

**35th Central Convention
Communist Party of Canada
February 1-4, 2007
Toronto, Ontario**

**discussion
bulletin**

October 25, 2006 - No. 1

Call to the 35th Central Convention Communist Party of Canada

In accordance with Article 7, Section of the Constitution the Central Committee hereby issues this Call to the 35th Convention, to be held February 1-4, 2007 in Toronto. The Convention shall commence its work at 7:30 pm, Thursday February 1, 2007. Registration will open at 6 pm in the Convention Hall.

The main work of the 35th Convention will be to adopt the main Political Resolution, adopt a Plan of Work, and elect a new Central Committee, Audit and Appeals Committees, and ratify a new Executive Committee and Party Leader.

The convention may also consider amendments to the Party Constitution.

Basis of Representation

In accordance with Article 7, Section 3, the number of delegates to be elected from each province and from Québec shall be determined according to the number of Convention Assessments purchased in each province, and in Québec, by December 31, 2006, combined with the number of Initiations purchased between September 1 and December 31, 2006. Provincial Committees, Regional and City Committees, and the National Committee in Québec, shall be advised of the number to be elected in each province and in Québec, not later than January 4, 2007.

Members of the outgoing Central Committee, Audit and Appeals Committees who are not also elected delegates, will be seated at the Convention with voice, but no vote.

Nominating Conventions

Delegates to the 35th Convention shall be elected by secret ballot at Special Provincial Nominating Conventions, or Regional Nominating Conventions in the case of Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Atlantic, on the basis of one delegate for every 8 members in good standing, or major fraction thereof. Where there are less than 5 members in a Region, one delegate shall be elected.

Delegates from Québec shall be elected by secret ballot at a Special National Nominating Convention on the basis of one delegate for every three members in good standing, or major fraction thereof.

Alternates shall be elected on the same basis as delegates, on a separate ballot and following the election of delegates, on a separate ballot and following the election of delegates.

These Nominating Conventions shall be held on selected dates between January 6-7 and 20-21, 2007, to be determined by the Provincial Commit-

tees and the National Committee in Québec, in consultation with the Central Executive.

In addition to electing delegates and alternates to the 35th Convention, the Nominating Conventions may also vote on any amendments to the Draft Political Resolution properly submitted to the Nominating Convention, by any Party club or member in good standing; and may conduct any other business relevant to the 35th Convention. Those amendments or resolutions receiving the support of a Nominating Convention, together with all other resolutions, shall be forwarded to the Central Convention Committee by 6 pm, PST, January 23, 2007.

Any member in good standing may submit an amendment or resolution

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directly to the Central Convention Committee, by 6 pm, January 23, 2007. Members are not obliged, but are encouraged, to place amendments before the Nominating Conventions.

The Nominating Conventions may also, by secret ballot, consider nominations for the Central Committee, Central executive, Audit and Appeals Committees, and Party Leader. Those nominations receiving the support of a Special Convention shall be forwarded to the 35th Convention Committee by 6 pm, January 23, 2007, together with all other nominations received by the Nominating Convention.

The outgoing Central Committee recommends that the incoming Central Committee be comprised of 25 members made up as follows: 6 from BC; 1 from Alberta; 2 from Manitoba; 10 from Ontario; 5 from Québec; and 1 from the Atlantic.

In accordance with Article 7, Section 6, delegating to Nominating Conventions shall be reminded prior to voting, to give due regard to candidates' leadership qualities; links with the working class and democratic forces; the national character of Canada; areas representation; balance of experienced comrades and the timely promotion of younger comrades; taking into account the systematic advancement of women, Aboriginal people and People of Colour.

Eligibility

As set out in Article 7, Section 3, to be eligible for election as a delegate to the Central Convention, one shall have been a member in continuous good standing for at least one (1) year.

As set out in Article 7, Section 6, to be eligible for election to the Central

Committee, one shall have been a member in continuous good standing for at least two (2) years.

As set out in Article 9, Section 9, to be eligible for election to the Central Appeals Committee, one shall have been a member in continuous good standing for not less than five (5) years.

As set out in Article 10, Section 2, to be eligible for election to the central Audit Committee, one shall have been a member in continuous good standing for not less than five (5) years, shall not be a member of the Central Committee or on the payroll of the Party, and shall be within access of the city in which the Central headquarters is located, that is, Toronto.

The eligibility requirements for alternate delegates, and for alternate members of the committees listed, are equivalent to the eligibility requirements set out above.

Convention fees for Delegates and Alternates shall be paid by the Provincial, or Regional Committee in the province where they were elected, or by the PCQ in Québec.

Transportation, Billets, Child Care, Accessibility

Transportation costs for duly elected delegates will be paid for by the Convention Committee. Transportation for alternate delegates and alternate members of outgoing committees, will not be paid for by the Convention Committee due to the high cost of cross-country transit. The Central Committee hopes that many comrades might be able to attend drawing on their own, and other, resources however, and the Convention Committee will do everything possible to facilitate this with flight arrangements, and available billets.

Transportation will be arranged by the Conventions Committee, as soon as the names of accredited delegates are known, but not later than January 23, 2007, in order to keep transportation costs as low as possible.

Requests for billets must be received by January 23, 2007.

Requests for childcare must be received by January 23, 2007.

Requests for special needs of any kind should also be received by January 23, 2007, to allow these to be met, if at all possible.

The Convention Committee will make every effort to ensure that the convention hall, washrooms, meeting rooms, and other facilities are wheelchair accessible.

Discussion Bulletin

The Discussion Bulletin will publish written contributions of up to 1,500 words, submitted by members, clubs, committees and friends on the Draft Political Resolution and any other matters properly before the Convention. There will be at least two more issues of the Discussion Bulletin, and may be more if a sufficient number of contributions are received. More than one contribution per member or club may be made, however only one contribution will be published in each issue of the Bulletin.

The Discussion Bulletin will be the only forum for written contributions to be circulated across the country; as a result Comparty will be suspended during the pre-Convention period. The Discussion Bulletins will be circulated to all members of the Party, through their clubs, or in the case of members at large, via the Pro-

vincial or Regional Committees. Club Executives are asked to organize special meetings of each club during the pre-convention period to ensure energetic theoretical and political discussion of the Political Resolution and other materials before the Convention. Clubs, as well as individuals, should develop their thinking on key questions, and express their views in the Discussion Bulletin so that all members and clubs can respond and comment.

Contributions should be sent to:

Kimball Cariou, Editor, Discussion Bulletin, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, V5L 3J1, e-mail: cpc35@telus.net.

Comrades, the 35th Central convention will coincide with the 85th Anniversary of the founding of the Workers' Party in February 1922. The struggle 85 years ago to build a strong and influential Communist Party in conditions of illegality and repression, have important parallels today as we fight to stop the drive to the right: to war, reaction and state terrorism, in Canada today.

This convention will include many delegates who have never participated in a Central Convention, and who will add new vitality, insights and experience to our deliberations.

We look forward to a successful and exciting 35th Convention, and invite all of our members and friends to attend and participate in the preparations leading up to it.

**Central Committee,
Communist Party of Canada
September 30, 2006**

Making Contributions to the *Discussion Bulletin*

With this Bulletin, we begin a 3-month period of oral and written party-wide discussion leading up to the convening of the 35th Central Convention, which is the highest decision-making body of our Party. All documents and resolutions coming up for consideration at the Convention should receive the widest attention and debate throughout the Party. Discussion and debate involving all Party members, as well as efforts to solicit the views and contributions of our friends and supporters, will deepen and enrich our preparations for a successful Central Convention.

It is the democratic right and political responsibility of members to participate in these discussions. The debate will continue in clubs, in this Bulletin, at provincial, regional and Québec National Committee meetings and conventions, and at the Central Convention itself. The Central Executive Committee will also arrange online moderated discussions, to allow for greater participation by members in areas where there are no Party clubs.

This Bulletin includes the Main Political Resolution drafted by the

Central Committee for party-wide consideration, including sections dealing with:

- The International Situation and the Fight for Peace
- The Situation in Canada and the Fightback; and
- Moving Into Action: the Party of Peace, Democracy and Socialism.

We will publish further Discussion Bulletins before the Central Convention. The next Bulletin, which we aim to publish by mid-November, will include the first round of submissions to the pre-convention discussion.

All members are encouraged to make submissions to this Bulletin. Submissions can be on topics relating to the political analysis and assessments contained in the draft Political Resolution, issues concerning Party organization, policy, program, tactics, leadership, and so on. Amendments to the Draft Resolution, and other special resolutions and motions proposed by Party Clubs and/or other Party bodies will also be published.

Get your submissions in early! This will raise key issues for discussion right away for the whole mem-

bership, so avoid the temptation to wait while others start writing.

Printed copies of the Bulletin will be distributed to all members. Electronic versions of the Bulletin will also be circulated in PDF format, and posted on the Party website, www.comunist-party.ca.

Submissions should be sent to the Editor of the Discussion Bulletin, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1, or emailed to cpc35@telus.net.

As stated in the Call, contributions should be limited to 1,500 words, and there is a limit of one contribution per club or individual in each issue of the Bulletin.

Please note that the final deadline for receiving amendments to the Draft Political Resolution is Tuesday, January 23, 2007, at 6 pm (Pacific Standard Time).

For help in sending your submissions, please contact the Central office (416-469-2446), the National Committee of the Parti communiste du Québec, or one of the provincial party offices. The Editor of the Discussion Bulletin can be contacted at 604-255-2041.

Main Political Resolution

Draft Resolution adopted by the Central Committee for consideration at the 35th Central Convention, CPC

I. Introduction

1) Our 35th Convention meets at a time of unprecedented dangers facing our class, our country and all humanity, arising from growing militarism and war, economic plunder, vicious attacks on the democratic and social rights of the peoples, and increasing environmental destruction. Each of these crises has its specific features and content, but all emanate from the same source – the prevailing socio-economic system of capitalism at its present imperialist stage. This situation makes the fight for peace, to save our environment, to defend democratic rights, and for social advance an imperative task of our times. The struggle today for progressive reform is inextricably tied to the struggle for the revolutionary transformation from capitalism to socialism.

2) The political, economic and social offensive of imperialism is generating stiff opposition. Mass resistance – to unemployment and poverty, to national, social and gender oppression, to environmental devastation, and to fascism and war – is growing in many parts of the world. These class, democratic and anti-imperialist struggles, while still largely defensive in character and often diverted into diverse directions, are nevertheless drawing millions upon millions into political organization and action. The task of the left forces and particularly the Communists is to help build these mass struggles and infuse them with revolutionary perspective and content,

opening the door to the socialist alternative.

3) In Canada, hard-won gains achieved by the working class and its democratic allies are being systematically erased by right-wing governments on behalf of finance capital – both Canadian and foreign. The federal Conservative government under PM Stephen Harper is the main political force driving this anti-working class, anti-democratic and pro-war assault in our country.

4) Public services and programs are being gutted. Labour and democratic rights are being stripped away. Real wages and income supports are being eroded, resulting in lower living standards for most workers and grinding poverty, homelessness and despair for the most under-paid and those on fixed incomes. The last vestiges of Canadian sovereignty are being shredded as our natural resources, industry and service sectors are sold off to the highest foreign bidder – primarily US-based capital – while state policy is brought into lock-step with those of US imperialism at home and abroad.

5) The most urgent challenge facing our Party today is to help mobilize and strengthen resistance on the broadest possible basis, and to work consistently and tirelessly to help forge it into a united, combative movement of labour and other mass democratic forces capable of confronting and defeating the current offensive of the ruling class and its governments, beginning with the defeat of the Harper Conservative government in Ottawa.

6) In order to achieve these aims and

fulfill its historic responsibility, the Party must itself grow and develop in a *qualitative* way, asserting its role as the revolutionary party of the Canadian working class. It must commit itself to overcoming weaknesses, to strengthening its discipline and collectivity, and to reasserting its Marxist-Leninist character in both theory and in practice.

II. The International Situation and the Fight for Peace

7) Since our last Convention, the international situation has continued to develop in an ominous direction, reflecting growing instability and great dangers to peace and the independence and sovereignty of the peoples. As our Program notes: “The dramatic reversals suffered by socialism in the last decade of the 20th century have shifted the balance of world social and class forces ... Imperialism is taking full advantage of the new situation arising from this historic, though temporary, setback. The imperialist powers, and U.S. imperialism in particular, are intensifying efforts to extend their economic, political and military domination to every corner of the world.”

8) But this reactionary offensive faces strong resistance that imposes restraints on the aggressive drive of US imperialism to extend its economic, political, ideological and military hegemony, proving that it does not have a free hand to carry out its policy.

9) This deteriorating global situation derives in the first place from the insatiable drive for profit and the accu-

mulation of wealth which is basic to capitalism, and the desperate efforts of imperialism to overcome deepening contradictions and crises – economic, political environmental, social and cultural – which are maturing in the belly of the global system. Capitalist ‘globalization’ and the neoliberal state policies of privatization, deregulation, attacks on labour and environmental standards, and the dismantling of social programs, are causing widespread impoverishment and unemployment, widening social disparities, and increasing volatility in the global economy.

10) This deepening systemic crisis not only foreshadows more wars, more oppression, more poverty and misery for the mass of humanity. It also takes place in the context of an intensifying environment crisis that becomes over more critical and urgent. Soil depletion and desertification, over-harvesting, and toxic dumping on land and in our rivers, oceans and our atmosphere are degrading the biosphere as never before. Most serious threat of all is global warming. Scientists now project that average temperatures may soon reach an average not seen for the past million years, resulting in rising ocean levels and catastrophic climate changes. In the face of impending disaster, imperialism continues its wars and occupations, largely with the aim of controlling vital energy resources, even though the emission of hydrocarbons is the key human factor in global warming.

11) Impervious to the growing catastrophic threats of wars and environmental destruction, the Bush Administration, on behalf of the leading imperialist state, has launched the most expansive and costly military build-up in world history to better enforce its hegemonic ambitions and to punish

any peoples, nations or states which refuse to succumb to its dictates. Despite growing international appeals for comprehensive disarmament, it is significantly increasing its lethal arsenal of weapons of mass destruction and its “star wars” program. While hypocritically accusing and threatening other states of ‘military ambitions,’ the U.S. has adopted a first-strike nuclear policy and is developing so-called “limited” nuclear weapons. The U.S. is continuing to expand both the membership and global reach of NATO as a key instrument to maintain its global military supremacy.

12) With the support of the other leading imperialist states, the U.S. arrogantly dismisses and violates the principles of the UN Charter, the Geneva Convention and other established international law. It seeks to transform the role of the UN, especially the Security Council, into a hostage to the pressures and blackmail by the world’s main military powers. This again raises the urgent need for a real democratization of the UN, free from the imperialist chains that bind it, as part of the struggle for a new policy of international relations among sovereign and equal countries based upon the principle of non-interference and steered towards the dissolution of military blocs.

13) Fifteen years after the supposed ‘end’ of the Cold War, imperialism is once again stepping up its ideological attack on the idea of socialism and its main purveyors, the Communist parties and revolutionary movements around the world. This offensive includes the promotion of national chauvinism, ‘cosmopolitanism’, militarism and fascist concepts and policies as well as religious radicalism and fundamentalism which – even though sometimes also influential in the resistance movements – is essentially

reactionary in content. In Europe, there are repeated attempts in the Parliamentary Assembly of the European Community (PACE) to approve a viciously anti-communist resolution – one which completely rewrites history of the 20th century by falsely equating socialism with fascism. In the Czech Republic, Slovakia and several other Eastern European countries there are overt political and legal attacks on the rights of Communist Parties, Young Communist Leagues and mass organizations “associated” with the Communist movement. Elsewhere – from Ecuador to South Africa – crude anti-communist ‘scare’ campaigns are once again invoked in a desperate effort by reactionary forces to stem the growth of anti-capitalist and revolutionary ideas among the working class and people.

14) The military adventurism of US imperialism in recent years is however suffering grave difficulties and is igniting growing opposition around the world. The US-led occupations of Afghanistan and Iraq face stiffening resistance in these countries. As the financial costs of these imperialist aggressions climb, as reports of atrocities filter out, and lists of fatalities of occupying troops mount, so too does the anti-occupation movement grow around the world, not least within the United States itself.

15) The Communist Party calls for the immediate removal of all foreign forces and the restoration of national sovereignty to the peoples of Iraq, and full compensation to the Iraqi people for the destruction and devastation of their country. The CPC also expresses its solidarity with all those genuinely committed to building a democratic, secular and independent federal state in Iraq. We also condemn the continuing foreign occupation of Afghanistan, and call on all peace-loving Canadi-

ans to oppose Canada's aggressive military 'mission' in that country and to demand the immediate return of all Canadian forces from Afghanistan.

16) The stunning defeat of Israel's brutal bombardment and invasion of Lebanon is the most recent example of the deepening crisis in the imperialist agenda for world domination. Israel's horrific military onslaught, undertaken with the full support and encouragement of US imperialism, resulted in the catastrophic destruction of much of Lebanon's infrastructure. It killed some 1200 innocent civilians and drove million from their homes. But the Lebanese national resistance held firm, dealing both a military and moral defeat to the Zionist Israeli aggressors. In the process, it also set back US imperialism's plans to provoke war with Iran and possibly Syria – the next step in an overall strategy to impose a "new Middle East" which would secure US domination over this region and its vital oil resources.

17) Our Party considers that the attempts by the U.S. and other imperialist states to foment a crisis and confrontation with Iran over its nuclear energy program are a serious provocation and a possible prelude to aggression and war against Iran. The CPC strongly opposes this orchestrated campaign and calls on all states to find a peaceful, negotiated solution to this problem. This in no way confers support for the Iranian fundamentalist regime, which has committed numerous and ongoing violations of the human, labour and democratic rights of the Iranian people, and the CPC expresses its full support for the democratic, secular and progressive forces of Iran in their struggle for a just and democratic transformation of their country.

18) Our Party reiterates its condem-

nation of the expansionist policies of the Israeli state. We denounce the recent re-occupation of Gaza, the destruction of its infrastructure, and the kidnapping of elected Palestinian officials and others. We demand that Canada grant full recognition to the elected government in the Palestinian Authority, and call for the dismantling of the hideous and illegal "wall" and the removal of all settlements. A just and lasting political settlement of the Middle East must be based on an immediate end to Israel's illegal occupation of all Palestinian territories, including East Jerusalem, seized in the 1967 war and the establishment of a viable and genuinely independent Palestinian state; guaranteeing the right of return for all Palestinian refugees; and recognizing and developing peaceful and cooperative relations with all states in the Middle East. There is no other "road map" to a just and lasting peace in the region.

19) No continent has been more ravaged by imperialism than Africa. Neoliberal policies imposed by the imperialist states (through the IMF and the World Bank) have led to mass impoverishment, disease and famine. Foreign indebtedness has skyrocketed, while overseas development aid has plummeted by some 40 percent (from \$18.7 to \$10 billion) over the last fifteen years. Over 300 million people live on less than \$2 per day, one-third of the population of the continent is undernourished, and twenty-seven countries are in need of emergency food relief. Mass poverty gives rise to the spread of tuberculosis, cholera and typhoid, as well as the ravages of malaria. 28 million are infected with HIV/AIDS— 8 percent of the entire adult prevalence – causing 2.3 million deaths each year. Imperialist intrigues and direct military intervention in a number of states from Sudan to the

Congo have exacerbated ethnic strife and regional wars.

20) In Asia, the U.S. continues to expand its military presence in a number of countries. With the support of the newly elected militarist government in Japan, it is once again fomenting tensions on the Korean peninsula, directing renewed threats against the DPRK following its nuclear weapons test, despite the wishes of the majority of the Korean people in both North and South to remove all U.S. troops from the peninsula and move towards peaceful re-unification. These moves in Asia are part of a larger strategic objective to extend US hegemony in the region at the expense of Russia – a storehouse of vast resources – and to surround a surging China which US imperialism considers the greatest long-term threat to its unfettered domination, not only in Asia and the Pacific but also on a global scale. The strengthening of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), regrouping China, Russia and a number of other Central and South Asian states, is an important development counteracting the expansion of US hegemony on that continent.

21) U.S. ruling circles are particularly determined to consolidate domination in this hemisphere, but are confronted by growing opposition throughout Latin America as well. Rejection of US imperialist domination and the ruinous imposition of neoliberal policies are moving millions of working people, youth, women, and indigenous peoples throughout South and Central America into action in the streets, workplaces, and at the ballot box. The deepening of the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela, under the leadership of Hugo Chavez Frias and with the broad support and participation of the masses of workers and the most impoverished and oppressed sections of the people,

is the most concentrated and dynamic expression of this process. The recent victory of Evo Morales and the MAS (Movement Towards Socialism) in Bolivia, and the subsequent bold steps to nationalize Bolivia's petrochemical sector and undertake agrarian land reform, together with the victory of the Frente Amplio in Uruguay, have added to the left and anti-imperialist momentum sweeping Latin America. It now appears that Brazil, the largest and most economically and politically important state in Latin America, will continue to be led by the progressive government of President "Lula" de Silva, despite a frantic, despicable campaign of the right forces and US imperialism to dislodge it. Left forces in Mexico, Ecuador, El Salvador, Nicaragua and a number of other South American countries are also making significant gains.

22) US imperialism is desperately trying to stem and reverse the revolutionary tide that is sweeping over much of Latin America. Following the collapse of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), the Bush Administration is scrambling to put in place a number of bilateral trade pacts with individual countries to shore up its economic interests in the region. It is expanding its support to the fascist Uribe regime in Colombia in a desperate attempt to contain and defeat the revolutionary insurgency led by the FARC-EP. It is intensifying its economic, political and ideological efforts to isolate and destabilize the progressive governments in Venezuela and Bolivia, and is rapidly constructing an archipelago of military bases as a launching pad for direct military intervention if all else fails.

23) Our Party expresses our complete solidarity with the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela and with the new

MAS government in Bolivia, as well as with the other left and progressive governments and movements throughout Latin America, and welcomes the establishment of the ALBA economic bloc ("Bolivarian Alternative for Latin America and the Caribbean") inaugurated by Cuba, Venezuela and Bolivia, as the progressive alternative to the FTAA and related U.S.-driven pro-corporate trade pacts. We condemn the attempts of the Bush Administration to isolate, destabilize and overturn the people's governments in Venezuela and Bolivia. We also condemn the continuing violations of basic democratic and human rights under the fascist Uribe Regime in Colombia, and express our full solidarity with the oppressed workers, peasants and other working people of Colombia, and with the insurgent forces of the country led by the FARC-EP. We call upon the Government of Canada to scrap the list of so-called "terrorist organisations" created under the proto-fascist "anti-terrorism" legislation, a list which includes the FARC-EP. The CPC commits itself to strengthening its active solidarity with the working class and people's movements and progressive governments throughout Latin America.

24) Socialist Cuba however remains the primary target of imperialism in this hemisphere. Cuba is a beacon of light to working people throughout Latin America and the world. The heroic achievements of the Cuban people and their revolution – providing universal, free education and healthcare for all, ending racial and gender oppression and inequality, defending national sovereignty in the face of unremitting pressures, invasions and US-sponsored terrorist attacks, and consistently advancing a principled foreign policy imbued with selfless internationalism and human

solidarity – stand in stark contrast to the exploitative, predatory character of capitalism. That is why the Bush Administration and the ruling class interests it represents are so intent on destroying the Cuban Revolution. We are confident that the counter-revolutionary schemes against Cuba will once again end in complete failure, and we express our full and continued solidarity with the heroic Cuban Revolution. The CPC again demands the immediate release of the "Cuban Five" from US jails, and calls for the immediate extradition of the anti-Cuban terrorist Luis Posada Carriles to Venezuela for re-trial for the bombing of a Cuban airliner in 1973 and other crimes against the Cuban people.

25) Our Party also expresses its solidarity with the recent election of President René Préval in Haiti, despite nefarious efforts to steal the election and deny his overwhelming victory. The Communist Party demands a full public exposure and repudiation of Canada's collusion in the unlawful ousting of former President Aristide and its support for the bloody and criminal coup which followed, along with the immediate return of Canadian soldiers and police from Haiti.

* * * * *

26) At the global level, the offensive of imperialism against the peoples of the world is itself unfolding in a contradictory way, reflected in both the direct collusion of the leading imperialist states and centres in pursuit of their common interests, and at the same time increasing rivalries and struggles between the main imperialist powers for supremacy. As our Program notes: "Contradictions within the imperialist camp itself are sharpening. While the imperialist powers have a common interest in imposing a single global

market which they can dominate and control, the three main imperialist centres – the U.S., the European Union (EU), and the emerging Asian bloc led by Japan – are engaged in a bitter struggle over the division of the spoils of global domination. As the world capitalist economy becomes ever more volatile, each imperialist centre seeks to protect its privileged position within those markets it already dominates (its so-called “sphere of influence”) while simultaneously attempting to penetrate and supplant its rivals in other national and regional markets.”

27) This developing inter-imperialist rivalry, combined with growing resistance in most ‘developing’ or ‘third world’ countries and of the anti-globalization movement to exploitative pro-corporate trade pacts, led to the collapse of the Doha Round of the WTO talks. While the attempts led by US imperialism (supported in large measure by the other imperialist centres) to impose a new “global economic architecture” to serve the interests of international finance capital have not by any means ended, internal differences within the imperialist camp have stymied their efforts, at least for the moment.

28) While Washington is encountering increasing difficulties securing its regional economic and political domination in this hemisphere, the consolidation of the European Union is also suffering setbacks. In Eastern Europe, the conditions of the working class continue to deteriorate following the restoration of capitalism in the 1990s. International intrigues and manipulations, along the model of the so-called “Orange Revolution”, in Georgia, Ukraine, Byelorussia and elsewhere conspire to twist and negate the democratic expression of the people to serve imperialist interests. Meanwhile, mass

opposition is growing throughout the continent to the “European model” envisaged under the Stability Pact, the Lisbon Strategy and the Bolkestein Directive. This imperialist “Europe” – which engraves as mandatory neo-liberal policies under its proposed constitution, which undermines sovereignty of the peoples and member countries, which impoverishes democracy and which champions militarization in coordination with the USA through NATO – is being increasingly rejected by the masses of working people in many of these countries, as indicated by the recent referendum defeat of the EU Constitution in France, and in numerous other polls and surveys.

29) The character and dynamics of inter-imperialist contradictions require greater attention and study. While for the most part, the other imperialist powers are conceding the leading role to U.S. imperialism due to its large economic and military power, they are manoeuvring to strengthen their regional hegemony in Europe and Asia, and competing for dominance in the Middle East and Africa. Euro-based and Japanese transnational corporations are also increasing their penetration into markets in the Western Hemisphere, including Canada. Left unimpeded, in the longer run this inter-imperialist rivalry to ‘re-divide the world’ will exacerbate tensions and lead to inter-imperialist war.

30) For all of these reasons, the development and growth of the world peace movement must be a top priority for the Communists everywhere. Every possible force, from every stratum of society, that stand opposed to aggression and war and who oppose militarism and the burgeoning arms build-up and arms trade, should be welcome in this broad movement. At the same

time, we recognize the decisive importance of building up the most advanced anti-imperialist sections of that movement, represented internationally by the World Peace Council. The recent re-establishment of the Canadian Peace Congress, an affiliate of the WPC, is an important achievement which will strengthen the anti-imperialist sections of the broad peace movement under the umbrella of the Canadian Peace Alliance. Our party gives full support to the development and growth of the Canadian Peace Congress, as well as to the CPA and the local coalitions which have been the main forces in building the large anti-war demonstrations and campaigns of the last four years.

31) Now more than ever, the expansion and consolidation of the broadly-based democratic and anti-imperialist front on a global scale is urgently needed, one that is capable of bringing together all the democratic and progressive forces to challenge the economic and political agenda of transnational finance capital and its imperialist states, and to win social and economic alternatives. As we have stated previously, the international communist movement has a vital role to play in constructing such a broad global front, and our Party will continue to work to promote greater cohesion and unity of action within the communist movement as a central priority of our international work. We welcome recent initiatives to strengthen the coordination and joint action organized through the annual International Meeting of Communist & Workers’ Parties, including the establishment of a permanent Working Group, the expanded *Solidnet* service (www.solidnet.org), and the publication of the *Information Bulletin*. We should also pay increased attention to developing regional forms of coopera-

tion and joint action among sister parties in this hemisphere, as well as developing closer bilateral ties with individual parties around the world.

III. The situation in Canada and the fightback

32) More than ever today, it is necessary to view politics in Canada, in particular the working class and the labour movement, in an international and historical context. It is decisively important to resist introspective or pragmatic approaches, which lack a dialectical compass pointing ahead to the defeat of capitalism, and back through the generations of class struggle. It is only within these parameters that the stages of class struggle can be identified, that the Canadian working class can be measured as a component of the entire world movement. It is also important to remember that the class struggle is the engine of economic, political and social change, and that the producers of this world – whether in high tech industrial plants or hillside farms in Chiapas – are the creators and source of all social wealth.

33) The most acute problems and needs of the Canadian people are those of a multi-national population living in a bourgeois state marked by conditions of national inequality, oppression and racism. This state itself is a prize in inter-imperialist rivalry, in great danger of being entirely swallowed and “deep-integrated” by the most powerful imperialist power, the United States.

34) One characteristic of the national bourgeoisie in most imperialist countries is the tendency to gain economic or military advantage for their own

interests, while acting in transient alliances to exploit the entire globe. Those sections of the ruling class around Harper and the Conservatives do not even pursue this course. They seek to enrich themselves through servility to U.S. imperialism, delivering the peoples of Canada, our resources and our future generations, to the agenda of exploitation, militarism and environmental destruction which mark imperialism in its advanced stage. The neoliberal attack clears the way for seizure of our resources, privatization of our public assets and social programs, conscription of our youth into military occupation campaigns, control of our population, and the imposition and enforcement of corporate laws.

35) The success or failure of the fightback by working people must be judged against these conditions. This is the environment in which the struggles and movements of the people must be connected, and where our economic and political agendas must be coalesced into tactical components of a common struggle.

36) The situation in Canada since our Party’s 34th Central Convention in January 2004 has been characterized by a growing class polarization, sharp attacks on the working class and on Canadian sovereignty and social programs. But while monopoly finance capital has been successful in moving the political ‘centre-of-gravity’ to the Right in Parliament and most provincial legislatures, the ruling circles have not managed to win over public support, especially among the working class, for their reactionary neoliberal program. Working people have not shifted to the right in large numbers, particularly around such vital issues as war and peace, privatization of healthcare and education, protection of

the environment, or the sell-out of Canadian sovereignty. In fact, resistance to the right-wing agenda is growing on many fronts.

37) Rather than reflecting subjective factors such as “shifting values”, the drive to the right is part of a worldwide capitalist offensive. Since profits are generated through the exploitation of wage labour, capitalists are forced by the competitive nature of the system to invest higher and higher proportions of capital into machinery, equipment, and raw materials; thus, the rate of profit falls over time. To offset this decline, the ruling classes in the imperialist countries such as Canada are engaged in a long-term drive to impose neoliberal economic policies – driving down wages, imposing longer hours and harsher working conditions, weakening unions, privatizing valuable public assets, cutting social benefits, transferring the tax burden onto the backs of middle- and low-income earners, expanding military spending, and using “trade deals” and wars to eliminate cross-border barriers to the flow of capital. The bourgeois propaganda machine works overtime to break down resistance against these corporate policies, to shift social consciousness by spreading right-wing ideology.

38) Another objective factor in the drive to the right in Canada is the growing power of foreign, and especially US capital. After nearly two decades of “free trade,” the post-war penetration of the Canadian economy is accelerating. Sectors such as manufacturing, energy, steel, forestry, mining, and retail are increasingly foreign-owned, with sharply negative impacts such as mass layoffs. Linked closely with the reactionary imperialist circles which dominate the US, the Canadian ruling class increasingly looks to ul-

tra-right US forces to guide its political and economic agenda. This is a key factor behind such sell-outs as the softwood lumber deal pushed through by the federal Tories, and the Harper government's slavish support for US foreign policy. This sell-out policy of the ruling class must be met with more powerful struggles by the labour and democratic forces to defend our sovereignty – the right of the peoples of Canada to determine our economic and social policies.

39) Despite bourgeois claims to the contrary, capitalism remains the same crisis-ridden economic system it has always been. The Canadian economy continues to be hit by cycles of boom and bust, recovery and crisis. The long-term trend is towards further concentration of wealth and ownership at the top, and increasing desperation and poverty at the bottom. While the corporate media claims that workers are reaping the benefits of the current economic “boom,” the reality is that even at the height of this economic upturn, over one million Canadians are officially counted as jobless. In some parts of the country, the spike in resource prices has led to a shortage of certain skilled trades and some limited wage gains. But the bigger picture remains – an overall decline in manufacturing employment, cuts in the public sector, and a long-term trend towards low-wage, part-time and precarious employment. There are ominous signs of a new economic crisis, such as the downturn in US housing prices which may foretell a collapse with severe consequences for Canadian working people. There will be another recession here – the only question is how soon, and how deep.

40) The real winners in today's economy are the corporations. Profits are at record levels, yet wages are fall-

ing as a share of the overall economy, and inequality is growing wider. Over the past fifteen years, productivity in Canada has advanced by close to 2% per year, while the real wages of the bottom half of the workforce have barely increased. Even unionized workers with some bargaining power have received only very modest real wage increases. While the big energy monopolies reap enormous profits from rising oil prices, working people face devastating home heating bills and fuel costs.

41) Corporate pre-tax profits now account for a record-high share of Canada's national income – 14.6% of GDP compared to a twenty-five year average of 10%. Pre-tax corporate profits in the second quarter of 2006 were \$196.1 billion, compared to \$183.7 billion in the same quarter of 2005. Yet the corporate tax-rate was cut from 28% in 2000, to 21% in 2006.

42) There are many other indicators of widening economic and social inequality. The 2001 Census showed that incomes for the richest one-tenth of the population grew by 14% over the previous decade, while the bottom tenth saw an increase of less than 1%; this trend is especially pronounced in major cities such as Toronto, where the wealthiest 10% of families received \$27 in income for every \$1 received by the poorest 10% of families. Taking account of inflation, minimum wages and social assistance rates are far below the levels of the 1980s, driving millions of Canadians deeper into poverty. One fifth of Canadian children live below the poverty line, making a mockery of Parliament's vow to end child poverty by the year 2000. Homelessness is skyrocketing; in Vancouver, the number of people living on the streets is projected to nearly triple by the year 2010, as low-income

housing is closed down leading up to the Winter Olympics.

43) There is a sharp racist edge to poverty in Canada. Right across the country, Aboriginal peoples remain by far the poorest section of the population, with the highest school dropout, unemployment, and incarceration rates. On many reserves and other Aboriginal communities, residents lack clean drinking water, and health conditions are abysmal. Efforts to protect treaty rights and to regain territories stolen through centuries of ruling class theft, such as the heroic struggles of Grassy Narrows First Nation against the corporate plunder of their resources or that of the Six Nations at Caledonia, which have been met with police brutality and racist violence.

44) The racialization of poverty also envelops other people of colour – both Canadian-born and recent immigrants – who are forced into the lowest-paid, temporary and precarious types of employment. The circumstances of undocumented and foreign workers are even worse. Given the high cost of living, such workers are often driven to hold down two and even three jobs to make ends meet.

45) Young people also face mounting economic and social problems, such as high unemployment rates, enormous student debt loads, inadequate apprenticeship programs, marginalized jobs, and the introduction of discriminatory “training” minimum wage levels. Instead of creating jobs and training for youth, the Harper Tories are stepping up military recruitment drives, seeking to turn young people into cannon fodder for imperialist wars and occupations.

46) Despite widespread demands to address these issues, Tory and Liberal governments alike have continued to

push the corporate agenda of cuts to social programs. Less than 40% of unemployed workers are even eligible to receive EI benefits. Provincial governments of all stripes have slashed or frozen social assistance rates, and pensions keep falling further behind inflation. The attack on universal Medicare, led by the provincial governments of BC, Ontario and Alberta, while federal governments do little to stop them, is rapidly creating two-tier health care, a system which preys on the desperate and allows the rich to buy their way to the front of the line.

47) Women's rights are coming under increasing attack. The right-wing agenda of the Harper Tories and their social-conservative and fundamentalist supporters aims to roll back the social conditions and political rights of women to that which existed in the early-1970s when the modern women's movement was born. Women in Canada continue to suffer a disproportionately high rate of poverty and victims of violence and abuse. The first small steps towards a comprehensive Canada-wide childcare system have been reversed by the Harper Tories, who have also slashed support for government programs to promote gender equality. Most women's centres across the country have been closed by funding cuts, leaving millions of women with nowhere to turn for help in their communities. The ultra-right opponents of equality are mobilizing to strike down same-sex marriage and women's reproductive rights, and hard-won progress towards pay equity in the federal sector is also under fire. The decision of the Harper government to cut funding to any women's group which engages in "political advocacy" is particularly outrageous. This is nothing but an overt attempt to intimidate and gag Canadian women and their organizations from speaking out

against oppression and injustice.

48) In much of rural Canada, especially the Prairies, farmers are facing the bleakest economic prospects in decades. Farm incomes are at record lows, input costs keep rising, and corporate domination of agriculture is growing stronger through policies such as seed patents. But instead of advancing policies to protect family farms, the Tories are pushing the agribusiness agenda, such as the drive to eliminate the Canadian Wheat Board and the concept of single-desk sales.

49) As always, the big business parties continue to deny the national rights of the Aboriginal peoples and of Québec to self-determination. Prime Minister Harper scrapped the Kelowna Accord, and then signalled his support for racist efforts to remove inherent Aboriginal hunting and fishing rights. Clearly the Tory strategy is to stoke the fires of racism in order to remove barriers to full corporate control of the vast natural resources on Aboriginal territories. The Tories also support the *Clarity Act*, which denies the right of the Québec people to determine their own future. While some leading figures in the Liberals and the NDP have begun to express recognition of Québec as a nation, they do not extend this recognition to the right of self-determination. For our part, the Communist Party of Canada continues to campaign for justice and equality for Aboriginal people and Québec, starting with full recognition of the right to self-determination, up to and including the right to secession, as the basis for an equal and voluntary partnership of nations.

50) The neoliberal agenda also attacks democratic freedoms and civil liberties. Using the so-called "war on terror" as a justification, the state has unleashed a wave of repression against

immigrants, the Arab and Muslim communities in particular, such as the security certificate process which allows the indefinite imprisonment of "suspects" who are not allowed to know the nature of evidence against them, and the trumped-up arrest of 17 Muslim "terrorism suspects" in Toronto. This racist campaign is intended to divide workers and weaken the common struggle for peace, democracy and social progress. There are other deeply troubling cases of police violations of democracy and civil rights, reminiscent of the RCMP "dirty tricks" campaigns of previous decades. After giving manufactured disinformation to US authorities about Maher Arar, who was then sent to face jail and torture in Syria, the RCMP covered up and lied about its sordid role in this scandal. During the last federal election, the RCMP used an NDP MP to spread allegations of corruption against a prominent Liberal cabinet minister. This episode can only be understood as police intervention in the political process for the benefit of the Conservatives, the most vicious "law and order" party favoured by big business. In another development, top Canadian military officers are increasingly engaged in public campaigns to press for changes in defence and foreign policy, rather than taking their direction from the government. Taken together with the continued pressure to restrict labour rights, we can see the pattern of an emerging fascist tendency within the state which must be strongly countered by all labour and democratic forces.

51) Not surprisingly, given their close ties with the U.S.-based transnational energy monopolies, the Harper Tories have taken the same course as the Bush Administration, refusing to take serious action on the crisis of global warming. Instead of setting clear targets and

timelines, the *Clean Air Act* tabled by the Conservatives calls for “consultations” which would delay any meaningful reduction of hydrocarbon emissions for years. While the Tories pretend to be taking action on the serious health problems caused by smog, their focus on “intensity-based targets” means that total hydrocarbon emissions will continue to rise, not fall.

52) Under Paul Martin’s short-lived minority government, which was forced to rely on the votes of NDP and Bloc Québécois MPs to survive, the progressive and democratic forces were temporarily in a better position to resist these attacks, even though the underlying class orientation of the Liberals had not changed. But the January 2006 election which resulted in a minority Conservative government has created a new, dangerous situation, especially for workers, Aboriginal peoples, women, youth, seniors, and national minorities. The policy direction of the new government has grave implications for social programs, for Canadian sovereignty, for equality rights, for our environment, and for peace.

53) The Conservative campaign took advantage of public distrust of the ruling Liberals, and of a widespread desire for “change”. The Tories deliberately misrepresented their positions on Medicare, education, Canada-US relations and many other issues to obscure and conceal their reactionary agenda. While this “makeover” and their populist rhetoric partially succeeded, the Tories only managed to gain support from 37% of voters, and less than 25% of the total electorate, and recent polls indicate that Tory support has slipped even further to around 30%.

54) Most Canadians do not share the Conservative objectives of priva-

tizing public health care, or of tying Canada more closely to the aggressive policies of the Bush Administration under the banners of “harmonization” and “continental security”. Neither do most agree with scrapping the National Childcare program and the Aboriginal Accord signed in Kelowna (despite its limitations and flaws), or with abandoning Canada’s commitment to Kyoto. Nor do they support the introduction of oppressive, fundamentalist values into the secular life of the country, especially any attack on the equality rights of women, of national minorities, or the LGBT community. In short, Harper and his government have no real mandate to move our country in such a radically reactionary direction.

55) But the long-term program of the Conservatives – with the full backing of the corporate elite – is to fundamentally transform the Canadian state at the federal level, downsizing and ultimately gutting its social redistributive role, and strengthening its repressive and militarist capacity and orientation. The principles of universality, accessibility, equality rights, social justice, and world peace are increasingly under attack. The Tories are laying the foundations of that program, manoeuvring politically to win a majority in the next election so that they can implement the full sweep of their agenda in an unfettered way.

56) Most activists in the labour and social movements in Québec, English-speaking Canada, and among Aboriginal peoples and minority communities agree that such a turn would have disastrous consequences. The critical question now is what can be done, in our organizations, constituencies and communities, to stop the Harper/Tory agenda dead in its tracks, and move politics in a progressive direction.

57) There were initially some hopes that the opposition parties in Parliament would do more to carry the fight against Harper’s minority government. Progressive movements called upon the BQ, the Liberals and the NDP to offer as much resistance to the Tory agenda as possible. While this strategy has slowed down some of the government’s reactionary policies, Harper has succeeded in persuading enough opposition MPs to back key policies, such as the Tory budget, the narrow vote to extend the Afghanistan mission by another two years, or the Bloc Québécois support for the softwood lumber sell-out. The reality is that while the Tories lack majority support within Parliament or in the arena of public opinion, the opposition parties are too divided and weak to act as an effective anti-Harper coalition. In fact, despite declarations to the contrary, many of the “members opposite” privately sympathize with and in some cases (e.g., Afghanistan, “free trade”/harmonization, so-called “law and order” measures, privatization, etc.) openly support Tory policies.

58) The Liberals are attempting to present themselves as the ‘progressive’ alternative to the Harper Conservatives, but as the Liberal leadership contest has made clear, that Party continues to be wedded to the right-wing neoliberal doctrine followed by its former leader Paul Martin. While less extreme than the rabid pro-war, anti-working class agenda of the Tories, this bourgeois party does not merit the support of working people.

59) Instead of moving to the left and working to mobilize a mass fightback, the NDP has continued its strategy of trying to supplant the Liberals as the main party of the political centre. During the 2006 election campaign NDP leader Jack Layton made a number of

policy retreats on key issues – in accepting the proliferation of private health clinics, in refusing to oppose corporate tax breaks and reductions, in supporting the chauvinist *Clarity Act*, the main aim of which is to deny Québec’s right to self-determination, and in pandering to the right populist press to “get tough” on gun violence and youth crime. This is a reflection of the crisis of social democracy, mirrored around the world – of its abandonment of traditional social-democratic reformism, and embrace of neoliberal dogma, its move to distance itself from labour and the working class as a whole, and situate itself as a centrist force, as would-be administrators of capitalism ‘with a human face’.

60) The rightward tilting of all three Parliamentary ‘opposition’ parties – the Liberals, NDP and the Bloc Québécois – has led some activists to look to the nascent Green Party as a potential alternative political vehicle. While the Greens put forward reasonably good policies on the environment, on democratic rights (including support for proportional representation) and some social policy issues, this party too is essentially tied to ‘market-driven’ solutions, a far cry from a consistent anti-neoliberal and anti-corporate policy that is so urgently needed today. That said, the Greens (like the NDP and BQ) is politically heterogeneous and some of its more progressive or ‘red’ Greens are worthy of support.

61) As our Party’s May Day 2006 statement said, in the final analysis, “this means that the epicentre of the struggle to stop the Tory steamroller will be located outside of Parliament, in our workplaces and communities, and on the streets. The most important and urgent challenge facing the popular forces today is to map out a way

forward to build the broadest possible fightback.”

62) Extra-parliamentary campaigns and protests against the Harper government are being built around battles to save public healthcare, to pull Canadian troops out of Afghanistan, to defend Aboriginal rights, and to expand public childcare, among others. These welcome initiatives deserve broad support, and there is an urgent need to extend such struggles to embrace every region of the country and to every section of the people threatened by Tory policy.

63) Those who argue against building a stronger mass fightback, to “keep our gunpowder dry” and wait for the electoral clock to tick down, are dead wrong. The next federal campaign is already underway, and the Conservatives are waging it in earnest. Failing to build the fightback now – or worse yet, consciously holding it back – plays directly into the Tories’ hands, allowing them to divide and neutralize the opposition forces inside and outside of Parliament, and permitting them to determine the terrain and timetable for the coming election. In short, it would concede the political initiative and momentum to the Harper government.

64) A strategy of “caution” also fails to take into account the very real harm the Tories are already inflicting on the rights of workers, Aboriginal peoples, women, youth, the elderly, immigrants and national minorities, not to mention what it will mean for the future of our social safety net, for our sovereignty, for our environment, and for peace. At the same time as announcing a \$13 billion budget surplus in late September, the Tories put the entire amount into deficit reduction, while slashing millions of dollars from a variety of federal programs which supported

measures to achieve greater social equality.

65) Finally, to delay the fightback now will make it that much harder to build the broad unity which is decisive, for without it we will not be able to defeat the combined assault of the Conservative/big business onslaught, or to press for working class demands in the post-election period. Instead, the labour and democratic movements need to put the Harper agenda on the defensive, to force the Tories to retreat wherever possible, and in the process create divisions and disarray in their ranks. That is the only way to ensure that the Conservatives are crushed in the next election, whenever it comes.

66) It is important not to fall into passivity or negativism in this struggle. Recent polls indicate that public support for the Tories is declining, around issues such as the debacle of the Afghanistan occupation. As the reactionary and fundamentalist forces which are using the Tories as their vehicle become more visible, there is likely to be a stronger backlash. But it would also be a terrible mistake to wait for the Harper government to stumble or self-destruct.

67) What kind of fightback is needed? As the neoliberal agenda unfolds at both the federal and provincial levels, more and more sections of the people are coming under fire, giving rise to protests, demonstrations, strikes, and other forms of resistance. The powerful two-week strike in October 2005 by the BC Teachers showed that with militant leadership and broad public support, labour can take on right-wing governments. The near-general strike in Québec, the Six Nations occupation in Caledonia, the recent mass demonstrations by farmers, and the growing mobilization to de-

fend women’s programs, show that the mood of popular resistance remains widespread.

68) Perhaps most significant is the “Troops Out Now” campaign, which includes anti-war coalitions in both Québec and English-speaking Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress, key sections of the Muslim community, environmentalists, the Council of Canadians, student groups, and many other organizations. The majority of Canadians support the call to withdraw the troops, compelling the NDP to call for removal of troops engaged in military operations by February 2007.

69) It is imperative that these threads of resistance be drawn together into a united, coordinated fightback. This will not happen spontaneously; it will require the conscious efforts of all those involved in the struggle, based on recognition that the only way to block and defeat a single, comprehensive right-wing agenda is through “unity-in-action”, through the building of the broadest possible, comprehensive and united fightback. Only by moving thousands and hundreds of thousands of people into the streets and onto picket lines will it be possible to force the Tories into retreat, to stiffen opposition in Parliament, and lay the basis to defeat this government and then to press for progressive change.

70) Broad unity does not imply, and should not entail, setting aside specific concerns and interests of respective movements and constituencies. On the contrary, all these concerns and demands need to find expression in a united fightback. We should not settle for “lowest common denominator” unity, but rather strive for unity based on our shared common interests in defeating this right-wing threat, and informed by that classic labour slogan:

“An injury to one is an injury to all!” Experiences in many other countries around the globe and in Canada itself convincingly show that “in unity there is strength.”

71) All of the social movements and organizations, from all sectors – labour, aboriginal peoples, peace groups and coalitions, women’s organizations, seniors, youth and student organizations, visible and national minorities, anti-poverty groups, environmentalists, LGBT activists, political organizations – must have both the opportunity and the shared responsibility to help build a united fightback movement. Indeed, its very success depends on the inclusion and active participation of all these forces to achieve the “critical mass” needed to block the Tories.

72) In order to build such a strong and united fightback movement, each of its many component parts must in turn be strengthened, and our Party and its members should work without fail to support and help build each of these movements. This includes (among others) our work among Aboriginal peoples against their racist oppression, police/state harassment, and in defence of their national rights; among immigrants and national minorities in the fight against racism and “anti-terror” victimization; in the women’s movement and in particular the efforts to rebuild a labour-backed pan-Canadian women’s organization; among youth and students in the high schools, post-secondary institutions and the workplace; in the environmental movement; in struggles at the civic level, including support for municipal reform candidates and movements; and not least, in the crucial anti-war and anti-imperialist movements.

73) But of all the above, our Party

needs to intensify its attention toward and activity within the organized trade union movement. With its mass membership base, its organizational capacity and its resources, the union movement has a special responsibility to build the fightback and help bring all of the other democratic forces together in united action against the Harper agenda. This means first, that the labour movement at all level must mobilize its own ranks around a clear, militant plan of action, and second, it must reach out to labour’s social partners to unite in struggle, and renew its commitment to help the social movements with material and staff assistance. It also means respecting them as full, equal partners, working with them to develop and project a broad programme, one which addresses the interests and concerns of all the component parts, during the fightback.

74) The labour movement is the most organized section of the working class, but it is not united in purpose, and it has not launched offensive campaigning sufficient for these times. The top leadership of the CLC, the union centrals in Québec, or their respective affiliates are not oriented on mobilizing the working class into mass struggles. Nevertheless the resistance of the organized workers, both in the brush wars and in major confrontations, shows that they are very capable of taking the offensive. When they have not been politically and physically betrayed, Canadian workers have been tenacious. Where their leadership was committed and united, they have been impressive. Powerful struggles have been conducted by the teachers in B.C. and Ontario, CAW workers who defied their leadership and the company to save their parts plant by preventing the movement of dies south of the border, public sector workers in Québec who were building toward a general

strike against the Charest government, and Hamilton Steelworkers who have fought a complicated and sustained fight for their pensions and their contract. The stance of the CLC against Canada's role in the occupation of Afghanistan and against integration into US militarism has given the peace movement an important boost. CUPE Ontario has taken a proud and determined position in solidarity with the Palestinian people and against US/Zionist war plans.

75) There have also been, and continue to be, setbacks and wheel-spinning. The political spectrum of labour in English-speaking Canada and Québec embraces everything from shallow posturing, tepid social democracy, compliance and collaboration, over to militant class action. It would be a grave mistake not to see the importance within this spectrum of a new and emerging search for a political expression of the developing struggle. Even leaders who only posture to try to keep a lid on struggle must posture in this direction, because of pressure and rumblings from below.

76) By and large however, there is an ongoing retreat from mass action and social unionism within the top echelons of the trade union movement. There are several explanations for this retreat: (1) the continuing dominance of right social-democratic, 'non-struggle' and collaborationist tendencies among the leadership; (2) the ferocity and all-sided nature of the corporate/state offensive which has mesmerized and demoralized even those union leaders who had previously been more disposed to struggle policies; (3) pressure from those reformist political parties with historic ties to labour (the NDP in English-speaking Canada, the PQ/BQ in Québec) to dampen mass actions; and (4) the increased penetra-

tion of Liberal and even Conservative Party supporters into leading union positions.

77) There has also been a significant change in political-electoral policy within the labour movement since our last Convention, especially within the CLC and among its key affiliates. The mutual distancing between the NDP and labour outside of Québec has been developing for several years, but it took a dramatic turn in the 2006 federal election when the leadership of the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) decided to publicly endorse 'strategic voting' and urged workers to vote Liberal to prevent a Conservative victory in those ridings where the NDP was unlikely to win. In this regard, the March 2006 Central Committee stated: "To recognize the very real political differences between the two main bourgeois parties and hence identify the Harper Tories as 'the main danger' was one thing; however to openly advocate the 'lesser of two evils' homily as a viable and necessary tactic – to the point of calling Paul Martin and the Liberals 'friends of labour' (sic) and publicly campaigning on their behalf – was ill-considered and wrong. Workers and working people in general need to free themselves from the political and ideological grasp of both parties of big business and advance their own, independent political expression and electoral vehicles."

78) Even more significant was the announcement of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) to not publicly endorse the NDP – its historic "political arm" – and instead to call upon workers to bear in mind 'labour's issues' when casting their ballots. In such a crucial election, with so much at stake for the organized working class and the country as whole, this was an abdication of political leadership by Ken

Georgetti and the CLC Executive. A number of factors appeared to come into play here: (1) an accommodation by the social-democratic leadership of the CLC to the wishes of the NDP as part of its efforts to downplay any ties to labour; (2) the growing influence of Liberal supporters within labour's leadership; (3) an attempt to avoid conflict with the Québec Federation of Labour (FTQ), many of whose affiliates planned to support the BQ; (4) a response to recent changes to federal legislation that severely limits trade union support to political parties; and (5) increasing opposition from left trade union militants opposed to labour's official ties to the NDP.

79) The Central Committee noted: "The evolving relationship between organized labour and the NDP has a complex and contradictory character. Clearly however, the recent positions by both the CLC and CAW leaderships mark a significant change – at least at the official, public level – between the two... The most critical question... is what form labour's political action will take now, and into the future. Communists and other left trade unionists have long been critical of the 'contracting out' of labour's political interests to the NDP, arguing instead for a program of "independent labour political action". The *de facto* change in labour's relationship with the NDP can provide an important new opening for labour to articulate its own comprehensive and militant program of independent political action... [T]here is an even greater danger that the 'contracting out' of political action to the NDP is already being gradually replaced by a retreat to political passivity or some latter-day variant of Gomperism."

80) This retreat away from political struggle in favour of narrow economism is being more and more

challenged by rank-and-file workers and militants within the trade union movement who understand full well that the only way to resist and confront the right-wing corporate offensive – which today is being primarily imposed through state policies, legislative changes, court rulings, etc. – is through united political action of the labour movement and its allies.

81) The recognition of interconnection is very important. For example, by abandoning the fight for universal Medicare for negotiated private medical coverage, U.S. unions found themselves in the last several years in a situation where the monstrous cost of supplying health coverage, especially to pensioners, was used as the main bludgeon to force concessions going far beyond medical benefits. Conversely, one of the main defences of Canadian workers against concessions has been universal Medicare, which was won several decades ago. The first line of defence for the working class is the fight to maintain public ownership and control of our universal social programs. The dynamics of this struggle will forge the alliances and develop the consciousness to embrace a higher level of internationalism, unity and solidarity. This will place the creation of a political-ideological-parliamentary vehicle on the agenda and raise the bigger question of political power.

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82) Heading into the next federal election, Canada is truly at a crucial moment, even more significant than the “free trade” campaign of 1988. There may be some new elements in this campaign, such as the possibility that the new leadership of the Greens will make that party a bigger factor in the struggle for votes. The fight for demo-

cratic electoral reform remains crucial to efforts to break the monopoly of the “big parties” in Parliament; in this regard, it will be important to conduct a major battle for proportional representation in the upcoming review of electoral reform in Ontario. A breakthrough for PR in Canada’s most populous province would be a major victory for democracy.

83) The goal of the Communist Party will be to help defeat the ultra-right Harper Tories – who are now the preferred party of finance capital – and in the process to shift the balance of political forces within Parliament and in the country as a whole. This struggle can become an important step towards initiating a broader campaign for a progressive agenda. For this reason, Communists will be on the ballot in as many cities as possible, to expose the right-wing agenda and to win support for the policies outlined in our *People’s Alternative*. The Communist Party will campaign to put people’s needs before corporate greed, presenting a strategy to defeat neoliberalism and block the threat of fascism and war. Our candidates will link the battles around immediate issues with the perspective of a People’s Coalition government, which can open the door to a socialist transformation of Canada. This is the special contribution of Communists as we campaign shoulder to shoulder with the people’s movements to defeat the Tories.

84) While the election outcome may help improve the political terrain, the class struggle in the coming period will revolve mainly around the ongoing fight by the working class for better wages and working conditions, and around the struggles of the peoples of Canada to defend and improve social programs and equality rights, to defend our sovereignty, and to pull

Canada out of the imperialist US war machine. Our aim will be to make a much greater contribution to these struggles, by building a larger, more effective Communist Party, within the ranks of the working class, and among all the movements of the people for a better life.

IV. Moving into action – the Party of peace, democracy and socialism

85) Tim Buck, our Party’s long-time leader, was fond of saying: “Keep your eyes on the stars and your feet on the ground.” This message applies not only to the rigours of the class struggle and our goal of socialism; it applies to building our Party as well.

86) The tasks before our Party flow from reality. And today our feet are in the New World Order. Pronounced fifteen years ago after the setbacks to socialism, it is an Order of increasing violence, cruelty and inequality that is leading humanity and the earth to catastrophic destruction. It is the Order of a dying yet still powerful capitalism resorting to ever more severe measures to keep its global hegemony.

87) But we are also living in a significant historical period, when resistance is growing and the socialist alternative to the nightmare of global capitalism is starting to win new support in more and more countries. Wherever communist parties are growing, it is the result of bringing the emancipating ideas of socialism to the working class movement and fusing the advanced consciousness with the class struggle.

88) In Canada, the Communist Party’s main challenge in this process is to become more effective, fighting for

every reform no matter how small and capable of leading workers to a better future. We must redouble our efforts and earn the confidence of workers in the course of struggle. The range of problems and new complexities that may arise cannot be underestimated. Likewise, the entire Party must grasp the seriousness of the struggle against the Harper Tories and the extremely dangerous Canadian and international forces which lie behind this reactionary government.

89) We require of ourselves audacity but also a sober appraisal of the situation. We require of ourselves constant action, learning and searching for ways, tactics and strategies for the political, organizational and ideological struggles, for strong offensives and effective retreats in the battles ahead. We are working for the day of socialist revolution, which we recognize as necessary to escape the mounting agonies and dangers of the dying capitalist system.

90) Workers throughout Canada sense these dangers and experience these agonies. As a revolutionary party, we realize that workers as a class can only fully resolve the contradiction of this crisis-ridden system and emancipate themselves through the overthrow of capitalism and the creation of socialism on the path to a classless society. It is this scientific, Marxist-Leninist ideology that we must advance and use to prepare the revolutionary class for its historic mission. And for this we must know, understand and achieve the closest ties with working class and its day-to-day struggles.

91) Revolutionary ideas do not spontaneously take hold of millions of workers in the course of the class struggle. Every day, the capitalist class and its state deliberately advance their ide-

ology, obscuring and distorting reality. Despite the ever-deepening general crisis and imperialism's drive to reaction and war, its ideology is still dominant among workers, including illusions that capitalism's worst features can be vanquished through reforms alone. Many workers are starting to search for answers and it is our job to reach them with our ideas and invite them to join the Communist Party in the struggle for peace, democracy and socialism.

92) As we know, the ruling class uses the dampening effect of its bourgeois ideology to restrain and sidetrack the class struggle. But these are not the only harmful ideological pressures on our class; reformist ideology and its parties also divert workers away from political action, and sometimes militant workers are "captured" by dead-end alternatives advanced by anarcho-syndicalists or anarchistic groups who seek to divorce mass movements from political struggle, effectively bowing to spontaneity without a consistent long-term goal of gaining working class political power.

93) It is when the mass movements embrace the ideas of scientific socialism that the prospects for victory will grow and be realized. The Communist Party needs to more effectively project our revolutionary perspective for the future of the working class and humanity as a whole. Our challenge is to fuse our ideology with the growing struggles of workers and mass movements, building the confidence of the working class and its understanding of the need for revolutionary change.

94) No challenge can be greater, or more necessary and inspiring. As communists we defiantly share with new millions of our fellow workers the idea that another world is possible, and that

we can change the world with our eye on the star of socialism.

* * * * *

95) This convention will look carefully and objectively at how we function as a revolutionary Party amidst all the political activity in Canada today. From the top to the bottom and back up again, we will assess what we can do as a Party, and take action to achieve our most important political objectives today to:

- defeat the Harper Tories in the next election
- end Canada's occupation of Afghanistan
- prevent Canada's complete subordination to US imperialism and to defend our sovereignty
- defend the national rights of Aboriginal peoples and Québec
- oppose privatization of public programs and services

And at the same time, through and in conjunction with these mass political objectives, to build a larger, stronger and more influential Party, press and YCL, especially among workers, Aboriginal peoples, youth and students, women, and immigrant communities. All these priorities call for greater visibility, agitation and ideological work by the Party at every level.

96) Flowing from this we need to examine how to strengthen our organization, our style of work, and the functioning of our leading committees and clubs. This important and essential discussion will move us forward in the upcoming period and allow us to take full advantage of the political opportunities that are presenting themselves to us.

97) While our party has done some good work in recent years, we know that we can do a much better job at all

levels. Our work has been inconsistent across the country, and we need to come out of this convention determined to move ahead.

98) The working class in Canada and around the world is facing increasing oppression and violence, from the incursions of imperialism in the Middle East to the increased pressures to roll back social gains here in Canada. The inherent contradictions in capitalism are more evident with each passing year, as billions of dollars flow into private pockets; poverty and marginalization rise, and imperialist aggression becomes the norm for settling international issues. There is a rapidly developing sharp edge of criticism directed towards our own Canadian bourgeoisie and international capital. It is becoming clear to many working people that this system holds no answers to the problems plaguing our country and our world.

99) This should provide very good objective conditions for the growth of our Party. Recent Communist Party conventions assessed that anti-communism is losing its effectiveness as a weapon against our Party. Impoverishment, war and other indications of a deepening system-wide crisis of capitalism are forcing workers to search more seriously for fundamental solutions and alternatives.

100) An increasing number of activists agree with and respect our Party's political analysis, programmatic positions and practical work. Our members are active in several mass movements, but more must be done to match the potential for advancing our perspective in these movements, particularly those movements opposing imperialist war and Tory reaction in Canada.

101) For example, in Nanaimo on Van-

couver Island, our local club decided to take some political initiatives in their community. Last summer they organized a *People's Voice* Picnic, attracting members of many local groups to socialize and to listen to a presentation from the *PV* editor. They followed up this activity with participation in the Labour Day march and demonstration organized by a local youth group in which YCL members participate, further developing an active and mutually respected relationship with a whole number of community groups and labour organizations.

102) In Hamilton, the Party has been making important connections in the Six Nations land claims struggle, and has opened a local office and solidarity centre. We have new clubs in Saskatoon and in Kamloops, BC. As a direct result of our election activity a new club in Guelph-Kitchener (Shafik Handal Tri-City Club) was established. There is the beginning of a new club in Calgary active in the South Asian immigrant community.

103) At the central level, we concluded our thirteen-year legal struggle with three successive federal governments, marking a series of victories for democratic changes to the *Canada Elections Act* and concluding with an out-of-court settlement of damages. This past October, we, together with several other smaller parties, scored another victory when the 2% threshold on party finances was struck down as unconstitutional by an Ontario Court judge. The Party must continue to wage a serious struggle to overturn other undemocratic measures being imposed by the Harper Tories, such as the limitation placed on fundraising from individuals and the banning of union donations, while tens of millions of public funds are handed to the large parties each year, the broadcast time

allotments, and the lack of proportional representation, all of which serve to maintain the hegemony of the large established parties while shutting the door on small parties.

104) When we take on well-organized central campaigns, such as at election time, our Party has a tremendous opportunity to reach many thousands of Canadians with our message. We received tens of thousands of visits to our website during the January 2006 election, and we had a huge upsurge in requests for information and applications to join, some of which resulted in new members. We continue to receive applications over the Internet, although we need to develop a more consistent response and follow-up.

105) These experiences show that clubs using their initiative are able to develop and execute locally based campaigns with good results, and that well planned and executed central campaigns can also help our Party to grow. This dialectical relationship depends on strengthening both our clubs and our leadership, since weakness of one or the other results in a breakdown of our organization and political work.

106) One area where we are making significant recruitment gains is among immigrant and national minority communities, especially the Latino and South Asian communities. The incoming Central Committee needs to make a more rigorous analysis of this exciting new development and develop a detailed program to build on these successes, including the publication of more materials and leaflets in other national languages.

107) If we are to succeed in moving the Party into action, we have to respect and advance Leninist principles of Party life and organization, follow-

ing through with assignments in a disciplined way, creating the greatest opportunities possible in making decisions, but following the decisions once they are made, and respecting the authority of leading bodies in policy and organization.

108) When we follow these norms of a revolutionary party the result will be advances for our Party but also for our class. It is true that we are small, but consider what we have accomplished in the last three years.

109) We fielded candidates in two federal elections and in several provincial elections; we had a cross-Canada campaign to protect health care; we have participated in a number of international Communist events, presenting theoretical papers and assisting our youth to send a delegation to the World Festival of Youth and Students in Venezuela. Very significantly, we are helping to prepare the re-birth of the Young Communist League, which will take place soon after this convention. Coverage of labour struggles has improved in the *People's Voice*, and the Central Committee produced a Labour Program that has helped to deepen our knowledge and our influence in the trade union movement. We must recognize that this program will have to be refined, but it is an important first step. Our Party is more closely engaged in building the struggles against war at both the local and all-Canada levels, promoting the broadest unity and carrying the independent views of the Party into the peace movement.

110) There is no question that we also had a number of difficult situations develop. The most distressing was in Québec, where a petit-bourgeois nationalist group almost destroyed the PCQ, which had been recently re-constituted to the delight and pride of our

entire Party. Indeed the 34th convention was held in Montréal and the comrades there put on a magnificent show. The comrades who remained loyal to the PCQ have responded to this difficult challenge with determination and commitment.

111) Today the PCQ is on the rebound. The PCQ has re-established the Communist press, *Clarté*, publishing on a regular basis with our analysis and coverage of important developments in Québec, Canada and internationally and distributing it to significant numbers of workers and activist. The PCQ is helping to re-establish the Ligue de la Jeunesse Communiste, where there are possibilities of establishing an organization in Montréal.

112) As the Party develops and grows, the constant tensions between mass and independent work of the Party must be constantly addressed. The maximum collectivity is necessary to make proper assignments. We need to be flexible, allowing cadre to shift from mass to independent Party work such as participating as candidates in elections or carrying out other public assignments.

113) Work in the mass movements and the working class is probably the most complex challenge that the Communist Party must address if we are to grow in the period ahead. We cannot grow in isolation, apart from the mass and working class struggles, apart from the class struggle. Learning from the experience of other members and from books can only take new members of our Party so far. What matters is tireless practice and the collective examination of mistakes and obstacles to building the mass and working class struggles. For example, the "Better work, Better wages" campaign by the comrades working to re-establish the

YCL is a very important effort to carry their revolutionary message to large numbers of working class youth. Carrying out this campaign successfully will help to build the influence and solidify the re-establishment of the YCL.

114) Strong, collective and active clubs – even small ones as shown above – can make a major contribution to strengthening and activating the entire range of movements. We need to overcome the uneven activity by clubs in the mass movements with greater attention by the centre to club matters. Publishing more literature and pamphlets, such as the "*Introducing Marxism*" pamphlet, and re-establishing an organizational newsletter must be given more urgent priority. The incoming CC must examine how to strengthen the productivity of the Centre more with the assigning a central organizer, allowing for more travel and live contact with existing clubs and the establishment of new clubs in various regions of the country and within specific communities such as the Latin American and South Asian communities. Strengthening the Centre and clubs must not be seen as mutually exclusive goals, but as equally necessary measures to accomplish the Party's priorities.

115) Party schools examine such experiences, showing that more must be done to engage comrades in the struggle, to improve collective work in different movements, and to learn the problems confronting the Party in mass work and where the Party needs to be mobilized. What is important is to direct new members into the Party's immediate priority areas of mass work and to improve our ability to draw all movements together around key tasks at the right time, such as defeating the Harper Tories, opposing the occupa-

tion of Afghanistan, fighting privatizations in health care.

116) We also have to improve our work in all movements to educate activists and prepare the subjective conditions for fundamental change on key democratic and class issues. This includes consistent work to fight for the national equality of Aboriginal peoples and French-speaking nations with the English-speaking nation in Canada, to oppose racism and sexism, to oppose militarism in all its forms, and to build working class leadership and alliances, such as the area of farmer-labour unity.

117) There should be a direct continuity between our work in the labour and other democratic movements, and our electoral campaigns, with efforts to carry our support in movements into the electoral field. Our goal is to achieve the closest relations of our Party's candidates and elected representatives with the broadest range of working class and other democratic struggles.

118) Many new comrades have joined our party in recent years, bringing their revolutionary zeal to get at the task of overthrowing the capitalist system and build socialism. This growth is the future of our party, and we must do more to ensure that the energy of our new members is welcomed and encouraged, and that we learn from their valuable experiences and knowledge. At the same time, it is important to educate our new members about our policies and program as part of our efforts to retain and develop these new members. The growing complexities of developments internationally and in Canada require that we deepen the political analysis and ideological level of the Party as a whole. Marxism-Leninism requires not only firm knowledge of early ideological struggles

born of problems confronting the working class movement in past decades. It requires greater study of obstacles to the ideological unity of the working class movement today, including varieties of nationalism, religious fundamentalism, and irrational ideologies that have arisen in the period since the setbacks to socialism. We need to publish *Spark!* more frequently and other theoretical and ideological materials, including on the website.

119) It is incumbent upon us to strive for the ideological unity of our Party, as the situation will not become less complex. Indeed, the struggle for greater ideological unity and clarity is a prerequisite for us to grow and to gain mass influence within our class and among Canadians in general.

120) The struggle for ideological unity and clarity is an important principle to Marxist-Leninists. The guarantee for ideological unity in a revolutionary party is more serious theoretical work. Crucial in this is building the collective study and discussion of Marxism-Leninism and learning to combat the entire range of reactionary and increasingly bankrupt ideological weapons of imperialism.

121) We also have to raise the level of ideological work in the mass movements, to engage in more debate and discussion outside the Party about our vision of socialism. We must be prepared to defend and advocate socialism when it is attacked – on the terrain and timing of our own choosing when possible. Only such practice will sharpen our skills and produce the experience necessary to create a more powerful and ideologically united Communist Party.

122) Our educational-ideological

work at all levels of the Party is inconsistent. Some clubs hold regular discussions and some provinces hold regular provincial educationals, but this is not always the norm. We need the central education commission to function at a higher level; we need to count on it a great deal in the coming period.

123) During the past three years the education commission has developed a very useful introduction to Marxism-Leninism, which is now being published and made available to all clubs. Much more along these lines needs to be done to meet the educational needs of our membership, particularly of new members who are drawn to our Party with visions of action and revolutionary discussion. If their clubs do not provide political and ideological discussion as well as practical work, we risk losing them, which has happened too many times.

124) The 34th Convention called for more frequent publication of our discussion journal *Spark!*. We have published one edition since then, and a second will be printed before the end of 2006. The incoming Central Committee has to ensure regular publication of this important theoretical resource. The pages of the Party press should also include a regular column on scientific socialism today.

125) We have yet to pay the necessary attention to cadre development, education and training. Leadership must increase efforts identifying and training the future leaders of our Party. We now have a situation where over 70% of our membership has joined the Party since our split in 1991. We need to pay ever-greater care and attention to both educational work and cadre development. This situation must be addressed in several areas.

126) Starting with our English-language press, the *People's Voice* has undergone many changes in recent years. Our improved labour coverage, for example, is being received very well around the country at union and mass events. It is troubling therefore to report that our subscriptions have been in decline. The reverse should be the case but it is not happening yet. There are several reasons for this, the most important one being that the transition to twice-monthly publication was not accompanied by a reliable record of getting subscription lists out to clubs in a timely and consistent manner. With the addition of a business and circulation manager earlier this year, this problem is being addressed and the situation is improving.

127) Unfortunately, we cannot do anything about the loss due to natural causes of many veteran comrades who were experienced builders of the Communist press. They knew how and where to solicit subscriptions, and they took personal responsibility to follow up on renewals. This is an area where training of our new members is essential to reverse our circulation decline.

128) Our newspapers are a tremendous tool for building our Party and disseminating our political viewpoint amongst the working class. We have to use our press better, get it into more hands and build our subscriptions in a big way, starting with those of our own members who do not have a subscription. The new Central Committee must make this a priority area of work.

129) Our Internet site continues to play a very important role in outreach to the working class, particularly to the youth. We have tens of thousands of visits every year and hundreds of requests for more information on our Party and applications to join. This technology

changes extremely rapidly, and the comrade who has been doing the majority of the work updating the site is not able to keep current with the newest developments. It is urgent to do much more to make our site more attractive, accessible, and timely. The new Central Committee must find other comrades who are more up to date with the latest developments to assign to this work and to ensure the functioning of our Technical Commission.

130) We have also been making a much more efficient use of available technology to help all of our commissions to function across the country without the need for expensive phone calls. The system has saved the Party thousands of dollars, but it can be improved with the assistance of other knowledgeable comrades.

131) After three years of preparations by our young comrades across the country, the YCL will be re-established in the spring, filling the huge hole left by the liquidationists when they disbanded the YCL in 1990. Our youth are to be congratulated for carrying through this difficult and historic task. Once again there will be a strong communist presence in the youth movement, and the Communist Party will have a revolutionary partner to walk shoulder to shoulder with us as we engage in our struggle to reach Socialism.

132) Our Party has taken this project very seriously, committing significant resources to help make it a reality. We are providing financial support and practical assistance with the provision of office space, computers and necessary supplies. The incoming CC will continue to provide the Party's political guidance and practical assistance to the YCL up to and beyond their founding convention.

133) It is both a necessary and realizable task to move the Party into action on a wider range of issues and priorities. With a strong effort starting with the central leadership in the first place, we can and will move forward in the next period – strengthening our commitment to Marxism-Leninism and our application of democratic centralism, conducting well-planned central campaigns, improving the connections between clubs and leading committees, putting more effort into smaller centres, and assisting clubs to initiate independent political action based on Party policy.

134) The key and urgent task of our Party coming out of this convention will be immediate work to mobilize massive, broad opposition to the Harper government, contributing to its defeat in the impending federal election. Our electoral tactic must be part of this effort, to expose the main danger to Canadian sovereignty, social equality, civil rights and world peace emanating from the Harper Tories. Our work in the election will include running candidates in all the major cities, presenting our views and policies to help build the strongest and broadest unity against the Harper right-wing danger. This fight will be an important contribution to our ongoing efforts to fight privatizations of health and other public enterprises and to end Canada's role in occupation and war against Afghanistan.

135) All this will require that we take measures to overcome the Communist Party's ongoing financial constraints. The incoming CC must look at building the financial resources of our Party as we face growing challenges. To take on these tasks, the CC will take the necessary organizational steps to improve our work, such as the regular publication of a Canada-wide party

newsletter, which will help to strengthen the unity of our Party across the country. More work is needed to issue materials in the languages of immigrant communities where the revolutionary forces have long and proud traditions of working class struggle, so that we can continue to build the Party in these sections of the population. It will also be a high priority to find the resources needed to place a central party organizer on staff, another measure which will improve the work of the central leadership and assist our clubs to become stronger centres of communist activity.

136) The 35th Central Convention of the Communist Party will coincide with the 85th anniversary of the first convention of the Workers' Party of Canada, which met in February 1922 as the first legal convention of Communists in this country. That historic event openly proclaimed the revolu-

tionary aims of the Communist movement. The Communists of that early period worked boldly in the trade unions, mining and lumber camps, the farm movements, the immigrant communities and other sections of the working people, audaciously tackling a wide range of issues. Within a few years after 1922, the Communist Party of Canada had become the leading force in the movements for democracy and for radical social change, initiating the Workers' Unity League, the Farmers' Unity League, the Relief Camp Workers' Union, the On-to-Ottawa Trek, the first campaigns for universal medical care, the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion, and many of the struggles to build industrial unions.

137) Ours is still the proud party of Tim Buck, Becky Buhay, Annie Buller, Norman Bethune, Mathew Popowich, Jim Brady, Darshan Singh Canadian, Slim Evans, and many other working

class heroes of that era. The delegates to our 35th Convention will carry forward the revolutionary traditions of our party in today's conditions. The convention will project plans to help build a powerful movement to defeat the Harper Tories, to save Medicare and other social programs, and to pull Canada out of the imperialist US war machine. In the course of these struggles, we look forward to building a much larger and more effective Communist Party, and to the day when our party will play a vital role in achieving a People's Coalition government which will begin the radical transformation of this country. Our goal is a socialist Canada in which exploitation, oppression, poverty, and inequality are but distant memories of the capitalist past, and a socialist world in which all live in peace and without fear of environmental catastrophe. This is a future worth fighting for, and we commit ourselves to make it a reality!

Constitutional Amendments

Three constitution amendments have been submitted by the outgoing Central Committee for consideration at the 35th Central Convention.

1) Article 16 - Initiation Fee and Schedule of Dues

The amendment is to change the Dues and Convention Assessment Schedule, as follows:

Net Monthly Income	Monthly Dues	Convention Assessment	Net Annual Income (this category for information only)
Under \$600	\$1.00	\$1.00	\$7,200
\$601-1,000	\$4.00	\$4.00	\$12,000
\$1,001-1,500	\$8.00	\$8.00	\$18,000
\$1,501-2,000	\$12.00	\$12.00	\$24,000
\$2,001-2,500	\$16.00	\$16.00	\$30,000
\$2,501-3,000	\$20.00	\$20.00	\$36,000
\$3,001-3,500	\$24.00	\$24.00	\$42,000
\$3,501-4,000	\$28.00	\$28.00	\$48,000
\$4,001-4,500	\$34.00	\$34.00	\$54,000
over \$4,500	\$40.00	\$40.00	over \$54,001

Rationale:

The new schedule more accurately reflects current income levels, and is more progressive in the spread. It retains 10 categories. The new dues schedule recognizes that dues are an indicator of membership, and an important source of funds for the Party, however dues are not the main means of financing the Party. Various sustaining fund quotas and contributions are also a responsibility that members accept. This dues schedule also recognizes that dues should not be so onerous that new members would decline membership because of the financial burden.

Changes to the dues stamp, which many comrades consider out-dated, should be considered at a future convention. 2007 will be the first year of dues payments under new federal legislation restricting political donations over \$20 to cheques and money orders. Some experience with the new rules will be useful in determining further changes.

2) Article 7, Section 6

This amendment is to change Article 7, Section 6 by adding the words highlighted in bold lettering:

"... The Convention shall elect a Committee on Nominations which shall receive all nominations for election to the Central Committee. Its functions shall be to decide on the eligibility of all candidates nominated. To help all delegates be fully informed, the committee shall submit to the convention its recommendations on the composition of the central committee in a form decided by the convention. It shall give due regard to leadership qualities; links with the working class and democratic forces; the multi-national character of Canada; area representation; balance of experienced comrades and the timely promotion of younger comrades, taking into account the systematic advancement of women, aboriginal people, people of colour, **and gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered persons.**"

3) Article 7, Section 7

This amendment regarding frequency of Central Committee meetings is intended to reflect the current reality, which makes it extremely difficult to convene the required three CC meetings per year. The amendment is to change the Section as follows: "It [the Central Committee] shall meet at least **two** times a year."