

PEOPLE'S VOICE

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CARNEY, TELL TRUMP:

NO WAR ON CUBA!

Across Canada, people are calling on Ottawa to stand up to Washington
and stop the US drive to war on Cuba

PHOTO: BRENT ANDERSON

STOP DOUG FORD'S HEALTHCARE TRAIN WRECK

Thousands of healthcare advocates
across Ontario help build massive protest
against privatization

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ATTACK ON RIGHT TO STRIKE MUST BE FOUGHT

The Canadian government is looking at
limiting the right to strike - time for a
Labour Bill of Rights

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CLC CONVENTION PRODUCES MIXED RESULTS

The CLC convention showed international
solidarity, but the needed mass struggle
still hasn't materialized

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WASHINGTON'S RED SCARE REDUX

The US is moving back to the days
of McCarthyism, with sweeping
investigations of Cuba solidarity groups

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Pages from our past...

The Worker Vol 5 No 189 ~ June 3, 1926

Concentration of wealth increases unemployment

A.A. HEAPS, MP

The amalgamation, the concentration of wealth means that less help is being employed, more production is taking place, and with this, and increasing and more menacing unemployment problem.

What has been individual production in the same years as quoted above?

Annual production per wage employee was \$5,196 in 1917, \$6,008 in 1918, \$6,216 in 1919, \$7,164 in 1920, \$6,758 in 1921, \$6,230 in 1922 and \$6,222 in 1923.

These figures indicate that if the index figures of the cost of commodities in the various years was taken into consideration, there was an actual increase in quantity production during the seven years of approximately 40 percent, by each individual employee.

Now, how have wages fared in the period?

Annual wages per employee were \$760 in 1917, \$878 in 1918, \$938 in 1919, \$1,109 in 1920, \$1,002 in 1921, \$939 in 1922 and \$959 in 1923.

If the cost of living figures are taken into consideration then real wages, as measured in the form of purchasing power by the worker, have increased from 1917 to 1923 by 11 percent. In other words, although the wage earner increased their individual output by 40 percent, their wages during the same period have only increased by 11 percent.

The amount of capital employed in industry was \$2.69 billion in 1917, \$2.93 billion in 1918, \$3.1 billion in 1919, \$3.37 billion in 1920, \$3.19 billion in 1921, \$3.24 billion in 1922 and \$3.38 billion in 1923.

These figures prove the decreasing ratio of wages to production. Between 1917 and 1923, the increased amount of capital employed in industry was \$684 million, or an increase of 25 percent. However, the number of workers employed in these industries was approximately 23.7 percent greater in 1917 than 1923.

It is evident that the trend of modern industry today is for less wages to be paid, less help to be employed, and therefore resulting in an ever-increasing array of unemployed.

The fact is that we have almost reached the stage of saturation in our productivity, yet in spite of this over-production there is so much under-consumption and want in the midst of plenty.

It's to this problem that the labour movement will have to direct itself and its energies in order to confront the problems now confronting it. ■

Notes: The author, Abraham Albert Heaps was a member of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF) who served as MP for Winnipeg North from 1925 to 1940.

Written just three years prior to the onset of the Great Depression, Heaps' article shows how the accumulation and concentration of wealth in Canada was driving unemployment and, eventually, deep crisis. The dynamics he wrote about are part of the fabric of capitalism, and they can be seen today – with the same effects.

**As Carney funds the war economy, thousands of care workers throughout NS continue their strike for living wages, public services**

JUDY HAIVEN

It's all well and good that young men can crowd into the trades and prepare to train for the 100,000 jobs that PM Carney promises will be up for grabs in the next five years. But we know who those jobs are for.

Today more than 1.6 million Canadians work in the construction industry. Just over 81,000 Canadians draw a paycheque from working for the 600 or so private companies that manufacture weapons, armaments, bombs, armoured vehicles and ammunition.

What's your guess for the number of women employed in these jobs – be it in construction or the arms producers?

In construction, only 13.6 percent are women – mostly in office roles. In Nova Scotia, barely 3 percent of onsite construction workers are female. In the war industries, only 27 percent are female, 17 percent in the higher paid STEM or professional jobs.

Why are there so few women in these industries? I would like to say it's because most women refuse to support war. Indeed, as many pundits have stated over the years, women tend to treat war seriously – as the killing machine it is.

For example, in 2010 the Fédération des femmes du Québec (FFQ) produced an antiwar ad on YouTube. The shows a fictional mother and daughter packing the girl's duffel bag. The mother says her son was killed in Afghanistan's war; another son came home with psychological problems. Now she despairs because her third child, her daughter, has enlisted. They pack a rifle and a bra. The mother says, "If I had known that in giving them life I was going to supply cannon fodder, maybe I wouldn't have had any children."

As if to emphasize the FFQ's opposition to war, earlier that same year (2010) the organization took the stand to oppose Israeli apartheid and endorse BDS – Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israeli-made products and services.

Likewise, Canadian Voice of Women for Peace, in coalition with other peace groups (typically female-led) rallied on Parliament Hill in the wake of Carney's announcements about ramping up pro-war production. Their rallying cry was "Hell No to NATO's 5%! Cut Military Spending and Fund a Green, Care Economy."

We know why women, typically, do not support war. It has to do with caring for other adults, teens and children – that's what a lot of women do without reserve. Never mind war, let's talk about manufacturing ammunition, guns – even crossbows. We know these are weapons that kill women who are wives, girlfriends or even acquaintances. From October 2024 to March 2025 seven women in Nova Scotia were killed by their male partners or former partners.

And that doesn't begin to account for the murders of 13 Nova Scotia women and 8 men shot to death in a weekend by one gunman in Portapique in 2020.

I'd like to think women typically don't choose to build war toys – or go to war.

But the real reason women tend not to work in the war industry, and in construction, is that the workplaces are unfriendly – even hostile – to women. It is a combination of shift work (that creates major problems for finding childcare), differential pay between typical men's vs women's jobs, poor working conditions, sexual harassment and sometimes violence at work.

Politicians and policy makers have created report after report about Canada's armed forces as black holes for sexism, and sexual assault of women in the forces. Between 2015 and 2022, there were three major external reports, including 2022's report by former Supreme Court Justice Louis Arbour, that examined women's situation in the Canadian armed forces.

Yet the PM insists that Canada's future lies in manufacturing weapons, LAV's, rifles, ammunition and drones. These are built to be sold to the US, to Israel, and to every dirty regime that wants to make war – often on its own people. The weapons will also be off-loaded onto Canada's military that has to "ramp up" for our role in NATO.

The PM's sister plan is to ramp up and train Canadians for jobs in construction and the trades. He says 100,000 workers will be needed in the next five years to build houses, apartment buildings and roads, and exploit development in the mines. Women are not very attracted to these jobs. In fact, 70.8 percent of women leave the trades during the first two years of their apprenticeships. There is the sexism, the misogyny, the nasty comments, the relentless disrespect that permeates men in the trades. All well documented.

As Ontario's Skilled Trades College site claims, "[stereotypes and biases] are the biggest culprits as to why there are still few women in trades. There is overwhelming evidence that women are often the target of stereotypes and bias in the workplace. It doesn't help that some employers don't do enough to eliminate this bias, as women in trades may be assigned lower-skilled roles or get fewer opportunities."

So, what are women to do?

A recent check on the Indeed job site told me what was out there for women. Of course, these jobs are also available to men – but how many men would settle for earning \$18 an hour to be a tour guide at the Nova Scotia Legislature? How many men want to earn \$25 an hour for clerical and reception work at the province's Department of Justice Victims' Services office? Women, especially if they are young, can usually land minimum wage work as servers in bars and restaurants. Then there are tips.

In Nova Scotia, the living wage is \$27.60 an hour – for Halifax it is \$29.40.

Women who work full time in child care earn about \$21 an hour – and they require a one- or two-year ECE certificate. That works out to \$38,000 per year. With two more years at university and a Bachelor of Education degree, beginning school teachers earn nearly \$57,000 a year to start, with the possibility of earning \$70 – \$90,000 after five years in the job. Clerical work in lawyers' and accountants' offices pays \$20 – \$23 per hour. Construction offices pay \$20 per hour for office help. Home support workers that cook and clean for disabled and elderly clients in their homes earn between \$19 and \$22 an hour, or \$34 – \$40,000 a year.

Now we come to the 3,100 people, 88 percent female, who work as continuing care assistants personal care workers, therapeutic workers, housekeepers and dietary aides in long-term care. Members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees have been on strike for more than a month at 34 nursing homes throughout NS. They earn from \$18.77 to \$25.70 per hour, after a six-month course at the community college. The lower figure – the \$18.77 quoted in news articles about the ongoing

■ CARING ECONOMY, PG 10

PEOPLE'S VOICE**WORKING CLASS MEDIA IN A CAPITALIST WORLD**

Join us for a discussion with the editor of People's Voice newspaper about the importance of independent working class media in a time of escalating austerity, environmental degradation and war.

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JUNE THREE VICTORIA 7PM 620 JUDAH ST. UNIT 10A
JUNE FOUR NANAIMO TO BE DETERMINED

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LABOUR STANDS WITH CUBA

All out to end the blockade and stop the US drive to war!



CAM SCOTT

Canada's unions spoke as one at the recently concluded 31st convention of the Canadian Labour Congress, voting almost unanimously in support of an emergency resolution in solidarity with Cuba. The resolution passed with Deputy Head of Mission of the Cuban Embassy in Canada, Dany Tur de la Concepción, in the room to hear the proceedings as chants of "¡Cuba Sí, bloqueo no!" rose from the floor.

Compiling language from several resolutions submitted from across the country, the CLC resolved to demand immediate action from the Canadian government to support the people of Cuba through solidarity aid, to push for an end to the ongoing US blockade, and to publicly affirm Canada's commitment to "the principles of sovereignty, non-intervention, self-determination of peoples and human rights."

Beyond these lobbying commitments, the CLC also committed to deepen its affiliates' practical working relationships with the Cuban people through pertinent bodies on the island and in Canada. These include the Workers' Central Union of Cuba (CTC) and the Canadian Network on Cuba, which comprises over two dozen member groups across Canada and works with the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples (ICAP) on its political and material aid campaigns.

Cuba's salutary role in the world was clear from the debate, where delegates spoke of Cuba's medical assistance to the Caribbean and beyond. Multiple speakers were freshly returned from labour brigades to the island, where Canadian trade unionists have witnessed firsthand what a society outside the profit system can accomplish for itself, even under decades of economic pressure. To this end, delegates spoke powerfully against Donald Trump's new sanctions and the unfinished anti-Cuba vendetta of the US right, pledging tens of thousands of dollars to the CNC's ongoing material aid campaigns from the convention floor.

No War on Cuba

This emergency resolution builds on a number of high-profile campaigns for Cuba. On May 8, MP Alexandre Boulerice presented a parliamentary petition initiated by the Canadian Network on Cuba to the House of Commons. At present, the Canadian government has one month to respond to the more than 12,500 signatories who have called on Ottawa to refuse participation in military and economic aggression against Latin America, reaffirm the Caribbean as a Zone of Peace, and actively oppose the US blockade of Cuba.

The CNC originated these demands against the backdrop of the illegal kidnapping of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and First Lady Cilia Flores on January 3. But after Trump's executive order of January 29, declaring Cuba "an unusual

and extraordinary threat" and preventing any fuel from reaching the island, the petition quickly became a tool for urgent solidarity with the Cuban people under renewed threat.

These sequences are closely related, and one predicts the other. By all accounts, the US continues to entertain the idea of a military operation against Cuba, and as the blockade pushes Cubans to the brink, Marco Rubio and his hawkish conspirators continue to search for the right pretense. This week, for example, the US Department of Justice moved to indict former president Raúl Castro for his involvement in the 1996 downing of two planes associated with the anti-Cuban terrorist group Brothers to the Rescue.

Not only did this event take place 30 years ago, but General Puentes of the Cuban Air Defence Force and the pilots responsible were already indicted without extradition in 2003. If anything, the arbitrariness and outdatedness of the case against the 94-year-old Castro only speaks to the blamelessness of Cuba on the world stage. Clearly the US and the Miamian right are the terrorists in this equation, but Trump and Rubio's eagerness to duplicate their Venezuelan heist in Cuba still requires a tenuously legal target.

As this farce proceeds, Axios has falsely reported that 300 Cuban drones are hovering over the US Naval Base at Guantánamo Bay, preparing to attack at any moment. Any competent student of the region knows that the base at Guantánamo is in fact an illegal US occupation of Cuban soil, for which the revolutionary government has refused a modest rent since 1959. Even so, Cuba has largely left the base alone, and these scarcely believable stories of Cuban aggression clearly intend to pave the way for a military operation or outright invasion.

As Canadian travel advisories and cancelled flights to Cuba conspire to deprive the island of badly needed currency and concerned eyewitnesses, it's fair enough to say that our government is passively participating in the heightened US blockade.

We've heard Prime Minister Mark Carney's shameful response to US aggression in both Venezuela and Iran, and his deafening silence on Trump's collective punishment of the Cuban people. As Canadian travel advisories and cancelled flights to Cuba conspire to deprive the island of badly needed currency and concerned eyewitnesses, it's fair enough to say that our government is passively participating in the heightened US blockade. And while Canadian companies withdraw from Cuba under threat of new sanctions, Carney's

■ STOP THE US WAR ON CUBA, PG 10



Communist Party calls on Carney: Speak now against US military invasion of Cuba!

US imperialism is escalating its aggression against Cuba in the form of a genocidal oil blockade, fresh sanctions and threats of military invasion. Now Trump and Rubio have manufactured a pretext by indicting Army General Raúl Castro over the 1996 downing of two aircraft from the CIA-backed terrorist group Brothers to the Rescue.

That group repeatedly violated Cuban airspace despite more than 25 formal warnings from Cuba to US authorities and the International Civil Aviation Organization. Cuba acted in lawful self-defence under the UN Charter. This indictment is a political provocation with no moral or legal legitimacy.

The Communist Party of Canada condemns this cynical assault on Cuban sovereignty in the strongest terms.

The Canadian government's response has been a disgrace. The Prime Minister postures about sovereignty, yet his government has refused, despite repeated media questions, to condemn US military threats against Cuba. Rather than stand with a close country fac-

ing the same expansionist imperialist power that menaces our own independence, Ottawa has deepened Cuba's isolation: issuing travel warnings, suspending flights, channelling token aid to NGOs instead of the elected government, and maintaining silence as the blockade strangles the population.

This is complicity.

A majority of Canadians, as a Nanos poll confirms, want Ottawa to demand an end to Washington's criminal energy blockade, regardless of the cost to US-Canada relations. The government's refusal to speak out is a surrender of Canada's own sovereignty.

Cuba is not a threat to the United States, besides being the threat of a good example: a socialist revolution that lifted millions out of poverty, delivered world-class healthcare and education, and proved that a people can thrive free from US domination. The Communist Party of Canada demands that the Canadian government immediately and unequivocally speak out against the threats of military invasion, break its complicity with the blockade, and send oil to Cuba.

Long live the Cuban Revolution! ■

May 28: Ontario gets on board to stop Ford's hospital privatization train wreck

PV ONTARIO BUREAU

The Doug Ford government is redirecting more than \$1 billion per year in Ontario public funding to for-profit corporations to privatize healthcare, rather than use those funds to restore and improve public hospitals that have been pushed into deficits.

Ontario hospitals and long-term care homes pay for-profit staffing agencies nearly \$1 billion per year for nurses and PSWs. The Ford government announced nearly \$300 million for 61 new private surgical and diagnostic clinics, on top of previous \$27 million annual funding increases.

As part of the ongoing fight against privatization and to save public healthcare, the Ontario Health Coalition and its local groups organized a massive protest outside the provincial legislature for May 28. Calling on people across Ontario to "Get on board to stop Ford's hospital privatization train wreck," the coalition mobilized groups to come to Toronto by train, to rally at Union Station and march to Queen's Park.

As of press time, organizers were expecting several thousand protesters.

Jack Copple, the Communist Party's Ontario organizer, told People's Voice that Doug Ford's push for further healthcare privatization marks "another escalation in his pro-corporate war against working people — the ongoing cuts to public healthcare will not improve wait times or health outcomes for working people, and instead are only intended to further fatten corporate profits."

"Ford's most recent attacks on Medicare in Ontario are some of his most egregious, funneling hundreds of millions of dollars into for-profit private clinics across the prov-

ince," said Copple. "Some of these clinics, based on their size on the services offered, will even de facto operate as private hospitals — a major escalation of Ford's privatization scheme."

This latest escalation follows decades of underfunding of Ontario's healthcare system from successive Liberal and Conservative governments. The system is now stretched to its limit and has the lowest level of per capita healthcare funding in the country, setting the stage for the increasing privatization happening now.

But instead of increasing healthcare funding, Ford is now demanding further cuts to the struggling public system to address their "fiscal mismanagement," and is threatening takeover of hospitals which are unwilling to further compromise patient care.

"This is the same brazen neoliberal playbook Ford is using to impose his regressive agenda on education," Copple notes. "First, impose billions of inflation-adjusted cuts to create a crisis of 'fiscal mismanagement'; second, use the manufactured crisis as a pretext to seize control; third, privatize assets and divert public dollars into private hands."

In the face of this, however, the labour and people's movements are continuing to escalate their fightback against Ford and his privatization agenda, to prevent further erosion of Medicare, which is under attack across the country.

Copple says this is key.

"It is worth remembering that organized public pressure has been able to halt Ford's regressive attacks in the past, and coordinated fightback can win gains for working people in Ontario. By uniting together, the

■ UNITED FIGHT CAN WIN, PG 10

EDITORIAL

STOP THE NEW ATTACK ON THE RIGHT TO STRIKE: FIGHT FOR A LABOUR BILL OF RIGHTS!

The transportation monopolies – ports, railways and airlines – have been lobbying the federal government to defang the right to strike. Public submissions from the Railway Association of Canada delivered to the consultations of Employment and Social Development Canada have openly called for changes in the Canada Labour Code to “reduce the likelihood of work stoppages.”

It was recently reported that the federal government is seriously considering altering the Canada Labour Code in line with these calls, to weaken the right to strike.

The last two years have seen a surge of workers in federally regulated industries using their right to strike to bring corporate monopolies back to the table. This includes longshore workers and dockworkers in Montreal and BC, Air Canada flight attendants, rail workers at CPKC and CN, and Canada Post sorters and carriers.

In every case the Canada Industrial Relations Board ordered these workers back to work through section 107 of the Labour Code. But still the monopolies are not satisfied, and they now want their friends in Ottawa to prevent strikes from happening in the first place.

This is proof that unity in action is the way forward. But the right to strike is not guaranteed through tripartite lobbying, only through the organised struggle of workers.

The entire labour movement and all workers, beyond federally regulated industries, must defend the right to strike. The fact that corporate monopolies feel empowered enough to even suggest taking it away gives an urgency and demands an all-out response – this is a call to action.

The federal government’s willingness to bow to corporate demands to weaken the right to strike is not a strategy to defend Canadian sovereignty or workers in the face of US aggression. On the contrary, these policies are lifted directly from the anti-union playbook of Donald Trump, and they are the same kind of policies that pro-corporate forces will impose through the upcoming USMCA update.

Attacking workers’ rights does not strengthen Canadian independence – it only weakens our ability to resist the corporate agenda coming from both sides of the border.

A key fight for the working-class movement is to win a Labour Bill of Rights that would enshrine the right of all workers to take strike action, including political and social strikes.

Workers don’t need tripartite negotiations that will only benefit quarterly profits while undermining collective bargaining. They don’t need prolonged lawsuits or court cases that take years to conclude while their day-to-day conditions are eroded.

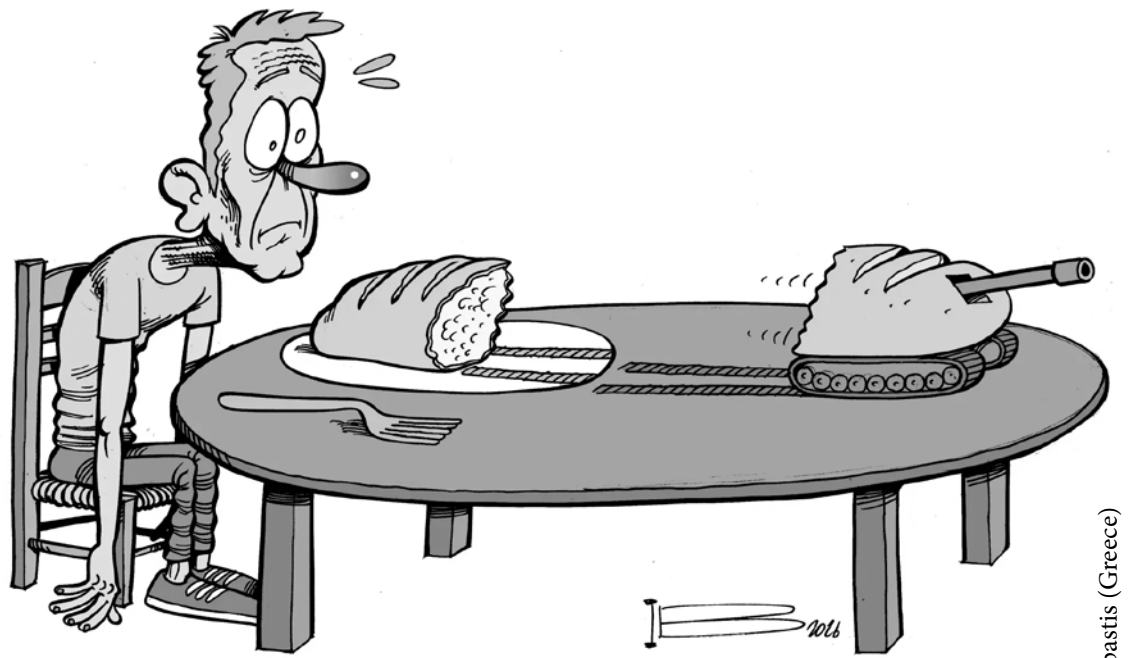
Today it may be the railway monopolies lobbying to end the right to strike. Tomorrow, if the unions and workers don’t take the necessary action, those same monopolies will be lobbying to end the right to collective bargaining. The time to stop the erosion of workers’ rights is now. Now is the time to fight to expand and guarantee those rights with a Bill of Rights for Labour.

The right to strike in this country was never a gift from benevolent companies or governments. It is a right that was won and defended through class struggle.

Today once again workers are called to defend the right to strike. But they need to go further and demand an advancement of their rights, not only a defence of the status quo. The right to strike is fundamentally in the public interest, as it prevents corporate monopolies from imposing unchecked exploitation.

A Labour Bill of Rights would be a serious advancement for all working people in this country, and one that can be achieved through a united mass struggle.

Solidarity Forever! Workers of the World Unite! ♦



Rizospastis (Greece)

OF NOTE



PEOPLE'S VOICE welcomes your letters. We reserve the right to edit for length and clarity, and to refuse to print letters which may be libellous or which contain personal attacks.

Cuba condemns the despicable accusation against the Leader of the Revolution

The Revolutionary Government condemns in the strongest terms the despicable accusation by the United States Department of Justice announced on May 20 and proclaimed for several weeks against Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, leader of the Cuban Revolution.

The United States government lacks the legitimacy and jurisdiction to carry out this action. It is a despicable and infamous act of political provocation, based on the dishonest manipulation of the incident that led to the downing, in February 1996, of two aircraft operated by the Miami-based terrorist organization Brothers to the Rescue over Cuban airspace, which repeated violations of Cuban airspace for hostile purposes were of common knowledge.

Furthermore, the US government distorts other historical truths about the event it uses as a pretext. It omits, among other details, the numerous formal complaints filed by Cuba during that period with the State Department, the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) regarding more than 25 serious and deliberate violations of Cuban airspace committed by the cited organization between 1994 and 1996, in blatant transgression of international law and US legislation itself.

It also ignores public and official warnings issued by Cuban authorities about the inadmissibility of such violations of its airspace and alert messages conveyed directly to the President of the United States about the seriousness and possible consequences of such transgressions.

Cuba's response to the violation

of its airspace constituted an act of legitimate self-defence, protected by the Charter of the United Nations, the 1944 Chicago Convention on International Civil Aviation, and the principles of air sovereignty and proportionality.

The United States, which has been a victim of the use of civil aviation for terrorist purposes, does not and would not permit the hostile and provocative violation of foreign aircraft over its territory and would act, as it has demonstrated, with the use of force.

The inaction of the US government in the face of the warnings issued by Cuba at the time, revealed its complicity in the planning and execution from its territory of violent, illegal and terrorist actions against the Cuban government and people, a recurring and systematic practice since the triumph of the Revolution to present day.

It is highly cynical that this accusation is made by the same government that has murdered nearly 200 people and destroyed 57 vessels in international waters of the Caribbean and the Pacific, far from the territory of the United States, with the disproportionate use of military force, for alleged links to drug trafficking operations that were never proven, which qualify as extrajudicial executions, in accordance with International Law, and murders, according to US laws themselves.

This spurious accusation against the Leader of the Cuban Revolution adds to the desperate attempts by anti-Cuban elements to construct a fraudulent narrative in an effort to justify the collective and ruthless punishment against the noble Cuban people, through the strengthening of unilateral coercive measures, including the unjust and genocidal energy blockade and threats of armed aggression.

Cuba reaffirms its commitment to peace and its firm determination

to exercise the inalienable right to self-defence, recognized by the Charter of the United Nations.

The Cuban people reaffirm their unwavering decision to defend the Homeland and its Socialist Revolution and, with the greatest strength and firmness, their unrestricted and unchanging support for Army General Raúl Castro Ruz, Leader of the Cuban Revolution.

Homeland or Death, We Will Prevail. ■

Havana, May 20, 2026

"Year of the Centenary of Commander-in-Chief Fidel Castro Ruz"

WFTU launches global petition campaign for Cuba

Following the unanimous decision of its Presidential Council meeting held May 12 – 13, the World Federation of Labour has launched a global petition campaign called "Cuba is not alone! – FIRMO POR CUBA" and is calling on its affiliates and friends to actively participate.

To participate:

- Visit firmoporcuba.com to download and print the petition form
- Organize signature collection initiatives in workplaces, factories, offices, ports, schools, universities, neighborhoods and communities
- Deliver the collected signatures to the Embassy or Consulate of Cuba in your country
- Inform the campaign organizers about your participation and the number of collected signatures, by emailing contact@firmoporcuba.com
- Promote and share the online international petition! ■

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Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to our Toronto office:
290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6
416.469.2481

EDITOR: Dave McKee, peoplesvoiceditor@gmail.com

EDITORIAL ADVISORY BOARD:

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Please send submissions (articles, interviews, photos, events, announcements) for our June 16-30 issue by June 8 and for our July 1-31 issue by June 22 to peoplesvoiceditor@gmail.com

Ford's energy policies are making Ontario increasingly vulnerable to global oil price shocks

JACK COPPLE

As the US-Israeli war in Iran continues, countries around the world are starting to feel the effects. Egypt has ordered nightly closures of businesses in Cairo and other areas of the country in an effort to reduce oil demand. The European Union is calling on all member states to shift to a work-from-home model and reduce all non-essential travel. The Australian Financial Review recently reported that there will likely be consumer fuel rationing announced in Australia.

In Canada, the war is primarily impacting consumers at the pump, as gas prices have risen over 40 cents per litre across the country, with some areas seeing even greater increases. In response, Canadian unions including the Canadian Association for Professional Employees and BC General Employees' Union are echoing the International Energy Agency's call to shift to fully remote work, to offset oil demands.

The IEA has further advised member countries to significantly reduce recreational air travel, reduce road traveling speeds, and rotate days which individuals may drive based on license plate number, among others actions. Most of these restrictions are focused on lessening consumer demand on oil by reducing individual vehicle travel, to preserve supply for industry. Like early reporting during the COVID pandemic, energy shocks are slowly rippling out across the world, causing damage that is difficult to see coming.

Beyond effects on prices at the pump, the global oil supply shocks could threaten Ontario's electricity grid infrastructure itself, as a result of changes made by the provincial government since Doug Ford's 2018 election. Ontario's energy grid currently relies more on fossil fuel consumption to power its energy grid than it has since shuttering its last coal plant – marking the highest emissions since 2012, and a near total reversal of Ontario's progress towards an emissions free grid.

Three-quarters of Ontario's electricity supply is provided by nuclear power (51 percent) and hydroelectricity (24 percent). But remarkably, oil and, especially, gas burning stations now provide 16 percent of the province's total electricity generation, a four-fold increase in total output since their 2017 low of 4 percent.

Nominally, increases in the oil and gas mix have been caused by disruptions in nuclear output as a variety of plants are restored and refurbished. However, investigations by the Toronto Star found that gas plants are being used during off-peak times not to bolster, but to replace alternative energy sources on the grid. These changes, implemented by Ford, have seen Ontario's grid go from 96 percent emission free energy down to 84 percent.



BLACK SMOKE FROM OIL AND GAS BURNING LENNOX GENERATING STATION

Increasing the fossil fuel mix of the energy grid is something Ford was known to boast of early in his tenure, including after cancelling 758 renewable energy projects shortly after first being elected. Further development of renewables has also stalled during his premiership, as he has shifted focus to nuclear and gas plant generation. He's taken his anti-renewable rhetoric further in subsequent years, including by banning green projects in certain areas of the province altogether.

But Ontario's reliance on fossil fuels may get even worse, as the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO, the crown corporation which manages the province's electricity market) expects total generation to increase in the near term, as refurbishments at the Pickering generating station take even more nuclear supply offline. Soon, Ontario will see 20 percent of its electricity generated by oil and gas plants, with even greater reliance possible in the future.

These changes to energy mix leave the province susceptible to supply shocks as oil and gas prices shoot up and supply shrinks in the near term. Despite the fact that Canada is a major oil producing nation, 70 percent of Ontario's oil and gas supply is imported from the United States. This major threat to Ontario's energy sovereignty is about to be tested, as prices shoot up and supply dwindles in the wake of final deliveries from the Middle East.

Environmental advocacy organization Environmental Defence told People's Voice that Ford's changes to Ontario's grid mix have already seen prices rise. "Electricity bill for Ontario ratepayers increased by 29 percent as of November 2025," since Ford started implementing the changes, and more price rises on their way. "We will

likely see additional cost increases in 2026 to reflect the higher operating costs of gas plants that the Ontario government has chosen to increasingly rely on for energy production."

Those price increases were expected before the closure of the Strait of Hormuz sent oil prices skyward, meaning even larger energy bills in Ontario are likely on the way, with rates remaining high for years to come.

Worse, still, as government policy continues to shift the energy grid mix over to fossil fuels while maintaining such a high level of US imports, it undermines sovereignty and energy security. The US-Israeli war on Iran has shown how dangerous ceding energy sovereignty to US imperialism can be – Ontario would be wise to learn this lesson before it is too late.

Addressing the threat to Ontario's energy sovereignty requires immediate action. This means removing Ford's arbitrary ban on renewables, including on solar panel projects on all farmland, which he implemented to appease segments of his climate-denying base.

Beyond that, Ontario must take dramatic steps to democratize its energy production and take steps toward a green transition. This includes nationalizing the energy grid and dramatically reducing reliance on fossil fuels for electricity generation, expanding renewable energy generation, and massively expanding urban and intercity rail and public transportation while eliminating transit fares. ■

Jack Copple is Ontario organizer for the Communist Party of Canada

Help finish our Fund Drive! Just \$20,000 to go!

Our Fund Drive continues to progress steadily, with \$5,000 coming in over the past two weeks. This puts our total at \$34,000, 62 percent of our overall goal of \$54,550.

Congratulations to our supporters in New Brunswick, who have joined Saskatchewan in reaching their target! Alberta and Quebec are both within striking distance of their quotas, and Ontario and BC have both made significant progress on their large targets.

We're hoping to finish the drive up soon, before summer holidays start, so let's keep this momentum rolling!

BC	\$9,185 out of \$20,000
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ON	\$14,270 out of \$22,300
QC	\$1,640 out of \$2,000
NS	\$260 out of \$750
NB	\$785 out of \$750
NL	\$525 out of \$750

Supporters across the county are organizing fundraising events – check out details on pages 10 and 11 of this issue.

Thank you to everyone who has donated so far. If you haven't contributed yet, please help us out by making a donation today. We accept cheques and money orders (payable to People's Voice and mailed to 290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON, M4K 1N6) as well as e-transfers to pvoicepayment@gmail.com. We can also accept donations through PayPal (including using credit cards) at our website, PVonline.ca/donate. ■

\$54,550 Goal



Opinion: Beijing Summit shows age of uncontested US supremacy is over

VIJAY PRASHAD

When US President Donald Trump travelled to China for his summit meeting with Xi Jinping, Western media, as it often does, fixated on spectacle: lavish banquets, honour guards, theatrical gestures that were designed to flatter the US president. Yet beneath all this ritual lay another reality, harder and more consequential.

Washington arrived burdened by several crises of its own making: a dangerous and illegal confrontation with Iran that Washington had engineered alongside Tel Aviv, global economic instability, deepening diplomatic isolation across much of the Global South, and mounting anxiety over the erosion of US industrial and technological supremacy.

The summit revealed a truth that many countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America already understand instinctively: the US remains militarily dangerous, but it no longer

possesses unquestioned political authority. China's posture at the summit reflected this new global balance. Even establishment Western analysts sensed the shift. For decades, the US insisted that China remain subordinate to a US-designed world order. In Beijing, however, the reality was reversed. Trump did not arrive to dictate terms; he arrived seeking assistance.

The Iran question exposed this dynamic most clearly. The US finds itself trapped in a cycle of endless militarism in West Asia. The illegal war launched over the past quarter century – from Iraq to Syria to the ongoing confrontation with Iran – have weakened the US strategically while bringing immense suffering to the region. Washington now understands that it cannot stabilize the situation alone. China, because of its economic ties with Iran and its growing diplomatic stature, possesses influence the US lacks.

Even Trump's own summit agenda re-

flected this dependence, with discussion focusing heavily on the Strait of Hormuz, Iran's nuclear program and regional stability. This is the crucial point: the US, which spent decades proclaiming itself indispensable, now requires Chinese cooperation to manage crises it largely created.

China recognized this reality and behaved accordingly. Chinese President Xi Jinping did not posture. He did not issue theatrical threats. He did not engage in the emotional volatility that now characterizes much of US political culture. Instead, he projected steadiness.

On Taiwan, Xi was firm. According to reports from the summit, he warned that mishandling the issue could lead to "conflicts." This was not the language of panic; it was the language of strategic clarity. Beijing understands that the greatest danger in world politics today comes not from rising powers demanding respect, but from a declining

world power (the United States) that refuses to accept limits. This distinction is profoundly important for the Global South.

Many countries across the South have long experience dealing with imperial instability. They know that empires in decline become erratic (that is why Xi raised the issue of the Thucydides Trap – the idea that a declining power becomes aggressive against rising powers – and urged that this be set aside in favour of peaceful development for all).

Economic decline often produces militarism; political fragmentation generates external aggression. The contemporary United States exhibits precisely these characteristics. Its elite speak constantly of "competition" and "containment" while its domestic institutions suffer deep crises of legitimacy.

China's conduct at the summit therefore

■ SUMMIT, PG 7

Youth delegation from North America and Europe tours China



RYAN ABBOTT

Against the background of the highly anticipated meeting between Chinese and US officials in Beijing this month, a smaller and less publicized delegation arrived in China at the invitation of the Communist Party of China (CPC).

From May 7 to 18, young cadres representing 20 communist parties in Europe and North America participated in a historic cultural and political exchange with their Chinese counterparts. The delegation included students, construction workers, white-collar professionals and public-service workers.

The exchange began at the headquarters of the International Department of the Communist Party of China (IDCPC) in Beijing. Vice Minister Jin Xin delivered remarks on recent CPC efforts at party building and youth engagement with international socialist forces in the application of Marxism to local contexts. In turn, members of the delegation noted the CPC's success in leading the construction of socialism in China, discussing the growing inspiration drawn by socialist organizations around the world and the delegation's anticipation of seeing first-hand examples of "socialism with Chinese characteristics."

The next 11 days were a whirlwind of travel, cultural exchange and political dialogue. From Beijing to Shijiazhuang, Zhengding to Yan'an, Liangjiahe Village to the metropolis of Xi'an, each day was packed with activity. One morning, delegates toured rural factories in a high-tech development, alongside a Sandinista delegation from Nicaragua; that afternoon they took part in a formal plenum called "Putting the People First – The Mission and Responsibility of Political Parties." Another day began with an on-site lecture on village grassroots governance and development, made a stop at a national table tennis training base and Zhengding Ancient City, and ended with a high-speed rail trip to a historic revolutionary stronghold of Yan'an and its Revolutionary Memorial Hall.

The delegation also visited the BYD electric car research centre, toured the control centre of an automated metro trail station, participated in lectures on ecology and socialism, and visited prominent Chinese universities. The trip was a kaleidoscope of history, culture, ecology and the first fruits of socialist modernization.

These activities were punctuated by a series of seminars and forums facilitated by leading members of the IDCPC and the Shaanxi Province Foreign Affairs Office. There were several debates and discussion on the state of the world socialist movement, capitalist crisis and ideology, internationalism and the idea of socialism with Chinese characteristics. These discussions deepened the mutual understanding of capitalism's uneven development and deepening crisis, as well as the ideological status of youth in China, Europe and North America.

Of special interest was the "Putting People First" conference, an international dialogue on the practice of re-

sponsibility and good governance. The conference was hosted by the CPC in Xingtang, Hebei, an area which has undergone impressive rural development since 2012. IDCPC Minister Liu Haixing gave opening remarks on the significance of rural development and poverty alleviation within the CPC's Five-Year Plans, while Provincial Secretary Ni Yuegeng spoke on the importance of agriculture and tourism development in Hebei province.

Maise Riley, National Chair of the Young Communist League of Britain, remarked on the post-2008 economic realities of Britain, the increase in austerity and the destruction of democratic institutions in Europe. Outlining the successes of the CPC, she also spoke of the need for democratic reform, the re-development of domestic industry and rural development in Britain, to put working people first and reverse decades of austerity.

The forum heard from Zhang Hua, a former homemaker whose wages increased almost sevenfold after she received domestic caregiver training for the elderly through the local CPC committee. A representative from the Laos Ministry of Foreign Affairs and a Sandinista mayor from Nicaragua both spoke on their respective struggles for literacy, gender equality and poverty eradication, and the lessons to be drawn from the CPC about putting the people first.

Norman Bethune, the celebrated internationalist and Communist Party of Canada member, featured prominently on the tour. A surgeon who joined Mao Zedong's Eighth Route Army during the war against Japanese aggression in the late 1930's, Bethune is a celebrated Canadian hero in China. Whether at the Xibaipo Memorial Hall, the Hebei University of Chinese Medicine or cast in bronze alongside leading figures in the Yan'an Revolutionary Hall, the spirit of Bethune lives on as a testament to internationalist friendship between the people of China and Canada.

The delegation provided communist youth an important opportunity to understand the nuances in constructing socialism in the 21st century, and the CPC hosts did not sugarcoat the difficulties of party building or the contradictions inherent to the development of socialism in the current global conditions. Perhaps most remarkable was the contagious sense of optimism, dignity and pride shared by subway operators, university students and cultural workers with whom we met, conscious of the great strides made in recent years and the international recognition China now receives on green energy, public infrastructure, cultural development and technological innovation.

Delegates returned home from this remarkable political and cultural exchange emboldened in the international struggle for peace, climate security, and public and democratic ownership of the economy. ■

The author represented the Communist Party of Canada at the delegation



Ahead of municipal elections and education bargaining, Conservatives take aim at school board governance in Ontario

SILLA TAULER

Recently, the Ontario government passed legislation that makes substantial changes to the ways that English-language school boards function in the province. This legislation is part of a series of reforms that the provincial Conservatives have undertaken to change school board governance, which promises a host of disruptions to the publicly funded education system.

The first salvo came in November with Bill 33, the Supporting Children and Students Act. This legislation centralizes the authority of the Minister of Education to take direct control of publicly funded school boards and sideline locally elected trustees for a host of new reasons. The impacts of existing takeovers in nine school boards includes the closure of numerous special education programs that supported students with the most serious needs in our system, and layoffs for hundreds of teaching, administrative and other staff in some of Ontario's largest school districts.

Then came Bill 101, the Putting Student Achievement First Act which was passed on May 7. This new piece of legislation came with a flurry of announcements which cynically pander to working people's frustration with the school system's perceived lack of rigour and failure to prepare students adequately for "success" within (read submission to) the norms of liberal capitalism.

This bill changes the way high school courses are assessed by adding an attendance and participation mark to every earned credit and banning the practice, which some boards had previously adopted, of removing exams from certain grades.

Furthering the Ministry's attempts to more directly manage, and promote privatization within public education, the announced reforms suggest the province intends to create a suite of standardized materials to be used in the instruction of courses in Ontario. The Ministry of Education is already in the habit of giving money to private third-party vendors to provide online night school to high school students, including an existing set of course offerings available through TVO. Through these programs, online vendors receive public funds to offer credit courses virtually, which translates to a loss of funding for neighbourhood schools and the decimation of enriching programming at every high school in the province.

Addressing governance directly and the impact these proposed changes have on local democracy, Bill 101 sets a hard limit of twelve trustees for every publicly funded school board in the province. Notably, this only impacts the Toronto District School Board as it is the only district with more than twelve prior to its provincial takeover last year.

The legislation also creates two new senior administrative posts at every English-language school board, a chief executive officer (CEO) and chief education officer (CEdO). From the announcement, the CEO will be required to have some background and qualifications from the business sector, and they will not be required to have any formal training or background in education. The CEdO will be appointed by the CEO if they do not have education training themselves to manage the pedagogical aspects of the school board's operations.

This means that school boards in Ontario will go from having one director of education as the most senior administrator in each board, to two director level positions with competing and overlapping missions at every English-language board in the province.

The role of locally elected trustees is also severely limited under this new reform. They will no longer serve the function of approving policy and budgetary proposals made by senior administrators, but will now be left as a largely consultative body whose only recourse is to appeal to the Minister of Education if they cannot resolve their disagreement with the CEO. The Minister will then assume the position of ruling over these disagreements and decide whether to side with the appointed CEO or the elected trustees.

All of this is the background to the next round of bargaining, as teachers' and education workers' contracts expire in August.

Under the previous system, unions representing all education workers would divide their bargaining between central and local tables to decide the terms of their contracts. The central table typically handled all monetary issues; simultaneously, local tables at each school board bargained terms without monetary consequences attached to them. Central table issues include salaries, benefits contributions, class size language, changes to the funding formula for schools, etc., while local bargaining might include matters like break schedules, supervisions and language around preparation time.

Typically, elected trustees represented management at both tables. They would delegate teams from among themselves to work with the unions in trying to resolve disagreements and resist making minor concessions with oversight provided by the Ministry of Education and the Ontario Treasury Board.

The new system creates a confused patchwork of bargaining agents. For English-language secular boards, all bargaining will be done with the CEOs and their provincial body, the Council of Ontario Directors of Education (CODE). Workers in an English Catholic school board, will be bargaining with their CEO and CODE for monetary issues, but their trustees will remain in charge of bargaining on topics which impact their religious community. French-language boards will retain the status quo and negotiate with elected trustees as before – this is seemingly an effort to avoid a constitutional challenge over language rights, but it also potentially splits the French-language unions further from their English-language counterparts.

Details of all these changes remain unresolved – while the legislation has passed, the regulations which implement it remain undefined. It remains to be seen whether the province intends to use this to delay bargaining, introduce a suite of fully privatized resources and accompanying exams, or otherwise undermine and confuse the public about the erosion of public assets due to decades of chronic underfunding.

In any case, with both municipal elections and education bargaining on the horizon later this year, a strong labour-community alliance needs to be built now to defend public education and local democracy. ■

In the fight for public transit, Toronto's VFH industry is a Trojan Horse for privatization



JACK COPPLE

Like most municipalities in the world, Toronto is playing catch-up on regulations covering the vehicle-for-hire (VFH) industry, which is dominated by companies like Uber and Lyft. Toronto is currently considering a variety of regulations but must ultimately choose between those which are good for Uber's bottom line or those which benefit working people.

As with most of the gig work sector, the VFH industry skirts around regulations, including labour law, by hiding behind the illusion of big-tech innovation. Through some clever legal fiction, this has allowed companies like Uber to pay workers less than minimum wage, flout health and safety regulation, and completely ignore environmental and infrastructural concerns.

While this approach has been great for Uber's bottom line, it wreaks havoc on the lives of the people it employs. A recent City of Toronto study revealed that, on average, VFH drivers make just over \$5 per hour worked – far below anything approaching a livable wage. The industry also has parasitic effects on the cities they operate in: clogging traffic, diverting fares from public transit and intensifying race-to-the-bottom business strategies.

In response to these widespread negative social impacts, working people across the country are increasingly calling for regulation of the VFH industry. In many areas, the labour and people's movements have won important gains to push back on the industry's worst excesses.

But VFH companies, and the big tech and finance monopolies who back them, have begun to fight back hard. In Toronto, Uber has used its massive cash stockpiles to build a bully pulpit to lobby against any form of regulation. According to Toronto's lobbyist registrar, Uber has lobbied Council a staggering 4000+ times over the 10 years that its file has been open – mean-

ing they have averaged at least 1 communication with Council every single day for a decade. VFH and gig companies have dominated lobbying at Council in the years since their development, with Uber alone representing 10 percent of total lobbying in some years.

Uber's most recent bout of lobbying has been to prevent regulations which have been under discussion in Toronto since 2023 and would reel in some of its worst excesses. Proposed by RideFair, a coalition of rideshare drivers, labour and community transit activists, the regulations would cap the number of business licences issued for VFH companies. RideFair proposes a cap of 25,000 active driver licences in the city – a significant reduction from the 90,000+ licenses currently active today.

By cutting licenses, RideFair says that drivers' pay will increase, as the better-managed supply will decrease time waiting for their next ride. A lower cap will reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions by removing cars idling on the road, speeding up public transit and making commuting through the city safer and faster for all.

Mayor Olivia Chow attempted to make regulating Uber an early priority for her administration, bringing in regulations in line with RideFair's proposals in late 2023. In response, Uber threatened the city with a lawsuit and put up billboards across the GTA attacking Chow and her staff for attempting to regulate the industry. As a result, the policy quietly died in the annals of the city's bureaucracy.

Now, the city is drafting new proposals to regulate VFH companies, but it is taking a different approach which favours corporations over working people.

The new policy would increase the levy on VFH rides – they are currently charged between \$0.90-\$1.50 per ride – to generate revenues for the city, and push people

■ VFH TRIPS, PG 10



SK govt undermines democracy, embraces corporate rule with AI data centre scheme

PV SASKATCHEWAN BUREAU

Saskatchewan premier Scott Moe and the Saskatchewan Party truly are lap dogs for the extraction and resource industry. Throughout the party's time in government, the resource industry has been given free reign over the province to do as they please, so long as private investment increases.

It is no surprise, then, that when Bell Canada and the tech industry came knocking, Moe and Co. couldn't resist salivating like Pavlov's dogs over the opportunity to privatize another chunk of the province.

Bell is taking the lead on the AI data centre in the Rural Municipality (RM) of Sherwood. But the lobbying arms of the tech industry is the Canadian Coalition for Digital Infrastructure (CCDI) and the Western Canada Data Centre Alliance (WCDCA), both composed of Amazon Web Services, Beacon Ai, Cologix, Ellis Don, Equinix and others.

It is well known that the Saskatchewan Party is a den of corruption but for the most part, this corruption has been silently infecting the province from back rooms and country clubs. This silence was boisterously interrupted in Sherwood when the party openly and loudly flaunted their corruption on behalf of the tech industry, for everyone to see.

In March, four out of the RM's seven municipal councillors resigned over alleged ethical concerns, which seem to centre on the proposed land development agreement between the RM and Bell Canada and the construction of an AI data centre. In response to the resignations, the Minister of Government Relations and former RCMP member Eric Schmalz appointed four new members to council, all of them government and resource industry cronies.

Despite calls to hold off on hearing the land development agreement until a new council is elected in November, the agreement was rushed through on April 20 and accepted by the RM council composed of only three elected officials.

The proposed deal includes 16 conditions

for the data centre, like drainage evaluations and sound pollution testing, as well as other "oversights." These conditions sound reasonable, but the agreement contains no guarantees and no established processes to ensure corporate adherence to the stated conditions.

As the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives note, "The [data centre] industry is notorious for demanding local governments sign Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs) to prevent local officials from revealing key details about the proposals to construct these facilities. Essential information, such as estimated energy or water consumption, tax incentives and subsidies – even the very identity of the company[s] building the facility – are withheld from residents in the name of protecting proprietary business information. Even important information that is made public by the industry – such as job creation estimates – are often inflated or revised over the course of development."

The lack of oversight and public consultation, political corruption and the slimy tactics used by Moe and his bandits to manipulate municipal policy in their favour, are all indications that this AI data centre is nothing but bad news for Saskatchewan.

Historically, Saskatchewan is a province which practices a semblance of public ownership and democratic control of resources, energy and services. A large part of the province still supports that practice and wants to see it continue.

But that can become reality until Scott Moe, the Saskatchewan Party and their policies are chucked in the waste bin. The opposition NDP is not the solution – that party has made very clear its willingness to follow the Saskatchewan Party in pursuing privatization of every aspect of the province.

Saskatchewan needs a real alternative – a people's alternative rooted in far-reaching economic, social and political reforms that can unite the working class and its allies in the immediate struggle and, in the process, open the door to working-class power and socialism. ■

Summit showed autonomy is no longer merely aspirational; it is materially possible

■ FROM PG 5

offered a political lesson extending far beyond East Asia. Xi demonstrated that it is possible to resist US pressure without capitulation or resorting to theatricality. There was no need for emotional denunciations or symbolic grandstanding. China approached the US as a sovereign equal and insisted on that equality calmly.

This posture matters enormously for countries of the Global South, many of which are attempting to build sovereign development projects under immense pressure. The old model, submission to Washington in exchange for temporary stability, is increasingly discredited. Across Africa, Latin America and Asia, governments now seek alternatives: regional integration, South-South cooperation, diversified trade relations, and strategic autonomy. The summit illustrated that such autonomy is no longer merely aspirational; it is materially possible.

Trump's delegation revealed the changing hierarchy of the world economy. The US president arrived accompanied by major corporate executives eager for access to the Chinese market. Discussions around agricultural purchases, Boeing sales, rare earths, and technology reflected a deeper truth: the US needs China economically in ways that China no longer needs the US to the same degree. China agreed to expand imports of US agricultural products, a move aimed partly at relieving pressure on US farmers harmed by Trump's own trade war.

This is revealing: the trade war, originally framed by Washington as a demonstration of US strength, has now become a situation in which Washington seeks relief.

Meanwhile, China continues to patiently build long-term industrial capacity, technological advancement, and diplomatic networks across Eurasia, Africa and Latin America. Beijing's strategy is not primarily based on military alliances but on infra-

structure, trade, finance and development. One may criticize aspects of this strategy, but it represents a fundamentally different approach to global power than the permanent-warfare doctrine that has dominated US foreign policy since the end of the Cold War.

None of this means that China is without contradictions or that global politics has become benign. It has not. But the summit clarified an essential historical development: the age of uncontested US supremacy is over. The United States still possesses enormous military power. It can inflict catastrophic violence. That dangerous capacity remains real. But the political confidence that once accompanied US power has eroded. Washington increasingly oscillates between threats and appeals, coercion and requests for assistance. The contradictions are visible to everyone.

The summit in Beijing was not the arrival of a Chinese century – history is more complicated than such slogans – but it revealed a changing world consciousness. More coun-

tries now recognize that the future cannot be organized around the anxieties of a declining empire.

The "new mood" across the Global South emerges precisely from this recognition. Nations that were once treated merely as objects of Western policy now increasingly act as subjects of history. They seek partnership rather than domination, development rather than militarization, dignity rather than dependency.

In Beijing, Xi Jinping embodied that mood with remarkable discipline. The US came asking for help; China remained composed. Much of the Global South watched carefully, hoping that one day they too will be able to engage powers that continue to treat them as inferiors on equal terms. ■

People's Democracy (India)
Slightly edited for length

LABOUR

Outside workers in Metro Vancouver start strike as World Cup approaches

Beginning May 24, just days before the FIFA World Cup arrives, Metro Vancouver outside workers began strike action at several locations. The 700 workers operate and maintain regional services such as water, sewer, infrastructure services, parks and housing communities.

The Greater Vancouver Regional District Employees Union (GVRDEU) initially announced that all non-essential services workers would not perform any overtime or standby work, then began temporarily removing workers from select sites.

Key issues include safety, contracting out, as well as recruitment and retention. "We have several non-monetary items that are very important on the table. Health and safety for workers is one of them," said GVRDEU spokesperson Bill Tieleman. "WorkSafeBC just fined Metro Vancouver \$167,000 for a very serious confined space accident where a worker was crushed and nearly killed."

Union members delivered a huge 97.8 percent strike vote in March.

Steelworkers accuse Alberta steelmaker of union busting, vote 99% to strike

USW Local 5220, which represents over 200 workers at AltaSteel's mini-mill near Edmonton, says the employer is refusing to bargain and has filed an official complaint.

The charge comes after union members twice voted down "final offers" by huge margins, including 90% against a forced vote in March.

The union began bargaining in June 2025, with AltaSteel tabling concessions that the workers were unwilling to accept.

Rather than returning to the table, AltaSteel filed for a lockout poll which would give them the power to lock the workers out. In response, the workers held a strike vote, with 98.5% voting in favour.

USW rep Jeff Kallichuk said the union still hopes to negotiate a deal. "We are not interested in a labour dispute, but we will not back away from one if it comes to it."

Pascan strike heads into sixth month

Flight attendants at Pascan Aviation have been on the picket line since October 28. The 21 workers, represented by CUPE Local 5490, are fighting for higher wages, off-base accommodations, and improvements to work assignments and crew scheduling.

In a breach of the federal anti-scab law, Pascan is using pilots and administrative staff to replace striking cabin crew members.

Furthermore, the union says it on the second day of the strike that the employer had never intended to bargain in good faith. As early as April 2025, the airline approached individuals to scab in the event of a strike.

"We find it deplorable that the company had no interest in giving negotiations a chance," said Jessé Vigneault, president of CUPE 5490. "Before we even submitted our list of demands, the company was already looking for people to replace us."

Transit workers in Metro Vancouver prepare for strike

A total of 5,000 transit workers at Coast Mountain Bus have voted 99% in favour of strike action. The members of Unifor Locals 111 and 2200 work as transit operators, maintenance workers, SeaBus crews, Community Transit operators and Spare-board members across Metro Vancouver.

Key issues include wage increases, health and safety, and improved retirement provisions.

CLC Convention backs Palestine and Cuba solidarity, but calls for coordinated fightback against austerity fail to move leadership into action



PV LABOUR BUREAU

The 2026 Canadian Labour Congress convention met from May 11 to 14 in Winnipeg, against the backdrop of the deepest federal austerity drive since the 1990s. Prime Minister Mark Carney's \$150 billion war budget is being paid for through slashed public sector jobs and wages and social services. Under cover of false patriotism, billions of dollars in public money are being shifted to corporate monopolies through military contracts, P3 infrastructure, and fast-tracked resource projects that trample Indigenous sovereignty, labour rights and environmental security.

Yet the convention also gathered as working people across the country are fighting back. Postal workers continue to resist attacks on the public post office, BC-GEU members struck for eight weeks to push back BC NDP austerity, and Alberta teachers carried out the largest walkout in provincial history. Air Canada flight attendants defied back-to-work orders and won, Rio Tinto steelworkers in Quebec held their picket line against scabs, and grocery workers are delivering massive strike votes. The question hanging over the convention was whether the CLC leadership would rise to the moment and chart a course for a coordinated, militant fightback.

More than 2,100 delegates from unions across Canada assembled for a convention that produced mixed results: it took some steps forward, blocked some steps backward, but was unable to win a commitment to build the mass, united fightback that many on the floor were demanding.

Organized labour has been under sharp attack since the 1980s. Yet the dominant trend among CLC and affiliate leadership has been to avoid mobilizing members into militant, united political action, and instead to rely on lobbying efforts to block the worst anti-labour attacks and legislation.

While a majority of Convention delegates don't see lobbying as effective or useful, the time for debate on the issues and the fightback has been steadily reduced and replaced with numerous guest speakers, guest panels and videos filling the time. This has led to abbreviated time for discussion and debate on the most important issues and a reduction in delegate speaking time to just 3 minutes.

In Winnipeg – likely in response to a public campaign by Labour 4 Palestine urging the CLC to stop burying a "Hot Cargo" resolution on Palestine solidarity – the entire week's agenda was rushed through on the first day, eliminating the usual chance to revisit it each morning. Resolutions were bundled into long, sometimes contradictory thematic composites, making it hard to debate how to fight on key issues. A call to nationalize the auto and steel industries, for example, was passed inside a composite that also called

for tax cuts for Canadian manufacturers.

Fight for labour democracy

Fortunately, delegates blocked two constitutional amendments which were designed to further restrict democratic decision making. One of these would have allowed only cross-Canada affiliates – not local unions – to submit resolutions, drastically reducing left and progressive motions; it was overwhelmingly defeated.

The second constitutional amendment would have imposed a "double majority" voting rule on the CLC's Canadian Council, effectively giving the largest unions a veto and weakening smaller affiliates, labour councils and equity vice-presidents who are directly elected by caucuses. This was the second consecutive convention in which the proposal was brought forward, following its narrow defeat in 2023.

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE), Canada's second-largest union, led the push this time. Its president spoke in favour but also read aloud an Action Caucus leaflet opposing the undemocratic changes – and then unconvincingly argued the amendment was a form of "proportional representation" for big unions.

Largely as a result of the Action Caucus campaign, the vote was 724 in favour with 885 opposed, well short of the required two-thirds and an even more decisive defeat than three years ago.

International solidarity – a bright spot

The Convention did see some real advances on international solidarity.

While the resolutions committee initially rejected a "Hot Cargo" resolution and buried it to keep it off the floor, a pre-convention public campaign forced the leadership to reverse that decision. The initial backwardness on Palestine was striking given the genocide in Gaza over the past two and a half years, which has isolated open supporters of Zionism and even pushed the NDP to clearly denounce Israel's crimes. Pro-Palestine delegates moved to refer a weak peace resolution with instruction to include the demand that the CLC cut ties with Israel's Histadrut labour federation, the main concrete call of the Hot Cargo resolution.

The Histadrut boycott is a longstanding demand of the international BDS movement, and gained urgency after the Histadrut chair signed a missile to be used in Gaza in 2023. The resolutions committee added the demand, and the amended motion passed the next day with upwards of 90 percent support, demonstrating how far labour has moved on Palestine solidarity in just a few years.

Solidarity with Cuba was also a major theme, as Donald Trump's illegal and genocidal oil blockade continues and sanctions by Marco Rubio forced Canadian company Sherritt International to shut

down operations in the country just one week before the convention.

The Canadian Network on Cuba (CNC) and the Action Caucus co-hosted an event with Dany Tur de la Concepción, Deputy Head of Mission from the Cuban Embassy. More than 130 people, mostly delegates, packed a local bar to hear from the embassy, the CNC and labour solidarity activists. The event raised \$2,500 for the Canadian Network on Cuba's material aid campaign which ships energy, medical and food supplies to Cuba on a monthly basis.

Tur also addressed meetings of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers' (CUPW) and the Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETFO) caucuses and met with other labour council and union leaders. On Thursday, the Convention nearly unanimously passed a resolution in solidarity with Cuba, with the CLC agreeing to strengthen its ties to the Workers' Central Union of Cuba (CTC), make a financial contribution to the Canadian Network on Cuba and call on the whole labour movement to build solidarity with the Cuban people. From the floor of the convention, ETFO pledged an additional \$20,000 for the campaign.

No coordinated fightback, despite militant mood on the floor

While international solidarity was a bright spot, a clear disconnect emerged between the presidium and much of the floor when it came to the need for a mass, extra-parliamentary fightback. The reports, resolutions and action plan spoke of austerity, layoffs, healthcare privatization and cuts to social services, yet there was no clear and consistent general condemnation of the Liberal government's corporate agenda.

The action plan, split into several thematic resolutions, was heavy on policy and very light on action. There was no proposed plan to mobilize, nor even an overarching campaign against the federal cuts. Air Canada workers were rightly held up as a model for defying back-to-work orders and winning, but no strategy was offered for how to defeat such orders through defiance and solidarity on a broader scale.

The floor told a different story. Action Caucus participants called for coordinated mobilization against austerity and linked Carney's cuts to massive military expenditures. Former CUPW president Mike Palecek gave a well-received speech opposing the "building worker power" resolution because of its heavy tilt toward lobbying and lack of a mobilization plan. Throughout the week, OPSEU leaders called for a general strike, as the CLC organized in 1976. Notably, however, they did not put forward a clear plan for the content of such a political strike or how to build toward it.

Still, the divide between the presidi-

■ CONTINUED TOP OF NEXT PAGE

■ FROM PREVIOUS PAGE

um and the floor on the threat posed by the Carney government – and what it will take to defeat it – was stark. This was clearly illustrated when the “building worker power” section of the action plan was voted against by roughly a third of delegates because of its lack of militancy.

Despite these debates, the outgoing leadership around CLC President Bea Bruske was re-elected. The only change was the retirement of Executive Vice-President Larry Rousseau (PSAC), with CUPW's Marc-Édouard Joubert elected to the position. All officer posts were won by acclamation and were on the same slate.

The challenge: from a divided house to unity in action

A key question at the Convention concerned the large unions currently outside the CLC, including Unifor and the Teamsters. Notably, the CLC and Unifor issued a joint statement for International Workers' Day. A Windsor delegate asked from the floor for an update on Unifor rejoining the house of labour, pointing out that a divided movement has been especially damaging for cities like Windsor and Oshawa, which are home to massive Unifor plants. Bruske responded that there was a “good pathway to final solutions,” that “the ball is in Unifor's court,” but she was “hopeful” to receive Unifor's official request to rejoin.

This response from the CLC president seems a bit lackadaisical given the urgent situation facing workers in Canada, particularly those in the private sector. Autoworkers, steelworkers, softwood lumber workers and many others are facing mass layoffs in the wake of Donald Trump's tariff war, Carney's sweeping cuts to the public sector, and the upcoming USMCA negotiations. This threatens the livelihoods hundreds of thousands of workers in Canada, who are looking for unity and allies.

Rather than the CLC and Unifor leadership's narrative of “calm and steady progress” without showing anything concrete for several years, union members and workers in general need a labour movement that builds unity in action around concrete campaigns.

A current example of this kind of fighting approach is Alberta, where the Alberta Federation of Labour has specifically reached out to non-affiliated unions like Unifor and the Alberta Union of Public Employees to help build their Common Front and the province-wide day of protest on May 29. A similar example is the Quebec Common Front, which three years ago built unity in action among four unions representing over 420,000 workers, even though none of the unions shared a common labour central.

These and other examples show that there is a huge capacity for building unity in action across the labour movement, without waiting for formal unity of structure. This is what delegates to the CLC Convention needed to hear, not that “the ball is in their court.”

With the Convention over, a key challenge for the Action Caucus and others on the left is to forge a fighting unity around specific campaigns throughout the year. A good place to start is at the local level, where labour councils can engage all unions and allied social movements in building efforts like anti-cuts committees, strike support initiatives and, in provinces with municipal elections this fall, civic reform movements based on labour's independent political activity.

The 2026 CLC convention captured a labour movement in search of a way forward as the corporate attack intensifies. Delegates defended democratic space, pushed through important Palestine and Cuba solidarity measures, and voiced a growing appetite for militant, coordinated action. Yet the leadership's action plan remained trapped in a lobbying-first approach.

With public and private sector workers already on the move, and Carney's corporate offensive accelerating, the task of building that coordinated fightback now falls urgently to the shop floors, picket lines and local labour councils that are already showing the way. Mass, united action by labour and its allies is the response that workers need now. ■



“Worth Fighting For”: thousands of community and social workers on strike across Ontario

Union calls on employers to aid push for increased government funding

Pressure is heating up for Doug Ford's Ontario government to deliver funding for services that provide vulnerable people rely on, with thousands of workers at community and social service agencies going on strike May 25.

The workers, represented by the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), say this is a fight for the future of the services they provide, and they're calling on their employers to support this call for funding to shorten job action.

“We want to get back to the people we support as soon as possible, so we're asking our employers once again to join us in this fight for funding,” said Tannis McGinn, Chair of the Child Treatment Divisional Executive and Leader of the Worth Fighting For Working Group.

“We are tired and devastated – seeing every day the impacts that underfunding has on our communities and the people we support. We simply cannot continue to carry a crumbling system on our backs.”

Chronic underfunding has resulted in people falling through the cracks, and families have struggled to access support. Workers have been forced to work two or three jobs just to make ends meet, and many rely on food banks.

The workers hitting the picket lines May 25 joined those from Community Living Hanover and Community Living Trent Highlands who went on strike over the weekend prior. Meanwhile, management at Ingersoll Support Services, Murray McKinnon Foundation and Apts Treatment Centre chose to lock out workers, rather than supporting the call for funding.

Thousands of workers at nearly two dozen community organizations are now on strike or locked out.

“These workers are taking a brave and historic stand that is fueled by the love they have for their communities and the people they support,” said OPSEU president JP Hornick. “It is time for this government to stop taking advantage of the dedication and commitment these workers have to their communities – when you stole from these workers, you were also cheating the communities who depend on the care they provide.”

Worker demands include retroactive pay for stolen wages by Premier Ford's unconstitutional Bill 124, which capped wage increases at one per cent during a time of skyrocketing cost of living. While many public sector workers have received retroactive wage increases of 6.5 per cent or more since Bill 124 was ruled unconstitutional and repealed, workers in community and social services are still waiting.

At the same time, funding for community and social services continues to fall, with the Financial Accountability Office highlighting a \$1.5 billion budget shortfall for the Ministry of Community and Social Services in 2025-26. ■

People's Voice encourages its Ontario readers to support OPSEU. For more information the strike and picket locations, visit worthfightingfor.ca

BC nurses show unity and militancy, as historic strike mandate leads to tentative deal



BC LABOUR BUREAU

Nearly 61,000 registered, psychiatric and licensed practical nurses in BC have made their voices clear, forcefully and in unison, that they deserve a fair contract.

Between May 8 and 11, nurses who are party to the sectoral Nurses' Bargaining Association (NBA) Provincial Collective Agreement held a strike vote. The majority of nurses covered by the NBA are represented by the BC Nurses Union (BCNU), with others represented by the Health Sciences Association, the Hospital Employees' Union, and the British Columbia General Employees' Union.

Fifty thousand nurses in the BCNU, working in BC hospitals, public health, home support, long-term care, and mental health care, voted in favour of job action, delivering a clear message to the provincial government and to the Health Employers Association of BC (HEABC). An overwhelming 98.2 percent voted in favour of job action.

On May 24, they reached a tentative agreement which includes improvements to benefits coverage, a wage increase of 12 percent over 4 years, workplace safety and violence prevention measures. The new deal, which will be voted on from June 15 – 19, also includes an agreement with the Ministry of Health for significant additional funding to continue implementing minimum nurse-to-patient ratios.

Nurses' demands across the province's six health authorities and affiliate organizations are clear: to be treated with the respect they deserve. Ahead of the strike vote, the HEABC had rejected 94 percent of the NBA's 140 proposals including key initiatives related to wages, workload, workplace violence and occupational health and safety.

Nurses are fighting for improved nurse-to-patient ratios, increased recruitment and stronger workplace safety measures.

The BCNU reports that, since 2019, injury claims across the healthcare field have risen by nearly 25 percent, and psychological injuries have tripled.

As Adriane Gear, BC Nurses' Union President and Chair of the NBA provincial bargaining committee, stated: “[Nurses] are prepared to fight for the future of nursing and for a healthcare system that is safe, sustainable and able to retain the nurses that patients rely on.”

And fight they have, both at the bargaining table and on the streets. On April 30, over 500 nurses, allied healthcare workers and supporters rallied in down-

town Vancouver to send a message ahead of the strike vote that nurses and labour stand in solidarity on the frontlines of the healthcare crisis in Canada.

Emergency departments in rural communities have faced temporary closures, and maternity and pediatric units in both rural and urban areas are reaching their boiling point. This is no accident: the provincial government is deliberately manufacturing a healthcare crisis to clear the way for two-tier, for-profit medicine. Hot on the heels of a government that is driving healthcare into the ground and toward a public-private model, BC Nurses have raised a red flag.

At the forefront of this fight is the expansion of minimum nurse-to-patient ratios. On February 17, the BCNU responded strongly to cuts announced in the BC Budget, which included pausing the expansion of long-term care facilities, increasing the strain on overwhelmed long-term care providers and the nurses employed at these facilities.

Nursing vacancies from Victoria to Fort St. John have ballooned to over 4,500 with, as the BCNU expressed, “tens of thousands more nurses needed in the coming years.” Not just staffing concerns, nurse-to-patient ratios impact the health and wellbeing of every British Columbian.

“Not only do minimum nurse-to-patient ratios improve the working conditions of nurses; they also ensure patients receive the safe care they deserve,” said Gear. “Nurses are the eyes and ears of healthcare.”

With the strike mandate secured, the BCNU and its partners in the NBA wasted no time. On May 14, they returned to the bargaining table with the HEABC, their 98.2 percent mandate serving as the central leverage point in their push for meaningful progress. The union held a 90-day window to engage in various forms of job action, from refusing to perform non-nursing duties such as handing out meal trays and cleaning stretchers, to a full-scale withdrawal of services.

The historic near-unanimous strike mandate meant that the NBA returned to the bargaining table holding the most militant show of unity in recent memory. With nurses signaling they were ready to escalate, the HEABC and provincial government were compelled to make meaningful movement on the key issues of nurse-to-patient ratios, wages and workplace safety.

Whatever the outcome of the ratification vote, BC nurses have made it clear: the status quo is no longer an option. ■

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Stop the US war on Cuba!

■ FROM PG 3

meek endorsement of the US plan for Cuba appears more cowardly still.

Unconditional defence

Our government continues to neglect the situation of the Cuban people. But this indifference cannot be imputed to the working class, here or anywhere. The global trade union movement has long stood with Cuba, including Canada's trade unions and their international counterparts. In a February statement, the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas (to which the CLC affiliates) clearly identified Trump's exaggerations of the Cuban "threat" as a maneuver to justify "an illegal naval siege (and to impose) new sanctions against those countries or companies that trade oil and other energy derivatives with the island." Not only did the TUCA name access to energy as a fundamental human right; its statement was equally clear that aid cannot be used to extort changes in a country's political system.

While the CLC offers a stage for the urgent solidarity we must extend, the resolution that we heard last week still lacks this fundamental clarity. From now on, every overture of friendship and each container of aid must be accompanied by unconditional support for Cuba's sovereign endeavour and backed by comprehensive opposition to US imperialism. Beyond simple lobbying requests, the labour movement across Canada must exert its power in the streets and in the workplace, and make our demands known: Cuba Sí, bloqueo no! Stop the US war on Cuba! ■

United fight can win improved public healthcare system

■ FROM PG 3

labour and people's movements can win a healthcare system which rejects the drive to increase corporate profits, and instead focuses on improving the health and wellbeing of all working people in Ontario.

"The Communist Party has long called for an immediate ban on private clinics and labs, a halt and reversal of all P3 developments and contracts, and for these services to be fully provided through publicly owned and administered institutions.

"We are the Party of Dr. Norman Bethune, a pioneer of socialized medicine in Canada, and were the first political party in Canada to call for Medicare to be expanded to include full and universal coverage for dental care, vision care, pharmacare, mental health care and long-term care.

"We are proud to stand in active solidarity with all those fighting back against Ford's regressive anti-worker agenda, including those rallying across the province against this recent wave of cuts to public healthcare."

Copple says that the Communist Party also calls for putting all long-term care facilities under public ownership and operation, with funding for adequate and well-paid staff and sufficient protective equipment and procedures; for full healthcare coverage for all residents of Ontario including temporary foreign workers, international students and refugees; and for the elimination of health premiums, co-payments and the University Health Insurance Plan (UHIP).

"Mark Carney's promise to increase military spending to \$150 billion over the next few years is a huge barrier to maintaining and expanding crucial social programs like Medicare and public education. Those fighter jets, naval vessels and tanks are all going to be paid for through deep, deep cuts to those programs and other public services.

"Working people in Ontario and across Canada need healthcare, they need education, and they need decent sustainable jobs – to get there, we need to defeat Carney's war economy." ■

VFH trips increasing relative to public transit use

■ FROM PG 7

toward public transit like the TTC. But this sort of market-based approach to regulation is exactly the type the industry is willing to accept – and even quietly support – because the fees can be passed on directly to the consumer and never be borne by the company. That means prices will go up for riders, but driver pay will stay down, city streets will stay clogged and Uber's profits will stay up.

Without cracking down on the predatory VFH industry and their pernicious lobbying efforts, public transit like the TTC will be left more vulnerable to privatization. VFH trips in Toronto are already steadily increasing, up from 10 percent of daily TTC ridership in 2019 to 21 percent today. This opens the door for privatization to companies like Uber, as some municipalities including Toronto have done in recent years by offering credits for VFH rides in place of public transit. In the long term, this will further erode standards in public transit, and can lead to transit "death spirals" in which ridership declines lead to revenue losses in a vicious cycle.

Ontario Premier Doug Ford's pro-corporate Bill 98 gives the provincial government even greater control over municipal transit, and could see him roll out zone-based fares and privatize more segments of the transit lines to VFH companies. Ford's recent addition of Uber to the "Ontario Corps," which is responsible for natural disaster response, could see the



International solidarity is key for Cuba

■ FROM PG 12

that aim to meet the social and health needs of the people while protecting the island's sovereignty. There are reports that the US administration is becoming increasingly frustrated with Cuba's continued ability to resist.

It is obvious where Cuba would be today if it had been allowed to flourish without US aggression. In a May 2 address to hundreds of brigadistas from around the world, President Díaz-Canel emphasized the importance of international solidarity in countering efforts to isolate Cuba. Acknowledging the responsibility to the Revolution he said: "We will not fail you, because to fail you would be to fail the hope of all humble people on this planet."

Fernando González, President of the Cuban Institute of Friendship with the Peoples, Hero of the Republic of Cuba and a member of the Cuban Five, told the Canadian brigadistas that the Revolution will still be here when the 33rd Che Guevara Volunteer Brigade returns in 2027. ■

company ferrying goods and injured people to and from sites of natural disasters and other emergencies. Ford seems content to have Uber take over public transit and ambulance services – and likely every mode of transportation currently in public hands.

To push back on the VFH industry's worst excesses, activists in the labour and the people's movements must push City Council to stay the course on regulating the VFH industry by capping licenses in addition to fighting for levies. Implementing caps is receiving more pushback from companies like Uber because it's a bigger threat to their profits and their system of control, providing more leverage and negotiating power for workers they employ.

Ultimately, the best way to confront the VFH industry is through extensive, quality, accessible and free public transit. The reason VFH trips are increasing relative to the TTC is the chronic underfunding of the service, which has been going on for decades. Reversing that decline and winning gains will require more of the concerted organizing efforts we already see in the city, including the work done by organizations like TTCriders and advocacy from transit workers unions like ATU Local 113.

In 2018, Ford's attempt to upload control over the subway system was blocked by a coalition led by labour and the people's movements. Blocking the further selloff of transit infrastructure to companies like Uber is not only possible today, but urgent. ■

Caring economy needed, not a new arms race

■ FROM PG 2

strike in Nova Scotia – is only 63 percent of the provincial living wage. This is a huge strike. And there is a lot riding on it.

Why support CUPE workers?

The premier insists that the negotiations are over and done, that CUPE workers should accept the wage settlement other unions in long-term care have already agreed to. If CUPE workers get what they need, the government would have to increase pay for all Continuing Care Assistants (CCAs) – that is what premier Tim Houston is afraid of. He does not want to boost the pay for all the care workers in the province, even though the union's demand is a fair \$30 per hour – just 60 cents more than the living wage.

Think of what care workers do – for elderly, for disabled, for mentally ill people in residential care. Now let's think about the jobs for the boys. Let's note that the average tradesman in NS earns \$67,000 or about \$40 per hour. Even a mid-apprentice earns \$30 – 35 per hour.

We had better support the CUPE workers. After all, many of us will end our days in long-term care, and we will want physical therapy, we'll need bathing and toileting and we'll want decent food. We can't get those services without paying for them.

So much for jobs for the boys. What will really count by 2030 – when 25 percent of Nova Scotia's population is over age 65 – is the caring economy. Not the arms race. ■

Judy Haiven (jhaiven@gmail.com) is a principal of Equity Watch, a Nova Scotia based non-profit that fights against discrimination, sexism and bullying at work

WHAT'S LEFT

BC

JUNE 2-4 | PV EDITOR'S TOUR

Join PV editor Dave McKee for a discussion about working-class media in a capitalist world. Details page 2.

VANCOUVER

JUNE 6 | KARAOKE & TRIVIA

6:30 PM at the Centre for Socialist Education, #105 - 211 East Georgia. Join friends and have a great time and this fundraiser for People's Voice.

VANCOUVER

JUNE 13 | CHE BRIGADE REPORT BACK

1 PM at the Centre for Socialist Education, #105 - 211 East Georgia. Join CCFA Vancouver to hear from participants to the 32nd Che Brigade.

VANCOUVER

JUNE 28 | PUENTES DE AMOR RALLY

1 PM at the corner of Commercial and Broadway. Join CCFA Vancouver for monthly action calling for an end to the US blockade of Cuba.

WINNIPEG

JUNE 28 | END THE BLOCKADE

1-2 PM at the intersection of Portage and Main. Join the Manitoba Cuba Solidarity Committee for monthly action calling for an end to the US blockade of Cuba.

TORONTO

JUNE 5 | FROM GAZA TO HAVANA

6:30 PM at USW Hall, 25 Cecil St. International solidarity event with speakers, discussion and refreshments. Sponsor: Canadian Network on Cuba.

TORONTO

JUNE 6 | CUBA UNDER SIEGE

7 PM at USW Hall, 25 Cecil St. Event on building solidarity with Cuba, with speakers, discussion and refreshments. Sponsor: Canadian Network on Cuba.

TORONTO

JUNE 26 | TRANS MARCH

5 PM at the corner of Church and Hayden. Join the Communist Party contingent to celebrate Pride and express solidarity.

TORONTO

JUNE 28 | END THE BLOCKADE

1 PM at the US Consulate, 360 University Ave. Join CCFA Toronto and other Cuba solidarity activists for a monthly picket against the US blockade.

OTTAWA

MAY 17 | CUBA SOLIDARITY PICKET

4:30 PM at the US Embassy, 490 Sussex Drive. Join Ottawa Cuba Connections for monthly action to call for an end to the blockade.

OTTAWA

JUNE 28 | PUENTES DE AMOR RALLY

11 AM at the Cuban Embassy, 338 Main St. Monthly action in solidarity with Cuba, calling for an end to the blockade and the return of the Guantánamo base.

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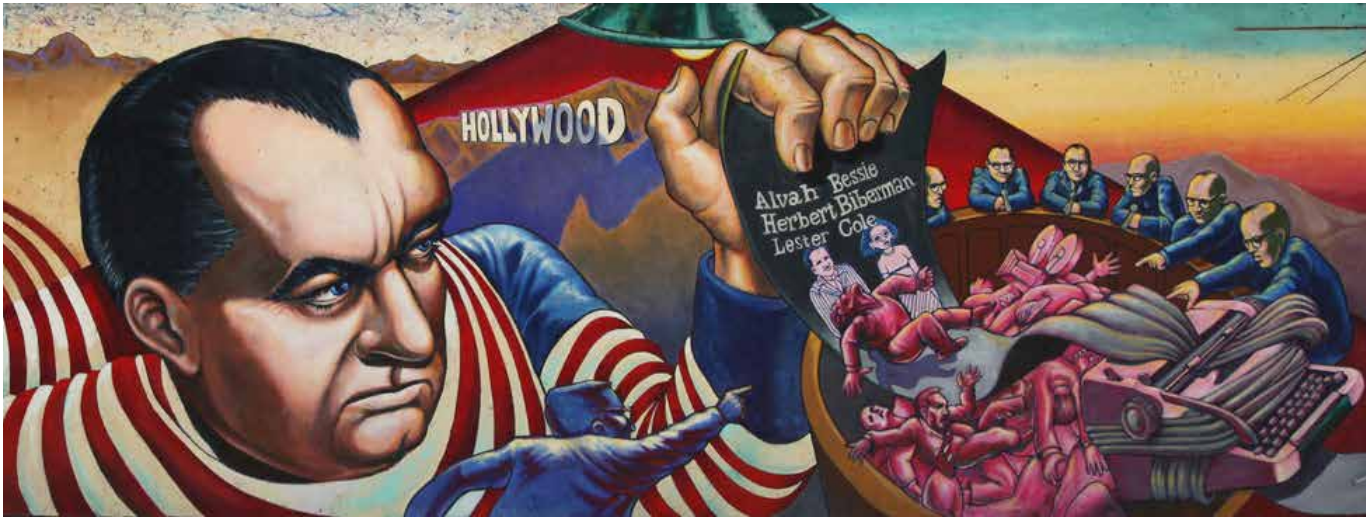
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Red Scare redux: Washington targets Cuba solidarity groups in sweeping investigation



US federal investigators at the Justice and Treasury Departments have reportedly launched a sweeping inquiry into Cuba solidarity organizations, raising the danger of a revival of McCarthyite tactics to target Americans who oppose US policy toward the island nation.

According to Fox News, the DOJ and Treasury are investigating US non-profits and activist groups that do Cuba solidarity work. The Trump administration alleges the groups coordinate lobbying, messaging, fundraising, delegations and political organizing efforts with Cuban government officials – activity the US government frames as potential violations of the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) and Treasury sanctions regulations.

Fox News claims to have “identified 145 non-profits, labour groups, advocacy organizations and activist collectives across the US that are mobilizing in support of the Cuban government and the Communist Party of Cuba” with supposedly “\$1 billion in combined annual revenue.”

The organizations targeted by Fox include CodePink, National Network on Cuba, Hands Off Cuba Committees, Nuestra América convoy organizers, People’s Forum, the Party for Socialism and Liberation, the People’s Forum, BreakThrough News, the ANSWER Coalition, the African People’s Socialist Party, the Communist Party USA, Democratic Socialists of America, the Peace and Freedom Party, the Socialist Workers Party, the National Lawyers Guild and labour unions including SEIU affiliates and the International Association of Machinists.

The Venceremos Brigade, another of the groups now under scrutiny, traces its roots to 1969, when US students and young people traveled to Cuba to participate in solidarity and labour work alongside the Cuban people.

For more than six decades, solidarity networks have operated openly, sending delegations, providing humanitarian aid and advocating for an end to a blockade that the United Nations General Assembly has voted to condemn year after year.

The blockade of Cuba has failed for over 60 years in its goal of overthrowing the government there. It has, however, impoverished ordinary Cuban people and isolated the United States from its hemispheric neighbors.

Subpoenas meant to silence dissent

All of the groups are singled out by Fox News as part of what it brands a “pro-communist Cuba ecosystem,” but most of them are not linked to one another politically, organizationally, or ideologically. It is not clear how many among them are being actively investigated at this time.

The factual basis for the investigations comes entirely from Fox News reporting, and no charges have been filed against any of the named organizations or individuals as of this writing. The escalation from investigations to formal subpoenas, however, makes the government’s intentions more obvious.

According to Fox News, the Treasury

Department’s Office of Foreign Assets Control has served formal “Requests for Information” – administrative subpoenas – on CodePink co-founder Medea Benjamin and Twitch streamer Hasan Piker seeking financial, logistical and communications records related to their participation in the March 2026 Nuestra América Convoy, which delivered desperately-needed humanitarian aid to Havana.

CodePink said that no subpoena had been received as of May 24. Benjamin posted a personal statement on X, however, declaring: “I am guilty. Guilty of loving the Cuban people. Guilty of believing Cuban children deserve medicine instead of sanctions. Guilty of believing that trying to save lives should not be treated like a crime.”

Piker took aim at Democrats who are so far not challenging the attacks on him and other Cuba activists. Rep. Jasmine Crockett, D-Texas, for instance, boosted a video posted to Threads where an individual mocked Piker. “Kamala would have never. That’s what you get for telling people to vote third party,” the video author said.

In a post to X, Piker warned, in his typical style, that the attacks won’t stop with just Cuba solidarity activists. He wrote: “every centrist blue maga who celebrates these subpoenas is a fucking moron. they think you’re all communists. they’re coming for you too.”

He further stated that centrist Democrats, whom he refers to as “blue maga,” are worried because “left flank candidates” who support Medicare for All and oppose US cooperation in Israel’s wars “are winning insurgent races.” The implication of Piker’s message was that some Democrats may feel Trump’s probes undermine left-wing voices and activists, thereby helping them maintain control of their own party.

Making the costs too high to bear

Fox News claims the government probe extends to as many as 40 US citizens who joined the Nuestra América convoy, with additional subpoenas expected. No charges have been filed against any of them, either.

The government’s legal theory is instructive for determining its possible course of action, though. Legal experts cited in the Fox News reporting note that the Treasury’s Office of Foreign Assets Control can impose civil penalties under a “strict liability” standard – meaning the government does not need to prove intent. A criminal case under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, by contrast, would require evidence that a defendant willfully violated the law.

In other words, the administration holds a loaded weapon: It can pursue public harassment campaigns against activists who traveled openly and publicly to Cuba, delivering aid, without having to prove they did anything more than go. This is precisely the kind of legal ambiguity that authoritarian governments exploit to neutralize dissent – not necessarily by winning in court, but by making the cost of activism too great to bear.

The pattern is chillingly familiar to past episodes in US history. The Trump

administration has been escalating a new McCarthyism – weaponizing federal law enforcement against the left, not to address genuine security threats, but to silence political opposition and intimidate movements that challenge the bipartisan foreign policy consensus. The Cuba “investigation” follows that blueprint precisely.

Fox News’s own reporting acknowledges a key legal fact: Under the Foreign Agents Registration Act, advocacy itself is protected under the First Amendment, and registration under FARA doesn’t prohibit political activity. Yet the spectacle of federal subpoenas, Treasury Department probes and multi-agency coordination serves a chilling function regardless of whether charges are ever filed.

Red Scare repeat

During the McCarthy era in the 1950s, the mere fact of investigation – of being named, scrutinized and summoned – was enough to destroy careers, shutter organizations and terrify entire communities of activists into silence.

A second Fox News report describes federal investigators examining a May 9 meeting in Wilmington, Calif., where a Cuban Embassy diplomat, David Ramírez Álvarez, addressed approximately 50 activists and union members. He briefed them on pending congressional legislation related to Cuba, including bills that would ease the decades-old trade embargo.

The Embassy of Cuba denied any wrongdoing, with a spokesperson stating that Cuban diplomats strictly comply with the Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations and that engaging with civil society organizations is standard diplomatic practice.

What the government is essentially criminalizing is lobbying for a change in US foreign policy.

The Fox News investigation frames the probe as flowing from National Security Presidential Memorandum 7, issued by President Trump in September 2025, which directed federal agencies to investigate “organized structures, networks, entities, organizations, funding sources” connected to political activity deemed adverse to the administration’s interests.

Accusations that the groups now facing federal scrutiny are agents of a foreign power repeat the Cold War pattern of labeling critics of capitalism and US foreign policy as agents of the Soviet Union.

Subpoenas, financial audits, and threatened prosecution are not necessarily national security work and could be a cover for political repression, as they were in the past. This new McCarthyism does not yet feature Senate hearing rooms packed with television cameras. So far, it relies on news reports from media outlets friendly to the Trump administration and letters from the Justice Department.

Just like the past McCarthyism, though, the implicit message is that dissent comes with a price. ■

The stupid idiot in the White House

STUPID
IDIOTS
LARS SVENDSEN A
PHILOSOPHY
of STUPIDITY
and COMPLETE and
UTTER LIGHT
NIGHT
IDIOCY

Stupid Idiots

Lars Svendsen

Reaktion Books (2026)

REVIEW BY ANDY HEDGECOCK

Norwegian academic Lars Svendsen writes from multiple perspectives – thinker, joker, moralist and satirist – bringing humour and erudition to the philosophy of society, popular culture and everyday life.

Previous books have tackled themes such as boredom, fashion, work, loneliness and lying. His latest explores the pervasive, spectacular and dangerous failures of cognition known as stupidity and idiocy.

He begins with definitions: stupid people fail to think while idiots think badly. Stupidity occurs when we hide behind clichés and discuss matters without real understanding. Doubt can enable us to transcend stupidity, but we become idiots if we make serious errors in our thinking.

Svendsen suggests a third category of flawed thinker – the stupid idiot – who sees erroneous ideas as self-evident truths and claims immunity from criticism. An entire chapter, “The Stupid Idiot In The White House,” is dedicated to the very model of a modern stupid idiot.

Svendsen acknowledges we are all prone to stupid idiocy. It’s a malaise with no single remedy. Evidence and examples are drawn from a range of sources and disciplines – philosophy, psychology, economics, personal experience, management science and the arts.

Contemporary ills are situated in historical contexts. Svendsen sees the elevation of feeling over thought – described by Hegel as “antihuman” – as a threat to the quality of public discourse: “When debates become little more than reports about who feels what, we are witness to a gathering of idiots.”

The philosopher Edward Winters claims that “Jokes and witticisms evaporate under the glare of analysis.” Not necessarily. Svendsen leavens his examinations of thought and behaviour with wisecracks that are not diminished by scrutiny.

This is a slender, introductory work, but the author’s scholarship is as impressive as his wit. There are detailed references, signposts to further reading and – increasingly rare in shorter books – a useful index. Arguments are cogent and for the most part well evidenced. The exception is a chapter on conservative stupidity and radical idiocy, in which the argument is vague and underdeveloped.

Stupid Idiots is an effective and entertaining overview of a fascinating aspect of epistemology. And the current distortion of public debate in the interests of a super-wealthy power elite makes it a timely and important publication. ■



Solidarity in the face of escalating aggression: Che Guevara Volunteer Brigade returns from successful 32nd delegation to Cuba

BRENT ANDERSON

On November 1 last year, Canadian airlines began announcing that all flights to Cuba were being halted due to fuel shortages on the island. The announcements were met with suspicion and condemnation since these actions align with US economic warfare against Cuba – halting Canadian flights during peak tourist season made a significant impact on the number of vacationers from Canada, Cuba’s number one source of tourists. In January the US Government announced an oil blockade and pushed Cuba further into a humanitarian and energy crisis, severely impacting essential services and the daily lives of Cubans.

At that time, there was speculation among some people that the 32nd annual Che Guevara Volunteer Work Brigade, scheduled from April 26 – May 10 this year, may be cancelled.

But through determination and careful planning, the delegation of 38 brigadistas from across Canada (including several from the US) successfully visited Cuba to express their solidarity.

The Che Guevara Brigade joined with delegations from around the world including supporters from Germany, Italy, the United States, Britain, South Africa, South Korea, Sweden, Brazil and Chile. We also met representatives from the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the BC Teachers’ Federation and CoDevelopment Canada.

We were warmly welcomed by Cubans at schools, a hospital, cultural institutions, businesses, agricultural cooperatives and industrial sectors. This included the country’s main power plant, which was offline when we visited – workers there were working 24/7 to regain power.

At the power plant we were informed that, despite significant challenges, one gigawatt of solar power (enough to power 500,000 to 750,000 homes continuously) was added to the power grid in 2025 and there are plans to add another gigawatt in 2026. Cuban scientists are also moving forward in developing ways to process the nation’s heavy crude oil. In the meantime, the limited power available is prioritized for essential services.

From 2005-2024, renewable energy represented three to four percent of the nation’s power; from 2025-2026, this number jumped to 10 percent. A recent report estimated that \$8 billion would allow Cuba to produce 93 percent of its electricity through renewable energy, with no need to import oil. Key challenges include funding and finding investors, who risk repercussions from the US government.

Historically, the international brigades stay at a camp outside Havana but this year, due to a lack of water and fuel, we stayed in hotels in Havana and Varadero. While in Havana we learned the brigades were the only guests in the hotel, and that the hotel would not be operating if we had not been visiting.

Varadero was a different experience. Without reading the news, a person would not be aware of the current crisis, except for the lower volume of tourists. Due to pre-planning by Cuba’s tourist industry, we experienced no blackouts, the internet worked well, and service was similar to previous visits to the island.

A highlight of the brigade was May Day, when 500,000 people marched to a location near the US embassy. Beginning at three in the morning, we witnessed masses of singing, dancing and celebrating Cubans. The media reported five million Cubans participated nationally in the annual march. Despite escalating US aggression, May Day delivered a strong message of Cuban unity and defiance

to the Trump administration.

During the celebratory festivities it was announced that from April 19 to May 1, eighty-one percent of Cubans over the age of 16 – 6,230,973 people – signed a petition supporting peace and sovereignty while condemning the almost 70-year US blockade, the recent oil embargo and threats of a military attack from the most powerful country on earth.

One Cuban said that if the US invades, they will face an army of six million people.

Also on May 1, the US administration announced executive order 14404 which allows for the penalization of US citizens who provide donations to certain Cuban state institutions, as well as non-US companies and institutions doing business with the Cuban government.

Sherritt Mining, a Canadian company which has a joint nickel production venture with the Cuban government, announced it would dissolve its operations due to US pressure and threats. The company is the island’s main foreign investor and a key source of foreign exchange currency, and has a history of resisting US efforts to force its withdrawal from Cuba.

Sherritt recently changed its decision to dissolve operations, with recent news reports indicating that under a non-binding agreement 55 percent of company ownership will be sold to Gillon Capital, pending US government approval. Gillon is owned by a former Trump administrator.

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Since the brigade’s return to Canada, events continue to change quickly with escalating threats and dubious maneuvering by the US. This includes Washington’s efforts to indict Raúl Castro for the 1996 downing of two airplanes flown by Miami-based counterrevolutionary terrorists – resulting in four deaths.

While the US ramps up its aggression, Cubans continue to suffer from the blockade. Within the health sector, in 2018, when Trump intensified the blockade, the infant mortality rate in Cuba was 4.0 per 1000 live births. By 2025 the rate had risen to 9.9 per 1000. This change represents a 148 per cent increase in infant mortality. According to Cuba’s Public Health Ministry, the waiting list for surgeries is over 100,000; 12,000 are children. Cancer medications are in short supply. Emigration has resulted in understaffing of medical programs.

The US blockade is killing people.

During an economics lecture we were informed that Cuba’s economy is “not functioning – it is surviving.” The blockade prevents the necessary stable investment and through various methods, as of 2025, had drained the country of over \$170 billion. The United Nations reported last year that the Cuban government has lost the economic equivalent of \$252 trillion USD in the last 18 years because of the blockade.

Despite severe US aggression, Cuba continues to work to prioritize the gains of the Revolution

■ INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY, PG 10

Youth demand a life with a future!



Young communists hold 30th convention amidst deepening youth unemployment crisis

ROB BANKS

The Young Communist League – Ligue de la jeunesse communiste Canada held its 30th Central Convention with a theme of strengthening the clubs and press. The Convention took place amidst the highest youth unemployment in a generation across the country and a deepening crisis of capitalism internationally, exemplified by war.

The discussion of the delegates during the plenary sessions reflected the increasing maturity of the YCL-LJC as noted by the General Secretary of the Communist Party of Canada, Drew Garvie, during his greetings to the Convention. The average length of delegates’ membership in the League was six years, reflecting the successful commitment to retention since the pandemic. Convention plenary sessions were focused on bringing young people into the peace and solidarity movements, building the fight for public social services especially healthcare and education, and the need to renew efforts into organizing the unorganized majority of young workers.

In his opening remarks, YCL-LJC General Secretary Ivan Byard noted the importance of the timing of the organization’s highest decision-making body: “Comrades, this convention is taking place at a moment that demands we take it seriously. The work is calling us, and it is time we answer.”

A great emphasis was placed around the discussion of how to empower the clubs to be centres of political activity and how to make the League’s magazine, Rebel Youth – Jeunesse militante, a more impactful tool for the work of young communists. There was a discussion on the need to focus on recruiting young workers, particularly from industries with a higher concentration of youth.

The Convention had a strong internationalist grounding, with delegates receiving many greetings from fraternal communist youth organizations as well as a greeting from the headquarters of the World Federation of Democratic Youth. The Convention passed resolutions in solidarity with the youth of Sudan and Western Sahara, and commitments to continuing building the Palestine solidarity movement across Canada. There was a special emphasis placed on the urgency of action needed amongst young people for solidarity with the Cuban Revolution.

Delegates adopted a focused and ambitious plan of work that placed recruitment, education and press building as the main objectives. The league renewed its commitment to building unity in action in the mass movements, with a goal of convergence of struggles against capitalism and for socialism.

The Convention also included a sold-out banquet to celebrate the work of the League over the last three years. The banquet included a speech from the Sudanese Communist Party on the current situation in Sudan and the necessity of working-class internationalism. The guests were entertained with lively musical performances from members and dear friends of the League, as the convention had emphasized the need for building spaces for culture and leisure for young people.

The banquet also hosted the ceremony of “graduating” young communists. The longest standing member of the League, Kayla W, gave a “valedictory speech” on behalf of the “graduating class of 2026.” She emphasized the importance of the YCL-LJC as the place to learn to struggle, and struggle to learn.

The Convention elected a new Central Committee of 16 with 7 alternates from coast to coast. The new CC once again has a balance between renewal and continuity and reflects the leadership of the clubs and mass movements. Ivan Byard was reelected as General Secretary.

The Convention reflected the forward march of the League as its membership tries to collectively meet the enormous challenges of the day alongside the Communist Party of Canada and within the World Federation of Democratic Youth.

The young communists concluded this Central Convention to the sound of the Internationale, pledging to meet in the struggles. ■

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