleford, Saskatoon, Vancouver and Victoria. After the police incursion, there was a quick response from



coast to coast. In Tyendenaga, in Mohawk territory, the CN rail line was blocked and bonfires were lit, causing millions of dollars in delays on that main line. In BC, Okanagan grassroots organizers set up an information picket on the highway, while near Chase, BC, members of the Native Youth Movement held signs and handed out information along the Trans Canada Highway.

Wearing red, protesters in Vancouver echoed the anger felt throughout the country at how the government of Canada is dealing with Indigenous people and their legitimate demands.

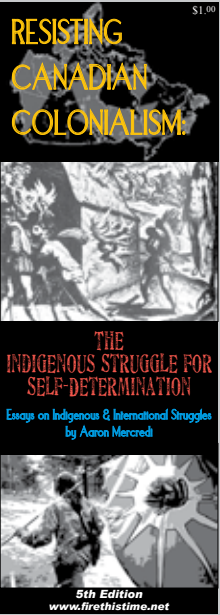
Bernie Williams, from the Downtown Eastside Women’s Centre, opened the rally by introducing Chief Ian Campbell of

because we are staking claim to what is rightfully ours. We do not deserve to have guns put in our face or to be tasered because we are peacefully occupying the land which we hold title to, which our ancestors are buried beneath.”

Shawn Atleo, Nuuchah-Nulth, and regional chief for the Assembly of First Nations brought supportive greetings and emphasized on the amount of young people who are taking the leadership in this struggle. Danny Wallace spoke next and targeted Canada for its systemic racism and lies that it promotes about Native people.

Annita McPhee, of the Tahltan nation, spoke next. Coming from a territory where elders in her community were arrested for defending their land from resource extraction, she spoke with conviction against the government’s policies of targeting Indigenous people who resist the theft and plunder of their land. “As a collective, we came together with a message. To the six nations people, we want to honour you in your struggle to protect

Also Available from FIRE THIS TIME



Resisting Canadian Colonialism

Essays on Indigenous & International Struggles

by Aaron Mercredi

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corporations see from building of new businesses in Afghanistan. But overall, these steps are just another piece in the puzzle of establishing economic control for the Canadian ruling class in Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has the poor luck of being a country that is an important hub between the Middle East, Europe, and Asia. As such, control of Afghanistan has been fought over for centuries by various imperialist powers – because control of Afghanistan means access to trade markets throughout these three important areas. While the US ruling class focuses on its occupation of Iraq, and other major imperialist powers such as Britain, France, and Germany jockey for control, Canada is attempting to throw off its traditional “middle power status” and secure its economic control in the world. The war drive in Afghanistan is the current centre of the ruling class of Canada’s battle for control.

Questions Left Unanswered for Working People

The increasingly obvious fact that the occupation of Afghanistan is not in the interests of people in Canada, combined with more and more frequent deaths of Canadian troops and Afghan civilians, has created a growing voice against the occupation of Afghanistan amongst ordinary working people in Canada. This opposition has left the government of Canada scrambling to quell this voice. On April 10, a “Take Note” debate was held in Parliament. However, the only thing to “take note” about in this “debate” was the *lack* of any debate. In the words of

former Liberal Defence Minister Bill Graham, “We, on our side of the House, do not consider this a debate. We believe this is an opportunity to allow the Canadian public to better understand this mission.” The Canadian public *do* understand this mission – we understand that it is not by our choice or in our interest, and that we are not being represented by the government of Canada.

It is not only the Conservative Party and the Liberal Party that do not represent us, however – the NDP, as well, unanimously voiced its support for the mission in Afghanistan during the “debate”. NDP leader Jack Layton called only for Parliament to “[commit] to a democratic debate and vote in the House on any further role for our Canadian Forces in Afghanistan *beyond our current commitments*.” [Emphasis added] There was no mention of a real debate on the current deployment of troops, nor on the legality of the occupation, nor on the recent doubling of the military budget to \$25.8 billion in the spring of 2005. This so-called “debate” simply left more questions unanswered for people in Canada.

Canada Out of Afghanistan! Tasks and Perspectives for Working People in Canada

As the April 10 “debate” clearly showed, it is up to us poor, working, and oppressed people in Canada to fight to make our voices heard. While the government of Canada continues to slash funding to education, health care, and other social programs that we rely on, they double the military budget, and push to add 8,000 more young workers to the ranks

of the Canadian Forces.

The government of Canada clearly is not representing the interests of working people in Canada in the occupation of Afghanistan. Even more clearly, it is not representing the interests of people in Afghanistan, for whom the occupation has crippled their country, and left them fighting for their basic right to survive every day. For the people of Afghanistan, the fundamental block to building their own country in their own interests is the imperialist occupation of their country by the guns of Canadian and NATO forces. Therefore, as people in Canada, we must fight for the self-determination of people in Afghanistan, as the occupation of their country does not represent people here or there.

Firstly though, working people in Canada must have a chance to be able to discuss what this occupation means. We must answer the many questions that have been left unanswered. To do this, we must call for an Independent Public Inquiry into Canada’s war drive in Afghanistan, and demand to know why Canadian troops have been deployed to Afghanistan to continue this bloody, brutal, and inhuman occupation. In the interests of poor, working, and oppressed people in Canada and in Afghanistan, we must also continue to voice our opposition to this horrific occupation, and to demand:

CANADA OUT OF
A F G H A N I S T A N !
INDEPENDENT PUBLIC
INQUIRY NOW! BRING
TROOPS HOME NOW!

your lands from exploitation by development companies. WE want to honour you. We want to let you know that you are not alone in your struggle and that we will do anything to make sure that your safety is ensured. And as a collective, we have a message for the government: Stop criminalizing our people when we are standing up for what is right. We also have a message for the government: You need to deal with First Nations people and land conflict issues on a nation-to-nation basis. Not at the hands of the police.”

Dave Dennis from the Nuuchah-Nulth nation and Vice-President of the United Native Nations, spoke next, outlining the different obstacles that Native people already face living in Canada in terms of poverty, health, housing and basic means of survival. He elaborated that the attack on the people of Six Nations is the same attack that has been waged against Indigenous people for hundreds of years, and that today we are uniting together across the country to defend ourselves against further attacks.

After the rally, elders and drummers led a march down Robson Street, through downtown to Stanley Park, where the march stopped, beginning a blockade of 3 lanes of traffic over the Lion’s Gate bridge. Speakers from many nations brought messages of solidarity forward, and traffic was brought to a standstill,

sending a message of what Indigenous people are capable of doing here in Vancouver if brought to this point.

Brought together over violence against Indigenous people at Six Nations, the response to defend against future attacks was swift. Vancouver’s rally and protest was a message to the government that if they attack Six Nations, they attack all Indigenous people. We have the ability to shut roads down, in Vancouver and BC, bringing traffic and the economy to a standstill.

Whether it be Mohawk, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca, Cayuga or Tuscarora, of the Six Nations confederacy, or if it is Secwepemc, Cheam, or Tahltan, the struggle of Indigenous people for land, resources and sovereignty are one struggle. One common struggle against a colonial government that has built itself and Canada on the oppression and poverty of all Indigenous people of this land. When the fight is taken up by one nation, it is a spark of hope, of inspiration for everyone else to join together to reclaim what has been taken for so many years. The radicalization and militancy that is shown in Six Nations right now will only spread throughout Canada, which will prepare Indigenous people, their allies and all social justice activists for proper response by any means necessary to win the battles to come.

Mayor Sullivan and the NPA Cut CUPE 15 Jobs and Public Services

Paul Faoro, is the president of CUPE Local 15 - Vancouver municipal, education and community workers, one of the largest union locals in all of Canada. Paul Faoro is also a long time social justice activist and an active participant and organizer in Vancouver civic politics. The article has been taken with permission from The Members’ Voice, the newsletter of CUPE Local 15.
- Editor

By Paul Faoro

The first statement I made to Mayor Sam Sullivan and Vancouver City Council at two different presentations over the last few weeks regarding the City’s 2006 operating budget was that Council’s final decisions will set the tone for our upcoming contract negotiations with the City.

The budget decisions made by Mayor Sullivan and his Non Partisan Association (NPA) Councillors on April 7th after a 20 hour meeting have clearly set a tone - a very troubling one. The NPA used their majority and eliminated over sixteen full time CUPE 15 positions and made serious cuts to public services from every area imaginable. Every citizen in Vancouver will feel these significant cuts. They appear to be targeted at children, women, homeless people, seniors, people with disabilities and several ethnic communities. The arts community was also hit hard.

In a press release shortly after the 20 hour marathon Mayor Sullivan was claiming he has delivered an “accountable and balanced budget”. Mayor Sullivan further boasts “I



am proud that we have been able to balance fiscal and social responsibility, while ensuring that we are showing compassion for our citizens who are most in need”.

The following is a short summary of the impact of the first NPA budget. They are:

- Cutting \$23,000 from the Emergency Preparedness Initiative. This initiative is in place to improve the City’s level of preparedness to respond to a disaster.
- Discontinuing three multilingual phone lines at City Hall for the Punjabi, Spanish & Vietnamese communities.
- Cutting \$30,000 from the Carnegie Outreach Recovery Program. This program links street people to housing and addiction services. This cut will hurt the most vulnerable people.
- Cutting \$81,900 for a temporary staff position for the City Women’s Task Force.

-Eliminating two working supervisor positions in Building Services. The loss of these CUPE 15 positions will impact the cleaning of City housing in the Downtown Eastside and will impact residents in City owned buildings.

-Eliminating the Child and Youth Advocate Program. This shameful cut will result in the loss of an advocacy role for child, youth and family issues.

-Cutting \$50,000 from the library books and materials budget. This cut will hurt the public.

-Eliminating one Seismic Specialist position in Community Services. This position was in place to mitigate seismic risks in unreinforced masonry buildings.

-Reducing \$100,000 from the Homeless Action Plan. This will delay the implementation of the evaluation of Vancouver’s rental market.

-Eliminating one Animal Control Officer. Cutting this CUPE 15 position will jeopardize prompt response to complaints from the public and reduce revenue from written violations.

-Wiping out entire innovation grants. The \$100,000 targeted for innovation grants was to respond to one-time strategies to address social problems and bring about positive social change.

-Eliminating one CUPE 15 clerical position in Community Services. This will increase the workload for other employees while adding to the unmanageable current workloads and cause service delays.

-Slashing \$75,000 from the Harm Reduction Conference. This will negatively impact this important conference.

-Reducing \$200,000 from the

Engineering Community Climate Change Action Plan. This will reduce efforts to target specific activities negatively impacting our environment. One staff position will be eliminated.

-Eliminating one clerical position in Engineering. Cutting this front line CUPE 15 position will impact service to the public.

-Cutting one CUPE 15 Streets Design position in Engineering which will cause service delays.

-Gutting \$300,000 from cultural grants which will severely impact the arts community as grant money is leveraged.

-Cutting \$13,000 from other civic grants. This will impact the Wildlife Rescue Society, Celebration Grants and Rental Subsidy Grants.

-Gutting 1.7 full time employees from library staffing.

-Slashing \$140,000 from library programs.

-Slashing \$400,000 from the Park Board. This severe cut will impact service after 2006.

-Reducing the Anti-Graffiti program in the Park Board by \$13,000. This cut will cause longer cycles between inspection and cleaning and ultimately result in more graffiti in all Vancouver parks.

-Wiping out the Ethical Purchasing Program including one CUPE 15 position. This progressive program was saving money for the City and was implemented when the City found out the uniforms for Vancouver Firefighters were being made in Burma using child labour.

-Reducing Britannia Information Centre hours. This \$11,000 cut will reduce hours for CUPE 15 auxiliaries and will reduce public service.

-Cutting outreach costs by \$12,000 in the City Clerks department. Funding was in place to deal with diversity, disability and seniors’ issues. This cut will make it more difficult for groups to reach their mandates.

-Eliminating one System/Network

Administrator, one Computer Programmer and one Network Support Specialist from Information Technology. Cutting these three CUPE 15 positions will negatively impact remaining staff.

-Cutting one CUPE 15 Planning Assistant II from City Plans in Community Services. This cut will reduce the division’s ability to respond to citizen inquiries and the provision of planning services to neighborhoods.

-Eliminating one Planning Assistant II from Current Planning in Community Services. Cutting this CUPE 15 position will negatively impact development planners.

-Cutting the Food Policy Coordinator and the \$15,000 budget for the Food Policy Council. This regressive cut will set Vancouver backwards.

-Cutting one full time CUPE 15 position for cleaning services at City Hall. This will add to the existing rodent problem in City Hall and satellite offices. Offices will now only be cleaned every three days.

Balancing “social” responsibility - what a spin. This is the most regressive, hurtful City budget I have ever seen. Since being elected as President I have been advocating getting actively involved in the municipal elections to ensure that progressive candidates are elected. Mayor Sullivan’s budget has been the best endorsement for this I have had to date.

Finally, with Mayor Sullivan’s clear attack on CUPE 15 members we have no choice but to make job security the top priority for our upcoming contact negotiations. In light of the Mayor’s and the NPA Councillors’ actions we will elect our bargaining committee in early May and our committee needs to immediately gear up for a difficult round. We can serve notice to bargain as early as September 1st.



Vancouver Civic Politics:

COPE without VISION is a COPE With Vision

An Interview with Tim Louis, COPE Corresponding Secretary and former City Councilor

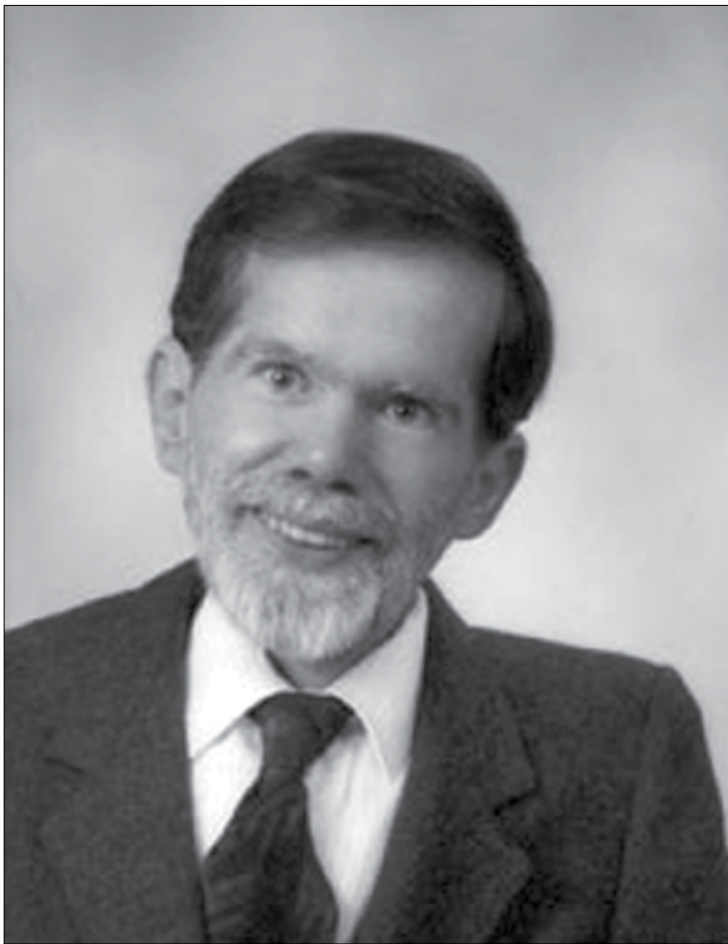
By Shannon Bundock

Fire This Time sat down once again with Tim Louis – Former Vancouver City Councilor and Executive Member of the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE). We discussed with Tim the state of COPE following the 2005 split within in the party, the formation of a new party, Vision Vancouver, and the 2005 municipal elections. Fire This Time also discussed some important civic issues impacting poor and working people in Vancouver and Tim’s vision for the future of civic politics in Vancouver.

FTT: On Sunday April 23 COPE held its 38th Annual General Meeting and elected a new Executive. Congratulations on becoming the new Corresponding Secretary! I would like to know what you think of the results of these elections, and what these results mean for COPE.

Tim Louis: I should really be very clear that I am not speaking on behalf of COPE. COPE does have a designated spokesperson. We have two Co-Chairs and our external co-chair is the official spokesperson for COPE. So my views that I am giving you today are exactly that – my views. They are not necessarily the official COPE view.

I am very, very pleased with the outcome of the Annual General Meeting. The membership have spoken loudly and very clearly and repeatedly; they have been incredibly patient.



what that looks like will be determined by the political landscape at that time, the balance of forces at that time. To enter into any sort of an accord or partnership, any sort of a formal agreement with Vision now, would be,

retrospect I am not absolutely certain that that was the case. Now with the benefit of hindsight, looking back on 02, I think that perhaps it wasn’t the real COPE that won. COPE had been infiltrated; COPE had been taken over

not worked, or for whom treatment just won’t work.

FTT: What do you think of Mayor Sam Sullivan’s recent comments regarding drug policy in Vancouver?

TL: I would very strongly support his proposal. What he is proposing is that we look at the possibility of providing some manner or other drugs to those addicts for whom treatment has not worked. You know we could eliminate, overnight, 90% of our property crime, simply by dealing with the drug issue.

If we provided drugs on a prescription basis to addicts that simply cannot succeed at treatment, then that would eliminate the need for about 90% of our police force. The ‘War on Drugs’ has been a colossal failure and even police forces around the world are recognizing that and beginning to call for the decriminalization of drugs.

FTT: It is only 4 more years until Vancouver will be the host of the 2010 Olympics. When the city was bidding to hold the Olympics, there were a number of concerns raised and opposition. COPE pushed for a referendum, and you were quite public about voting “NO” to the Olympics. Now, in 2006, what do you think about this fast approaching event, and the impact on Vancouver?

TL: For most people, the average person, it will be a negative impact. Higher taxes to pay for colossal

as opposed to the RAV line and other mega-projects.

FTT: Now, to bring it back to COPE, I would like to bring up some of the criticisms as to why COPE faced a loss in the 2005 elections. One criticism is that COPE wasn’t able to integrate broad political forces and maintain a broad coalition. What is your analysis of this?

TL: Well it is a little bit complicated. First of all, in this political environment – and I am always open to feedback, debate and further thought – my own view right now is that the road to success in the future is in fact a very broad coalition. A coalition that welcomes people of all political views, with one condition that at the end of the day it is the membership that determine COPE’s position and policy at a policy conference before each election, and that any candidate that runs for a nomination, if they get that nomination will do their best to implement that platform. So I do believe in a very broad coalition; one that is democratic though. A coalition where no one particular current rules. In the last term, 2002-05, the Larry Campbell faction, by brute force, tried to impose its view on the entire coalition in a very undemocratic manner.

However, why did we lose the 2005 election? Not because we were failing in any way to be a broad coalition. We lost the election because the Vision party, portraying itself as a progressive force in civic politics and massively

At the WISE Hall, back in July, a so-called framework agreement was put to them. A framework agreement between COPE and the forces of division, and it was soundly rejected by the membership.

The membership debriefed the [2005] election, at the Roundhouse [Community Center], and again, very, very decisively expressed grave concerns about working at this point in time with Vision Vancouver.

With all of those concerns in the background, the membership decided in a very democratic and respectful way, to elect an executive that has quite a focus on COPE. An executive that is committed to building up COPE and getting COPE back into the community, where it should be: working with community organizations, co-sponsoring events in the community with other community organizations, and leaving the whole question of Vision for later.

In a nutshell, Sunday for me was a huge victory for the membership taking back control of their own party.

FTT: COPE has been through an eventful past few years. Sweeping City Council in 2002, dealing with division within the party and the formation of Vision Vancouver, facing set backs in the 2005 elections. At this stage can you explain what COPE represents for people in Vancouver, and specifically, what is the difference between COPE and Vision Vancouver?

TL: Two years from now in the fall of 08, Vision may be around, or it may not be around. We may enter into an agreement with Vision, or we may not. We may enter into an agreement with the Green Party, which we have done before in previous elections.

What we do, who we do it with, and

in my view, very premature.

Personally speaking I have a number of very serious criticisms, more than criticisms, perhaps even condemnations of Vision. In my view (and again this is not the official view) a part of Vision is just the “NPA-lite”.

On a number of major issues they are to the right of the NPA [Non-Partisan Association, another civic party in Vancouver and it is right wing]. On gambling expansion, they are to the right of the NPA. On raising bus fares, they are to the right of the NPA. On hiring more police officers, they are to the right of the NPA. So I do not see Vision as a positive progressive force in Vancouver at all. It was the Vision faction that effectively blocked the return of a compressed work-week to our workers at city hall; that delayed for two years the introduction of an ethical purchasing policy at city hall; and very successfully and tragically sabotaged the implementation of a ward system – which would have been a partial democratization of our civic system.

When COPE was founded, and for many years after it was founded, it presented a real alternative. It never hesitated to call a spade a spade. If on the political landscape there appeared a wolf in sheep’s clothing, [COPE] would point at it and call it a wolf. It never had any hesitation in doing that.

In the early years after COPE formed, a force came on to the political scene which was very similar to Vision, except it was called TEAM. COPE never played around with the possibility of entering into an alliance with TEAM. It described TEAM for what it really was, the “NPA-lite” – not truly committed to real social or urban reform.

When we see that COPE swept into office in the 2002 elections, in

by the same disease that permeates a number of, perhaps all, mainstream political parties, including the NDP. Careerists, opportunists, and the moneyed-class had taken control of the COPE office, had inserted their own staff into the COPE office, and a number of the candidates that got elected were supportive of that trend. Power at any cost.

So in retrospect it wasn’t a COPE victory in the sense of the people who founded COPE back in the late 1960s. COPE in 2002 was not much different from TEAM in the early 1970s. It took the membership – including myself – a number of years to awaken with horror at what had occurred, and then gradually weed out the rot. But I think we’re just about there.

FTT: On top of this yourself and COPE have taken stands on a number of important municipal issues. One of the projects that COPE has fought for is the Safe Injection Site in the Downtown Eastside. Can you comment on the successes, challenges and role of this project in Vancouver?

TL: It has definitely proven to be what anyone with any common sense predicted it would be: a huge success. Time now is to stop reveling in the novelty of the first ever harm reduction initiative, a safe injection site, and to promote the opening of a whole number of additional supervised injection sites. It was a great first start, but it has now been over three years since COPE won the election on the basis of opening up a safe injection site. I think it is time now that the government – all three levels, federal, provincial, municipal – open a number of supervised injection sites. And perhaps go a step further and look at maintenance prescriptions for those addicts for whom treatment has just

overrun, and a lot of displacement for marginalized people – especially people in the Downtown Eastside. The impact on tourism will be positive, but it will be very short-term. There will not be long-term benefits from the Olympics.

If it was something that would benefit in the long-term, then the private sector would have been more than pleased to fund it entirely on its own. But it needed, in fact ironically, “Socialism” – and I put quotations around that word – socialism for the rich. The rich need welfare, massive corporate welfare to subsidize this colossal party. And it will be a colossal party, but it won’t benefit the people of Vancouver at the average level. The homeowner will just see higher taxes, both property taxes and income taxes, to pay for the party and to pay for the huge overruns. The RAV-line is already hundreds of millions of dollars over budget.

FTT: One argument is that the Olympics will bring jobs for people in Vancouver. Perhaps not long-term jobs, but jobs nonetheless. What do you have to say regarding that?

TL: I am not sure that in the long-term that it will bring jobs. But there are many ways we could use government subsidies to create jobs if we want to create permanent jobs that benefit the public a lot more. We could massively reduce class sizes by hiring hundreds of more teachers. We could improve public transit by hiring hundreds of more bus drivers. We could hire people to work on the Downtown Eastside connecting with street people; to engage with them, get to know them and befriend them and move them towards treatment and support. So there are positions that we do need to hire people for, in jobs that will actually benefit society

bank-rolled by three sources (the gambling industry, the bar-owners, and the developers) were able to bank-roll a campaign that was about three-times more expensive than the COPE campaign. That resulted in COPE becoming marginalized. I am hopeful that next time COPE is able to work harder with the rank-and-file of labour unions, to make connections with community organizations, to have a real track record of working in the community so that COPE can have a real broad based energetic campaign in the community.

FTT: What is next for COPE? What can poor and working people in Vancouver expect?

TL: What is next for COPE is to continue working with community organizations, within the community. Holding community forums on issues of the day, such as the ‘Gateways Forum’ that we held a few months ago in partnership with community organizations – BEST [Better Environmentally Sound Transportation] and the David Suzuki Foundation. [It was] a very successful forum where over 300 people turned out to the Croatian Cultural Centre. We need to have more of that, every two or three months. We need to hold regular membership meetings, to let the membership debate issues of the day. Both internal issues such as tactical issues, “How does COPE move forward?”, and external issues, like the proposal to provide drugs to addicts; issues like shifting taxes from business owners to residential property owners. The membership needs to be given an opportunity to have a real voice, a very meaningful voice, in the affairs of COPE.

FTT: Thank you Tim.

Tim Louis: Thank you Shannon.

Free The Cuban Heroes

By Noah Fine

“[That court] has to throw the entire case into the trash bin and free our compañeros, but legally, technically speaking, its minimum obligation is to annul that charge.”

-Ricardo Alarcón, president of the Cuban Parliament.

Nothing But a Frame Up

What charge is Ricardo Alarcón speaking of? Since nearly the beginning of the trial of the 5 Cuban Heroes the most severe charge laid against any of the 5 refers to an incident where an aircraft was fired upon after infiltrating Cuban airspace. The light aircraft had violated Cuban air space for the twelfth time with warning on February 24, 1996. One year after the Cuban 5 were arrested in 1999, with pressure from the anti-Cuba mafia in Miami, the charges for this incident were brought down on Gerardo Hernández of the Cuban 5; the most severe of all charges brought against the 5, giving him over two life sentences.

However, due to no evidence criminalizing Gerardo of this incident, the prosecution “actually stated that the

What Actually Happened? Who is the Real Criminal?

In September 1998, Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Antonio Guerrero, Fernando González and René González, were kidnapped from their families, separated from each other and spread across the U.S. in different prisons. They were put in jail for investigating right-wing anti-Cuban terrorists that walk freely on the streets of Miami, often with aid from Washington. Those protected by Washington include terrorists such as Orlando Bosch and Luis Posada Carriles who are known by the Cuban and U.S. government for their roles in terror attacks against Cuba. Their acts of terror include the mid-air bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1976 that killed all 73 passengers.

When asked about his role in the act Bosch stated, “Who was on board that plane? Four members of the Communist Party, five North Koreans, five Guyanese, (there were really 11 Guyanese passengers) . . .

As part of an international campaign to free the 5 Cuban Heroes, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver has organized constantly to educate people about this brutal injustice. As well as organizing many forums and other educational events about the case of the 5 anti-terrorist Cubans, the Free the Cuban 5 Committee-Vancouver has also begun a monthly protest campaign at the U.S. Consulate in Vancouver. We have now organized 5 picket actions since December 2005 at the very door of U.S. consulate in Vancouver. The protests have been featured in many different mediums, ranging from local to provincial media reaching hundreds of thousands of people. If you are interested in learning more about the Cuban 5 heroes, or would like to find out when the next action in Vancouver is please check out: <http://www.vancubasolidarity.com/freethefivevan.html> or e-mail at cuban5_van@yahoo.com.



available evidence was insufficient to convict Gerardo Hernández, and thus, the jury would absolve him,” stated Alarcón. The prosecution withdrew this charge against Gerardo. However Judge Joan Lenard refused to acknowledge the withdrawal of this charge, stating that the prosecution had used it for seven months and it should still be presented to the jury. Even when the Atlanta Court overturned the trial of the Cuban 5 in August 2005, the

concho chico, four member of the Communist Party chico!!!” Among all 73 passengers that were killed 6 young women from the Cuban fencing team were also murdered. These are the kinds of terror attacks that the 5 Cuban Heroes were attempting to stop.

If this kind of terror hits the U.S. does the government of the U.S. not respond? These 5 Cubans were only defending their people against attack. They were unarmed and



prosecution stated in a petition to the court that keeping this charge of first-degree murder against Gerardo “is something unprecedented.” In fact, like all of the charges against the 5 Cuban heroes there is no sufficient evidence.

harmed no one, yet after they had submitted evidence outlining this terrorism against Cuba to both the Cuban government and the U.S. they were jailed without evidence.

Join the Campaign

Support the Struggle to “Free the Five” with your Donation Five Heroes Freedom Fund

December 8, 2005

As you are aware, this is a very critical time for the Cuban Five anti-terrorist heroes. While the original appeals took two years to be decided, the calendar for the full-panel appeal is scheduled to occur fairly quickly.

Defense attorneys have a Dec. 15 deadline to file briefs. The prosecution responds in January, and oral arguments are scheduled for Feb. 13 in Atlanta.

We in the Cuban Five solidarity movement must prepare now and use every day in the coming weeks to get the word out to the people about the Cuban Five’s existence and their struggle for justice.

Now, more than ever the political struggle is absolutely critical to give full weight to the legal battle that the Five and their attorneys are heroically undertaking.

The National Committee to Free the Cuban Five, in discussion with Cuban Five activists in Europe, Latin America and in the United States, made an important decision:

To launch a Five Heroes Freedom Fund, with the goal of raising \$250,000.

Our aim is more than just a second Full-Page Ad in the New York Times, although that will be part of the effort. What we need is a fund that meets the needs of a full-scale, all-out fight for justice and their liberation.

We believe \$250,000 is what is needed for a media and organizing

strategy that will break down the information blockade in the United States that has surrounded this case. It is imperative that we all give it our greatest effort.

The Fund will be used:

1. To contract the services of a progressive, professional media agency. This will allow us to take advantage of every legal and political development in the case, and to use those developments to spread the news of the Cuban Five through the national, international and local media. It will also enable us to develop news stories for the media.
2. To organize for the oral arguments hearing on February 13 in Atlanta. We will invite key prominent Jurists to witness and report on the oral arguments, as we did in Miami. The presence of international and national jurists last year in Miami had a big impact in the press. They returned home with first-hand accounts to build support in their own legal community and general public. The Legal community throughout the United States must be made aware of the historic importance in winning justice for the Cuban Five.
3. To develop all the literature and material that the committees can use to make the Five’s presence visible throughout the United States, especially in major cities like New York City, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Atlanta, Boston, Miami, San Francisco, Los Angeles, in law schools and major universities. We want to mass-produce large, color posters, for example, calling for the freedom of these anti-terrorist

activists.

4. To organize events in law schools and other departments for an exposition by legal experts on the case.

5. To place a second full-page ad in the New York Times.

This is all in addition to other large public events that will need to be organized, including in New York and other key cities.

The Fund is not, nor can it be for Legal Defense. The legal and political funds are separate.

We propose, in consultation with those many organizers involved in this struggle, that all progressive forces, especially in the Cuban solidarity movement, work together to organize and build fundraising and political events for the Cuban Five and to meet the formidable but, we believe, entirely attainable \$250,000 goal of the “Five Heroes Freedom Fund.”

It is an uphill battle. But together we can do it! Let’s all keep fighting until our five brothers, Gerardo, Antonio, Ramón, Fernando and René, are free and home in Cuba.

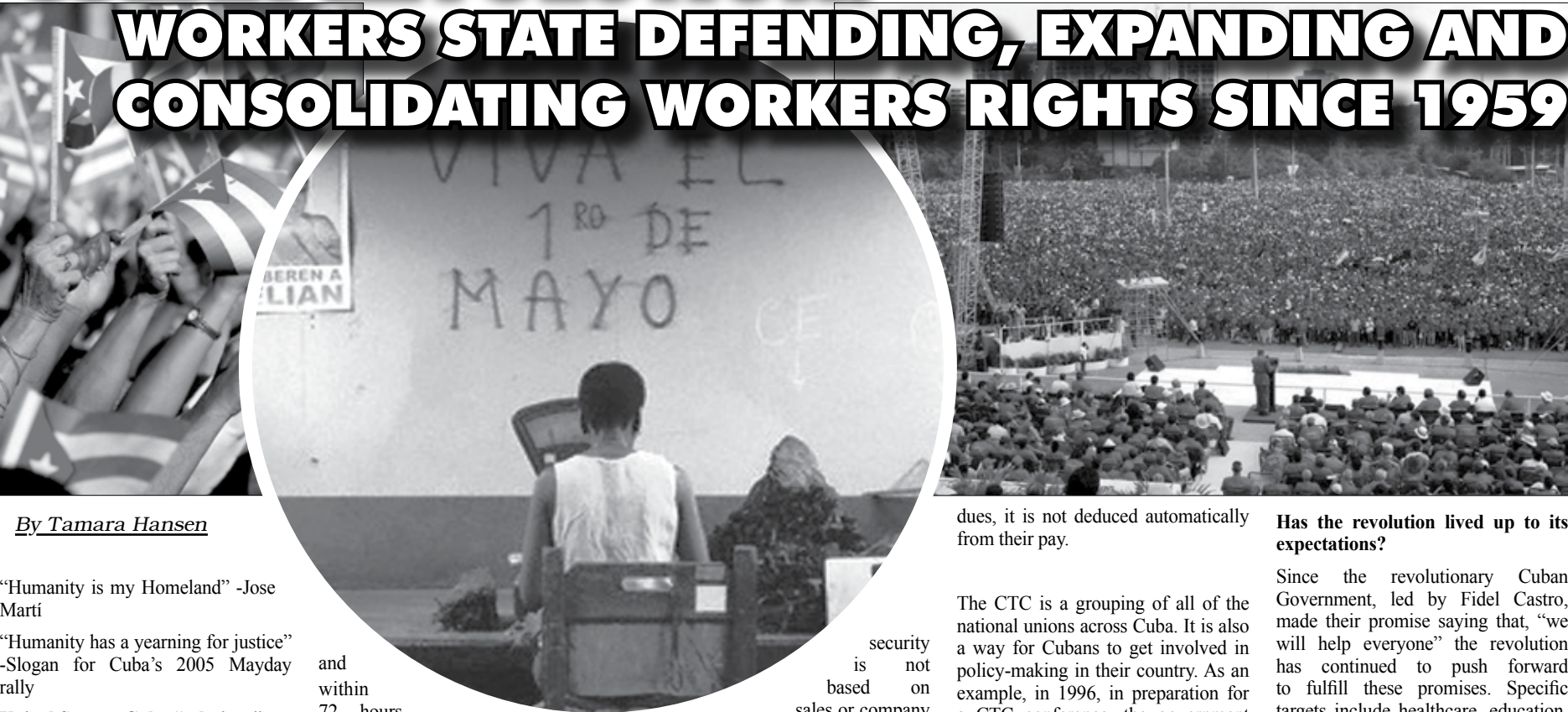
Please visit our website: www.freethefive.org

Make a personal donation. Then see what you can do to organize an event in your community, and solicit your friends.

¡Volverán! They will return!

The National Committee to Free the Cuban Five (U.S.)

CUBAN REVOLUTION: WORKERS STATE DEFENDING, EXPANDING AND CONSOLIDATING WORKERS RIGHTS SINCE 1959



By Tamara Hansen

“Humanity is my Homeland” -Jose Martí

“Humanity has a yearning for justice”
-Slogan for Cuba’s 2005 Mayday rally

United States - Cuba “relations”

The US has been intervening in Cuba basically since 1898 when Spanish colonialists were kicked out of Cuba. Between that time and 1959 the US intervened in Cuba through exploiting Cuba’s resources and creating a large economy in Cuba based mainly on sugar being exported to the United States. This helped maintain Cuba’s economic reliance on the US.

By 1958, American institutions owned 90% of telephone and electricity services, over 50% of the railways, and over 70% of the land in Cuba. In order to maintain these interests in

and within 72 hours the counter-revolutionary Cubans and their US allies were forced to retreat.

Today the US blockade on Cuba continues and is basically an attempt to create poor living conditions for the people of Cuba in hopes that they will lose faith in their revolutionary government or that the people will become weaker through hunger and illness, allowing the US to overthrow the government and possibly invade again.

But the Cuban people remember many of the promises Fidel Castro made

security is not based on sales or company profit making. Instead, during times of little or no work, employing enterprises are in charge of continuing to pay their workers and provide them with any retraining needed to find a new job.

According to Prensa Latina, a Cuban new agency, “The International Labor Organization (ILO)’s regional director for the Americas Daniel Martinez said Cuba was a model for indicators achieved in employment and initiatives to create jobs... he was impressed with the Island’s low unemployment level (1.9 percent), its state policy aimed at eliminating unemployment and social

dues, it is not deduced automatically from their pay.

The CTC is a grouping of all of the national unions across Cuba. It is also a way for Cubans to get involved in policy-making in their country. As an example, in 1996, in preparation for a CTC conference, the government put forward some proposals on how to approach some of the problems caused by the collapse of Cuba’s main trading partner at the time, the Soviet Union. More than 2 million workers across Cuba participated in evaluating the proposals. Two of the proposals submitted by the government for discussion were rejected by the CTC vote and were not adopted into Cuban policy.

The revolution is not over, new gains must continue to be made

Recently a new debate has been opened in Cuba around how to make

Has the revolution lived up to its expectations?

Since the revolutionary Cuban Government, led by Fidel Castro, made their promise saying that, “we will help everyone” the revolution has continued to push forward to fulfill these promises. Specific targets include healthcare, education, workers’ rights, and advancing Cuban society towards becoming more humane, just and dignified. With these targets Cuba has made some amazing accomplishments.

According to Istvan Ojeda Bello’s article in Periodico 26, a local newspaper in Las Tunas, Cuba, “Ironically, the country that supposedly limits the freedom of its citizens is the only one in Latin America where there is not malnutrition. Such a claim was not made by Cuban authorities but by a representative of the UN World Food Program (WFP).” Cuba also has the highest life expectancy, literacy

Cuba, the United States supported a long line of repressive governments in Cuba, which kept the Cuban people in poverty and stole their dignity and pride as human beings. This led to a growing resentment in Cuba towards the United States, which ended in 1959 in a popular revolution.

Only three days after the triumph of the Cuban revolution, in 1959, the Guardian reported, “[Fidel Castro] proposes to nationalize all utilities; to give their working land to tenant farmers, who make up 85 per cent of the farming population; to distribute to the employees of every business in Cuba 30 per cent of the profits; to confiscate all the property of ‘corrupt’ former Government officials; to modernize the island’s industries and begin a huge rural housing and electrification project.”

Almost immediately the new revolutionary government began to follow through with these plans. The agrarian reform laws were quickly implemented with Fidel announcing, “What I can say today is that when the Agrarian Law is entirely applied, two million Cubans will have their income increased and they will become buyers in the domestic market.” Only a year later in 1960 the Cuban government nationalized US corporate assets in Cuba.

US starts Blockade of Cuba

In retaliation the United States stopped importing sugar from Cuba, which was vital to Cuba’s economy. A year later in 1961 the US implemented a full economic blockade against Cuba refusing any trade. During this time the US and counter-revolutionary Cubans who had fled to the US during the revolution, tried to intervene not only through squashing Cuba’s economy but also militarily with the Bay of Pigs invasion. However, the invasion failed

to them, one of which he made upon entering the province of Pinar Del Rio after the triumph of the Revolution: “I know there are many people in need. I know there are many who are ill who have no hospital to go to, that there are many children who have no schools to attend, that there are many families who go hungry, but we will not help one or two people, we will help everyone.”

Does Cuba work for workers?

After Bastista fled, the revolution had only just begun. From 1959 to today the revolutionary process continues to unfold in Cuba. A report published in 2002 by a US delegation of “employment lawyers, neutrals and trade unionists” to Cuba (sponsored by the National Lawyers Guild Labor & Employment Committee and the U.S. Health Care Trade Union Committee) outlines some very interesting information about workers’ rights in Cuba and the sharp contrast between workers’ rights in the United States and Cuba.

Something the delegation from the US noticed was that the relationship between employees and management is significantly different in Cuba than it is in the United States or Canada. They found that there were two main goals in the workplace for both employees and management, which was to improve production and to improve workers’ lives.

The report explains that “without the profit motive which drives management in the United States to try to generate as much income as possible for shareholders, rather than spend money on the workers, Cuban management and labor interests tend to converge.”

Another difference was Cuban workers’ employment security. Unlike in the United States or Canada, job

security projects.”

In May of last year Cuba’s minimum wage was increased by more than 100 percent from about \$5 to about \$11 US per month. More than 1.6 million workers benefited from the raise. But at the time several million higher-level employees did not receive any benefits, until later last year in November when it was announced that higher-level employees would also be getting a pay raise.

The fact that Cubans earn in one month what is considered about an hour’s wage by people in the US and Canada is something the media uses quite often to try to discredit the gains made since the Cuban revolution. However we must look at how wages break down for people living in Cuba to better understand what \$11 per month means.

According to an Associated Press article from November 23rd 2005, “Although low by international standards, Cuban salary figures can be misleading in a country where most people do not pay for their housing, utilities or transportation. Health services and education are free, other government services are heavily subsidized and everyone receives about a third of their food each month for less than \$3.”

Unions in Cuba

According to Guillermo Ferriol Molina the Director of Labor and Social Issues for the CTC (Central Of Cuban Workers), “Approximately 97 to 98 percent of all Cuban workers are members of one of the nineteen national unions, all of which are grouped in the CTC.”

Members’ dues fund unions in Cuba; dues are usually about 1% of a workers wages. Workers voluntarily join the unions and also voluntarily pay their

the revolution strong and protect the gains it has made for workers across Cuba. On November 24th 2005 Cuban President Fidel Castro declared, “We are well aware, that today there is new class, in virtue of the phenomena that the Revolution has had to go through, particularly in the years of the Special Period... I can assure you with absolute certainty that this battle against waste, theft, the illegal diverting of resources and other generalized vices has been won in advance... It is the organized masses, ideas, the support of the people that give us the confidence in victory, and, just like we have said that the Revolution today is invincible in military terms and is seeking economic invulnerability, we can also assure its political invulnerability by guaranteeing that the new generations are better than us, more capable than us.”

Of course while battling some internal problem Cuba must also continue to face and defend itself against the outside world. Last week on April 25th 2006 Us President George Bush defended the US’s illegal and criminal economic blockade on Cuba and the American travel ban on Cuba saying, “trade with the country enables a tyrant to stay in power.”

It is obvious the rest of the world disagrees with this statement. First many both inside and outside Cuba support the leadership of Fidel Castro, and if they do not they at least believe that Cuba has the right to self-determination and choosing its own government. Secondly, the blockade has been widely condemned repeatedly at the United Nations.

In November 2005, 182 countries voted to condemn the US blockade on Cuba with only four voting in support of the cruel and genocidal blockade.

rate and number of doctors in Latin America.

Interestingly, Cuba even has more doctors per capita than the United States. In 2000, the US had 279 doctors per ten thousand while Cuba soared above them with 582 doctors per ten thousand. What is the quality of these doctors you might ask? According to a report by the World Health Organization done in that same year, out of 191 countries Cuba’s overall health system ranked 37th while the United States sat below Cuba at 39th. At the same time out of 191 countries the United States spends the most money per capita while Cuba was one of the countries that spent the least at 118th out of 191 countries.

In terms of education, Cuba has made drastic gains since the revolution. Cuba’s Ministry of Foreign affairs website explains that, “In 1953 Cuba had only about 6.5 million inhabitants; more than half a million children had no school and more than 2 million people were completely or functionally illiterate. Only half of the school population went on to secondary school; there were 10,000 unemployed teachers; about 550,000 children aged between 6 and 14, almost half the total number, did not go to school. The population over the age of 15 had an average educational level of less than three years of primary school.”

Today illiteracy has been eradicated in Cuba. The Cuban people, Cuban workers, have universal access to education and students who want to go to school can do so for free! All of the way up to getting their PhD!

These are some of the important gains that Cubans are most proud of. They have fought long and hard, and over come many difficulties to make these gains and continue to surpass difficulties today to make greater gains for future generations.



Che Guevara's Legacy

for Social Justice Movements in Latin America & the World



**An Evening of
Music, Presentations
& Discussion**

**Sun May 14
6:30PM**

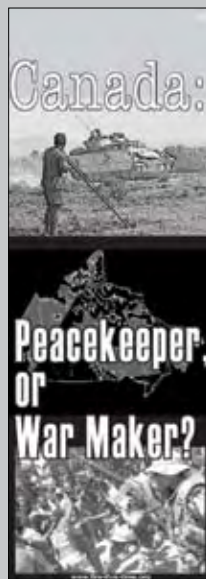
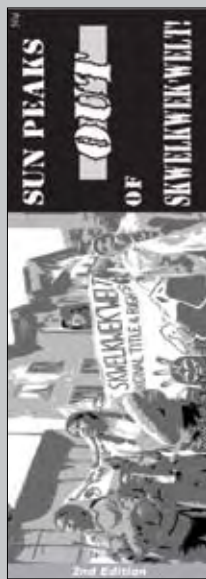
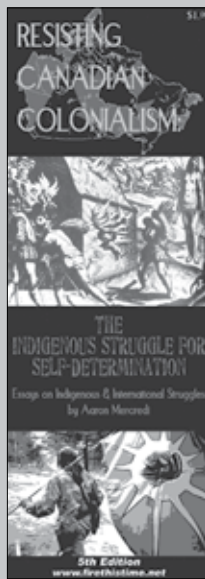
**Unitarian Church
949 W 49th Ave (@Oak St)**

Admission By Donation
All proceeds will go to helping send young people from BC on volunteer trips to Cuba

**Organized by:
Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC)
Unitarian Church Social Justice Committee
Free the Cuban 5 Committee Vancouver**

www.vancubasolidarity.com

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**1319 Commercial Drive
604-253-6666**

Call for a Vancouver and B.C.-wide ad-hoc Coalition to demand:

HANDS OFF VENEZUELA AND CUBA!

Desperately bogged down in its war for Empire in Iraq, the Bush administration is escalating its threats and campaigns to undermine, subvert, provoke, and overthrow the government of Venezuela, while strengthening the economic blockade of Cuba, tightening the travel ban to Cuba, and refusing to extradite vicious anti-Cuba terrorist killers like Luis Posada Carriles.

In the United States, an ad-hoc Hands Off Venezuela, Hands Off Cuba Coalition of 40 organizations has been formed. They chose Saturday May 20 as the day of march and rally in Washington D.C.

In British Columbia we invite anti-war/anti-occupation groups and organizations, peace groups, unions, Cuba and Venezuela solidarity groups, Latin American and third world groups, and all progressive organizations throughout B.C. to come together and discuss building, over the next two months to march in Vancouver on May 20th demanding: Hands off Venezuela and Cuba!

In this march and rally we will oppose U.S. aggression against Venezuela and Cuba and defend the sovereignty of both nations. The action will also demand that Washington normalize relations with Havana, and immediately release the five Cuban heroes and revolutionaries held in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges.

The first organizing meeting for sponsors and endorsers will be on Wednesday, April 19 at 6:30pm in the "Learning Resource Room" of the Britannia Community Centre (Napier St. and Commercial Dr, just past the entrance to the Britannia Library).

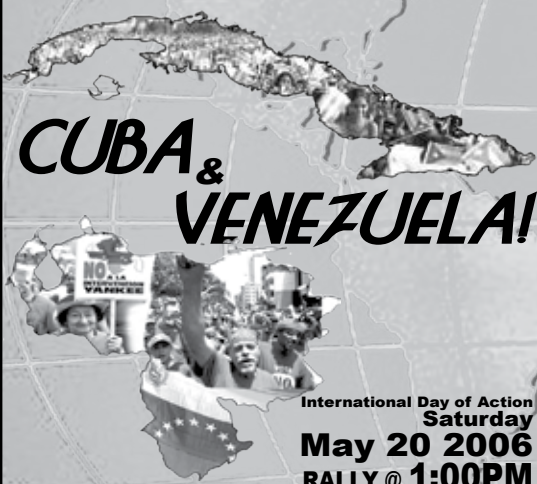
FOR MORE INFORMATION:

bcmay20demo@yahoo.ca

CALL-OUT ENDORSED BY:

Hospital Employees Union BC, Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church, Canadian Cuban Friendship Association (CCFA), Pastors for Peace, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), Capilano Students Union, UBC Social Justice Centre, Tim Louis former Vancouver City Councillor, Lisa Barrett, Bowen Island Councilor, Internationalist Bolivarian Circles, Hands off Venezuela, Bolivia Solidarity Committee, La Surda Latin American Collective, Latinos in Action, Victoria Goods for Cuba, Victoria Solidarity with Venezuela, Free the Cuban 5 committee - Vancouver, Mobilization

HANDS OFF



**International Day of Action
Saturday
May 20 2006
RALLY @ 1:00PM
Vancouver Art Gallery (Robson St. Side)**

MARCH @ 1:30PM

**Organized by:
Hands Off Cuba & Venezuela May 20 Coalition
bcmay20demo@yahoo.ca | 778-882-5223 | 604-327-4320**

Endorsed by:
Hospital Employees Union BC, Social Justice Committee of the Unitarian Church, Canadian Cuban Friendship Association (CCFA), Pastors for Peace, Vancouver Communities in Solidarity with Cuba (VCSC), Capilano Students Union, UBC Social Justice Centre, Tim Louis former Vancouver City Councillor, Lisa Barrett, Bowen Island Councilor, Internationalist Bolivarian Circles, Hands off Venezuela, Bolivia Solidarity Committee, La Surda Latin American Collective, Latinos in Action, Victoria Goods for Cuba, Victoria Solidarity with Venezuela, Free the Cuban 5 committee, Vancouver Mobilization Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Republic Newspaper, Free the Cuban 5 Cttee Courtenay, MAWO-SFU Club, World Community Development Education Society, K1a How Yah FM - on Co-op Radio 102.7FM, Coalition Against War On the People of Iraq and Internationally (CAWOPI), Fire This Time Newspaper, Iranian Cttee Against War, El Bus de las Siete - Coop Radio 102.7FM, La Vanguardia Newspaper, Youth Third World Alliance (Y3WA), Kanadian Posi-Kids, Collective Perspectives - Coop Radio 102.7FM, Langara Students United Against War and Occupation (LSUAWO), Our Community Bikes, Douglas College Anti-War Club, Code Pink Women for Peace, Milenio Newspaper

Against War and Occupation (MAWO), Republic Newspaper, Free the Cuban 5 Cttee Courtenay, MAWO-SFU Club, World Community Development Education Society, K1a How Yah FM - on Co-op Radio 102.7FM, Coalition Against War On the People of Iraq and Internationally (CAWOPI), Fire This Time Newspaper, Iranian Cttee Against War, El Bus de las Siete - Coop Radio 102.7FM, La Vanguardia Newspaper, Youth Third World Alliance (Y3WA), Kanadian Posi-Kids, Collective Perspectives - Coop Radio 102.7FM, Langara Students United Against War and Occupation (LSUAWO), Our Community Bikes, Douglas College Anti-War Club, Code Pink Women for Peace, Milenio Newspaper



MAYDAY 2006 EVENTS and ACTIONS

BC

VANCOUVER

April 29

Celebration commemorating the International Workers' Struggle and Migrant Labour & Immigrant workers Resistance...

7:30 PM- 1 AM

DINNER WILL BE SERVED. DJ'S AFTER 10 PM.

CAPRI HALL, 3925 Fraser (corner East 23rd Ave)

5-10\$ suggested donation- includes dinner

Beer and wine sold during dinner (7:30-8:30 pm) and after performances (10pm onwards)

Organized by: S.T.A.T.U.S. Coalition
Vancouver, BC

May 1

International Day of the Worker

Globalize Workers Rights

March and Rally

Saturday April 29th
11am Vancouver Art Gallery

Rally at 12 noon

Vancouver Public Library

Organized by:
Vancouver and District Labour Council
Vancouver, BC

May Day March & Rally

Gather at Main & 17th Avenue (west-side corner)

5:00 PM

*Expose and oppose the exploitation of migrant

Organized by SIKLAB-Vancouver, Filipino Nurses Support Group, Grassroots Women, and the Bus Riders' Union

participating organizations of the International League of Peoples' Struggle (ILPS)
Vancouver, BC

May 1

Mayday Street Party & March
1pm Centennial Square

Organized by Victoria Mayday Committee Victoria BC

AB

EDMONTON

May 1

May Day for Medicare March
5:30 pm

Winston Churchill Square (across from City Hall)

March to Legislature at 6pm
Edmonton, Alberta

May 1

Labour, Arts & Youth - Street Jam
Approximately 8pm (after May Day for Medicare Rally)

MB

WINNIPEG

May 1

MAY DAY LABOUR FAIR
7:30 A.M. TO 4:00 P.M.

Main Floor, Union Centre 275
Broadway

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Organized by the Manitoba Federation of Labour.

ON

TORONTO

Mayworks Toronto

Festival of Working People and the Arts.

Series of Events:

April 28th - May 7th

www.mayworks.ca

email: admin@mayworks.ca

Mayday March and Rally:

Oppose continuing state attacks on workers' rights!

Uphold and defend the rights of all working peoples!

Saturday April 29

12noon

Dundas Square (Dundas and Yonge Street).

For more information email reclaimmayday@gmail.com or phone (416) 795-7516.

Endorsers: United Steelworkers Local 1005, CUPE 3903, IWW, No One is Illegal, OCAP, SIKLAB (Filipino Migrant Workers' Organization) -Ontario, Philippine Women Centre, People's Front, International League of People's Struggle (ILPS-Canada) and many others...

OTTAWA

Mayworks Ottawa

Festival of working people and the arts

April 28 - May 5

www.mayworksottawa.ca

QC

MONTREAL

"DayShift!": A Day in the Park with the Immigrant Workers' Centre

Saturday April 29th

2pm to 6pm

Parc Kent

On Neiges Blvd at the corner of Appleton/Plamondon

For more info :

514-342-2111

iwc_cti@yahoo.ca

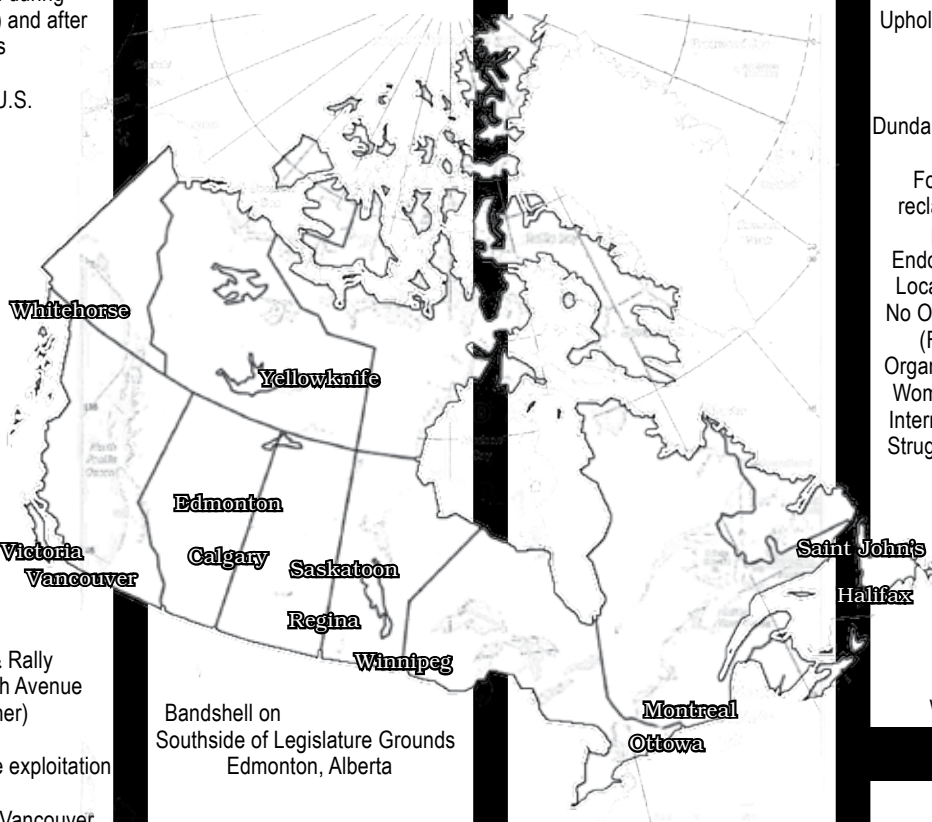
"NightShift!": 1 year of Worker Solidarity

Saturday April 29th

8pm

Main Hall, 5390 St-Laurent

for more information: 859-9092



CALGARY

May 1st

International Workers' Day Rally
4:30pm

Harry Hays Building (220 - 4 Ave. SE)

Calgary, Alberta

Organized by: Calgary and District Labour Council (CDLC) and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW)

May 1

MAY DAY MARCH

6:30 P.M.

Assemble at City Hall

Organized by Winnipeg Labour Council.

For more information contact Glenn Michalchuk at 589-7840.

Winnipeg, Manitoba