

The fires of youth resistance burn

Johan Boyden, Toronto

It is a great pleasure for me to be able to write and share thoughts on youth work by our party, and of the youth and student movement in Canada. I wrote this submission travelling between Winnipeg and Sudbury. Yesterday, the YCLers organized an excellent public meeting at a coffee shop. We doubled our small membership, and made some good allies. Now I'm typing from a comrades house in Sudbury, and I can hear the voices of the high school students in another room who have come to talk YCL politics over dinner. There is a sense of confidence and excitement in their voices.

We are building a movement here, a revolutionary movement for real change leading to socialism, because the current order is unsustainable. It must change, or end in disaster. I believe passionately that our Programme and by in large the convention documents present the correct line. The issue is execution of that line. Several submissions have already offered what I think are thoughtful assessments and proposals, including about labour. Clearly the critical question the Communist movement faces is getting into action.

That challenge includes an area of work very close to my heart, the Young Communist League. And it pays to be frank here. The YCL's progress since the last convention - we were hardly an organization then,

you may remember ' has been uneven. It's challenges, not surprisingly, have been similar to the Party's. (In some cases youth have even become caught up as pawns in divisive chess games against our Party's policies).

But the mistakes are out shadowed by the achievements. Three issues of Rebel Youth magazine, two within the past year. Participation in a number of struggles. Many educational events, including schools. Offices in Vancouver and Toronto. An LJC club in Montreal. Help with the Party's political work, including electoral activity. A growing membership somewhere between sixty and a hundred. We are on the eve of a re-founding convention. A major need is now for some sort of YCL staff person. Even a quarter-time position would greatly help, indeed it is now essential to hold things together.

I want to emphasize the point that when we have been visible, we have been able to recruit. This is much to be very optimistic about! The YCL's success is our movement's success. We should draw inspiration from it, which I am convinced is part of an international insurgence of Communist youth.

I still vividly recall the YCLs work to build a delegation of over 170 people to the 16th World Youth Festival in Venezuela.

On the streets of Caracas - we marched. Under the shadows of green hills and mountains that in the day reached to a blue tropical sky night

and at night became covered in star-like constellations of the lights of the barrios, where the Bolivarian Revolutions strongest supporters lived - we marched. Thousands of youth, from around the world, and hundreds of red and multi-coloured banners.

ANGOLA! INDIA! BRAZIL! "Another world is possible, only with socialism!" That's what all the Venezuelan volunteers t-shirts said.

Over the past, say five years, increasing numbers of Canadian youth have also been drawn into struggles and some are realizing the connections between their struggles and the global anti-imperialist and anti-corporate cause. I think there is a broader openness by youth, many of whom

(continued on page 2)

Issue No. 4 - Jan. 19, 2007 CONTENTS

Youth resistance / 1

Electoral dilemma / 3

Making contributions / 4

Thoughts of an Aboriginal / 4

The practice of theory / 7

A simple approach to dues / 8

Put workers first / 9

Proposal from the PCQ / 12

Proposed amendments / 12

began developing political consciousness with the anti-globalization movement and the massive peace actions before the bombing of Iraq. Just as there is great anger among youth against what is happening not only in Afghanistan and Iraq but also Haiti, Lebanon, and Palestine - I also think there is great openness to concrete alternatives, including the socialist and anti-imperialist revolutions of Cuba and Venezuela.

Whatever we may think of the evolving, militant and sometimes quite mistaken tactics of small groups like Fire This Time in Vancouver, or the Grass Roots Anti-Imperialist Network in Toronto, or the Fredericton Social Forum - many of their members have positive views towards Cuba and/or Venezuela. I understand the same is at least partly true in Quebec. Much more development, especially with Brigades like the Che Guevara work brigade, could happen with international solidarity and Latin America.

Sadly, the leadership of the largest, most organized and most significant component of the youth movement - that of students, the Canadian Federation of Students - is rather lacking when it comes to an anti-imperialist stance and also militancy. There is debate about the significance in the youth movement of the student movement, compared to young workers. To be sure, students can be among the first to stand up in resistance, and to sit down. Nor is it a class-specific movement. However, the student today is by and large also a part-time worker. And because of its position in the struggle of youth, the student movement demands close assessment by Communists.

Perhaps the most exciting development in the student movement is the February 7th National Day of Action on tuition fees. Everywhere, student activists are pulling in new recruits.

But, at least in Ontario, the CFS's effectiveness suffers because of over-emphasizing lobbying rather than street mobilizing. That was especially true last year, where students begged the McGuinty Liberal government to keep the freeze, were told that option was on the table, and then embarrassingly had only a limited immediate strategy when the freeze was lifted.

If lobbying is again discredited in Ontario, then street protest was again proven in Quebec two years ago. The united, strong and powerful actions of Quebec students beat the Charest Liberals magnificently. There is much to learn, including about ties with organized labour. Anglo-chauvinism, I think, is the main reason more students in the dominate English-speaking Canada know little about that fight and why there have been no trans-Canadian educational tours out of that victory. Chauvinism and racism are also obstacles stopping greater campaigning by the student movement to on shameful condition of Aboriginal education. 70% of aboriginal students do not finish high school.

The obstacles to unity and militancy within the CFS are the right-wing inside the student movement. The most organized political currents within the CFS are connected to the Liberal or NDP political machines. Former ultra-left and Marxist-inspired groups, like the International Socialists, the New Socialist Group, or Fightback, have a limited voice - currently, the main left force in the CFS are thus left-wing social democrats. With some conscious planning - leadership - the strength of the progressives can grow in the CFS with the Feb. 7th day of action, and stop the drive towards a more and more limited alternative agenda put forward by the CFS, focusing only on education-specific issues.

Still, at its last Convention, guest

speaker and journalist Avi Lewis berated the CFS for its lack of commentary about peace. (That convention also dropped the term "class" from an old the CFS policy statement on barriers other than tuition to education.) The contradictions between imperialism and social progress are sharpening with the current neo-liberal agenda for state policy - deep integration, war and militarism, privatization and union busting. A real need exists, therefore, for the Communists and the student movement to unite with the peace movement in exposing the impact of the corporate agenda on the education system and youth.

Deep integration is the harmonization of Canadian foreign and domestic policy with the US. It strengthens the privatization drive in education, the P3 high schools and research parks, and private colleges. It also furthers the transformation of the Canadian military, now Canada Command, increasing "interoperability" with US military units, "missile defense," and wars in general.

Young bodies are what are needed by the military. Operation Connection is the name for the massive recruiting drive and re-branding that the Canadian military is doing to fill the gap of troops who are now in Afghanistan. The goal is 12,000 new recruits by 2011 by militarizing society, pushing the army into hockey games, exhibitions, museums, schools, and campuses - and adopting US press gang approaches.

Still, the war in Afghanistan is tremendously unpopular. The number of Canadian soldiers convicted for going AWOL has gone from 340 in 2001 to 708 in 2005. Survey's show that 80% of Canadians want an independent foreign policy, even if it means conflict with the US. According to the Canadian Association of University Teachers, completely eliminating tui-

tion would cost 4 billion dollars. That is also the price tag for the new Heavy Lift Aircraft spent by Harper, in a 15 billion dollar military budget. The ground is ripe for mobilizing public pressure.

Likewise for young workers. Every few hours in Canada, young workers are injured or even killed at work. By and large the jobs we have are unsafe, low-paying, and not unionized. The power of young workers is weakened by this lack of organization. Many jump from job to job and place to place very quickly, making an objective challenge for organizing. Many, including YCLers, have noted that young workers need to be at least partly organized by fellow young workers. This is one major role youth

committees in labour councils in educating and building up militants from the affiliates.

The right-wing anti-democratic side of Labour leadership views youth as unpredictable and therefore dangerous. For example, it was the top dogs of the UFCW who spoke against greater structured youth involvement at the last OFL convention! The CAW refused to set-up youth committee at its last convention, but pressure is mounting. Many unions, like CUPE, OPESU, have youth committees. The largest labour council in Canada, the Toronto and York District Labour council, is now advertising a position for minimum wages campaign coordinator. It has also experimented with a youth committee, as has the Vancou-

ver District council. At the last CLC convention, some discussion occurred about youth committees and the positive experience of the QFL in this work. Where will the activists and allies for these committees come from?

Here then, is are many clear examples of where the YCL-LJC is needed, and what we can do - build militancy and unity around alternative agendas against Deep Integration, militarism, war, and privatization, and for peace, jobs and public education. These are the basis around which campaigns can be crafted. We now have the critical mass, with a presence in most parts of the country, to really launch good campaigns about these issues. What is lacking are resources. Above all, we need staff. ■

Electoral Dilemma

Danny Goldstick, Toronto

It is on the record that Jack Layton offered to support the Martin Liberals in Parliament if they would only agree to proportional representation (PR). That was not to be. It is said, as well, that soon after becoming NDP Leader he privately proposed to the Bloc that the NDP in Quebec would run only in anglophone seats if the Bloc would stand down there. With the Bloc's cherished "territorial nationality" project, that too was a non-starter. And it is really more than doubtful that the NDP Federal Council would ever, ever have agreed to any political pact with the Quebec separatists.

Don Currie of Canadians for Peace and Socialism now proposes (Bulletin 3) a trans-Canada anti-Harper "Liberal-NDP-Labour-Peace-Environmental electoral alliance" to back in any riding only the party likeliest to beat the Tories there. Since the NDP, by and large, is (unfortunately)

not set up to engage in extra-parliamentary politics, that would effectively mean the NDP's removal from the federal-political scene in most of English-speaking Canada, just as it already is effectively absent from the political scene throughout francophone Quebec. Is the political disappearance of the NDP as an organized force in most of the country a development which we could welcome? Hardly!

And as well, of course, there is not the slightest chance of the NDP agreeing to such a thing. Even where co-operation does make sense, the NDP has always been too sectarian to give up its claim that it is the progressive political force in Canada, so that for progressives there can be no alternative to it.

What about our party? Should we for our part give up running federally and just back the Dion Liberals in most constituencies? We run in order to inject certain ideas into Canadian election campaigns which would other-

wise go unheard, and to acquaint people with our existence and policies. To stand down electorally as Currie appears to be suggesting would hardly serve the long-term interests of our class and the interests of socialism.

But Currie does have a point. Canada's antiquated first-past-the-post single-member-constituency electoral system is a standing affront to democracy, resulting as it almost always does in governments supported by only a minority of voters. Our party's situation is paradoxical. We have to call for united struggle against Tory reaction. We have to call for the election of the largest possible bloc of really progressive MPs. And we have to ask voters to "send a message" to Ottawa by casting a ballot for us.

All this underlines more and more clearly why we Communists, especially, have to be among the strongest supporters of the now swelling Canadian campaign for effective PR. ■

Thoughts of an Aboriginal of the Communist Party

Cheryl-Anne Carr, Jacob Penner-Norman Bethune Club, Winnipeg

Government money slowly trickles into Aboriginal Programs and new programs are cautiously negotiated but to what ends? The creation of a solid elite class to be the stopper in the bottleneck for the Aboriginal Community.

Around seventy per cent of Aboriginal people are un- or under-educated, below high school graduation.

While between fifteen to twenty per cent of non-Aboriginal people attain university degrees, Aboriginals hover around 7% for men and 5% for women. Aboriginal communities may see unemployment near 90% levels. Over seventy per cent of all Aboriginal Canadians, wherever they live, are in the lowest paying jobs in this country, far, far behind immigrants and people of colour. The education and job-creation plans of the federal and provincial governments are not in-

tended to alleviate this situation but to perpetuate it. It is the plan.

We could write a sizable book and add it to the already vast library documenting the suffering being knowingly inflicted on the Aboriginal peoples within Canada's borders. But let us just cite one instance.

L. Wilkinson reported on a 2005 poll of Manitoba business leaders at a January 12 Conference on Post Secondary Education of Métis People in Winnipeg. They were asked "From

Making Contributions to the *Discussion Bulletin*

The Communist Party of Canada is engaged in a 3-month period of oral and written party-wide discussion leading up to the convening of the 35th Central Convention, the highest decision-making body of our Party, which will take place at the Steelworkers Hall, 25 Cecil St., Toronto, Feb. 1-4, 2007. 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 Quebec National committee meetings and conventions, and at the Central Convention itself. The Central Executive Committee will also

arrange on-line 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.

All members are encouraged to make submissions to the Discussion 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.

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 Quebec, or one of the provincial party offices. The Editor of the Discussion Bulletin can be contacted at 604-255-2041.

where should Manitoba recruit new workers?" The results were widely circulated and discussed in the media. 27% wanted to recruit new immigrants, 26% said youth; 16% suggested other provinces; 14% were unsure; 6% suggested unskilled workers could be sought, while 5% wanted university students. A further 14% listed "other" as their choice. Only 5% of Manitoba business leaders had any notion that Aboriginal people - the fastest growing segment of our population, half of which is now under 15 years old, should be encouraged to fill the ranks of workers. The Business people do not have Aboriginal people on their radar. The media did big stories on this poll referring to recruiting new immigrants and from which countries, totally ignoring the fact, as the Business leadership did, that our immigrants do not stay in Manitoba, but once trained and given Canadian experience, promptly leave for Vancouver, Toronto, and parts of Alberta. Our Aboriginal population, however, stays. With education and jobs the stay would be much more pleasant.

The real agenda is not to educate and employ Aboriginal people but to create a middle class to keep the other in their traditional place. This is of course not new, as elevating a sympathetic leadership has always been a way to get treaties signed, land sold or expropriated, and populations evicted and disconnected. The new processes now taking place only look like land claims, sovereignty issues, self-governance and equalization. It is one more sorry dance in the courts and negotiating tables. The new buzz word is "self-employment." Close ten per cent of the people are already self-employed. The leadership and analyzers tell us this is a positive step. No one informs us what these people are employed in and how much

money they make.

Being self-employed (hauling wood, trapping, fishing, making crafts, etc.) and near starving has been the legacy of the Aboriginal people since European aggression. Hardly a progressive move.

Issues of land use, water purity, ownership, governance have been hot points all over Turtle Island, not just lately but for generations. Within the CPC, we seem to be tailing the mainstream, jumping on board certain issues as they are read about it the media. Our solidarity is not with the many and diverse Aboriginal peoples across the country, but with groups that are lucky enough to have gained media attention to their current plight. While this is good, it is not enough. We are generally unknown to the range of Aboriginal peoples and groups in Canada's borders. All of them are suffering under the same oppression with particular consequences in each area. Every native person is subject to racism and the disallowance of her or his rights. And every native person needs to be made aware of their real connection to all workers and oppressed people. For this the CPC must have a much more visible presence in Aboriginal circles. Our policies must be spelled out in literature and programs that can be made available to and of interest to Aboriginal people. Our clubs and organizational meetings must be welcoming, of interest to, and advertised to the Aboriginal community. The general mindset of the Party must be overhauled to include the notion of Aboriginalness and Canadian, not "other" or "ethnic" or "minority" - because this is an Aboriginal Country never lost, never ceded, never sold to Europeans. Aboriginals are not outside the loop, they are the circle in which we all need to take our own place. If we as individuals cannot see

this, it is because we have all been thoroughly indoctrinated, marinated in the racism that formed Canada. We should not, within our Party, hold the idea that we should "make a place" for Aboriginal peoples but in fact, get out of the way, to let our comrades take the place they should have always held.

To do this, we cannot simply do outreach; we need to confront the racism that lives in us all and with proper self-examination and self-criticism weed it out, as individuals and as Party organizations.

When I told a woman who is employed by the Louis Riel Institute that I was a communist because the Party's policies were the closest to Métis values and aims of any other Party, she said with much confusion "So why haven't I heard of this?" And my only answer was because I had not done my job well enough yet, but it was an oversight I was going to rectify.

One of the biggest barriers to Aboriginal education is that our children do not see themselves in the mainstream culture. As Aboriginals, we are always on the outside. Immigrants can become Canadians or they can go home. We are from here, but we do not belong. This is our land but not our country. This is our home but not our place. Not only do the newcomers not speak our language, but most of us do not. A person can live all their life in Canada and not know our history, our food, our traditions, our music, our names. Often they tell us even our faces are wrong - "You don't look Indian." They define us; they don't listen to us.

We have rights, comrades. As human beings, we have a right to the dignity that socialism promises. This must become our Party without us compromising our Aboriginalness. When we come to a meeting, it must be like we are coming home.

I have a dream, that as Aboriginal

people, we can walk into the meeting places of the CPC in our own skins - as we are, not explaining why we look like this, not hiding our real selves, not speaking or acting to protect ourselves, but as we really are, as we can never be. I dream the Aboriginal person rises to the level she or he can achieve as a human being without ever compromising her or his Aboriginalness. If we can achieve this in the CPC, we can achieve this in Canada. If we can have this in Canada for Aboriginals, we can foster this for everyone, all the world over.

There has been only one experiment in democracy in Canada and it was crushed by the Ontario forces sent to Red River to stop the democratic movement. The Resistance of the people of Red River and the negotiation to bring Manitoba into Canada as a full province was never a "Métis Land Claim" but the democratic will of the majority of people in Manitoba, of all ethnicities. That many of the prominent defenders, planners and leaders were Métis is significant as it had always been the Métis role in the widespread Canadian communities from Quebec to the Rockies. The Métis had long been the bridge from one culture to another. The great gift of "In-between People" has been turned into a curse. When mentioned in Canadian history, they are vilified and discredited. In modern Canada, they are "lesser Indians" without "status." "Status Indians" denounce them as stealers of Indian money, believing everything a Métis gets is taken from a status Indian. Canadians are never taught the truth that all Métis are descendants of Aboriginals and are as "Indian" as anyone with "status."

Most of our cultures saw lineage in families through the mother. European laws changed this, but our Aboriginal laws have not. The Métis people are people of their mothers and

therefore "native." Starting in 1609 in Quebec the Mohawk and Algonquin women who had married French men along with their children were evicted from Indian communities. This was the first displacement of Métis people, it continued straight through the 20th Century. Even though the terms "Native" and "Aboriginal" include Métis, status, non-status, and Inuit people the terms are continually used by non-native and status Indians alike to mean only status Indians as "Native and Métis" or "Aboriginal and Métis." Like saying "British and Yorkshire" it is ridiculous and meant to marginalize.

If nothing else, the CPC should begin disseminating information about Aboriginal peoples to all clubs and encourage anti-racist educationals so that we can begin the processes that make us truly inclusive. Inclusion does not happen just because we say we are.

To quote Dr. Lea Maracle about the Métis achievements in North America, "My people could have led this country to democracy if the others (non-Métis) had not been so ignorant."

Inclusion should mean that we remember we live in Aboriginal Territory, on Aboriginal land. We had at the last CPC Convention agreed that all documents when referring to "laundry lists" of groups or peoples would place Aboriginal people first. We have not been consistent in this and we should. This is not elevating the Aboriginal people to a place of superiority but to the respect they deserve.

As well, our public meetings and large gathering should strive to have an opening conducted by Aboriginal people. This can mean many things - songs, drumming, dancing speeches, greetings, etc. - limited only by creativity, imagination and the variety of Aboriginal people who know us. Our bringing this up in mass movements

that we participate in is also crucial. Let us be seen as supporting and promoting the Aboriginal community wherever possible. It is possible everywhere. Our Cuban comrades want to get to know Aboriginal people. Get them together. Immigrant communities, peace, youth, women, artists, education, environmentalists are all obvious places to bring in and bring up Aboriginal people. Ask the labour groups where their Aboriginal leaders are. May Day should have an Aboriginal worker as the key note speaker. Aboriginal groups should be all over the May Day parade. Drummers at every rally. Elders at every vigil. The Aboriginal community specifically invited, by us, at every event, for every political reason conceivable. If it makes someone uncomfortable, ask why. If they say it's not an "Aboriginal issue," we must answer with "this an Aboriginal country and as such anything that impacts on it impacts on Aboriginal people."

What will this campaign of inclusion get the CPC? Aboriginal supporters, Aboriginal members, votes in every election, friends when we need them. This will further lead to other groups believing our message and coming to our Party. Among the groups the CPC would like to recruit there is a very high interest and respect for the Aboriginal peoples. By truly including the Aboriginal people, the CPC will naturally attract a variety of groups that have hung back so far. Meanwhile, the other political parties and political groups have not been a friend of the Aboriginal community. From genocide to patronizing, the Aboriginal people have suffered under their leadership. Except for a handful of bought off leaders, the Aboriginal people are highly suspicious or cynical towards these policies. The CPC can make great strides to foster a relationship built only on true equality and respect. ■

Concentrate on where to begin the practice of theory

Club Red, Calgary

The process of building a revolutionary party, that will become the vanguard in the struggle for communism, is the task of all members of the CPC. It is clear that this goal is achievable, only if our membership is constantly involved in revolutionary practice. However, without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary practice. A small nuclei of revolutionists can win support amongst the advanced sectors of the proletariat, and eventually the broad masses, when they are equipped with the ideological weapon of the workers, Marxism-Leninism. With this weapon, revolutionaries can battle against any ideological offensive that the bourgeoisie inflicts upon the consciousness of the masses.

During the years following up to and for a smaller time after 1917, the bourgeoisie had no counter to Marxism-Leninism. As a result, Communist thought spread rapidly across the entire globe. Tragically, this did not last forever. The steady deviation from Marxism-Leninism within the USSR and therefore the Comintern, brought the spread of truly revolutionary theory to a stand still. The crimes against and the oppression of genuine socialist ideas within the first workers state, provided the bourgeoisie with the ideological weapon they were without. As a result, the ensuing anti-communist propaganda blurred the consciousness of millions of workers.

The bourgeoisie intelligently used the corrupted and perverted Marxism-Leninism to refute the entire theory. Due to the revisionism, in theory and

practice, the proletariat suffered a terrible blow. As there was no alternative, the proletariat began to assume the ideology of the ruling class. Which has dominated the minds of working people, not consistently, but nevertheless a majority ever since. Anti-communism is still a vital component of bourgeoisie ideology. It's use is frequent in schools, media and the state actions in regards to Cuba, Venezuela, China, North Korea, and Europe etc. As the growth of determined revolutionary movements, at home or abroad, make progress; the bourgeoisie intensify their ideological attack on the minds of masses.

The membership of the CPC must be able to counter-attack with the methods and theories of Marxism-Leninism. The CPC forum and the email list, COMPARTY, was established not only for the expedient exchange of practical information, but also as a means to debate, and educate the party's cadres. Both of these forms of communication were an excellent opportunity for comrades across the country to exchange and develop their ideas. There are those in the party who wish to exclude communications between rank and file members. They would prefer a top-down, and conversely bottom-up, linear restriction on COMPARTY. This limits the ability of interparty discussions on practical and theoretical issues. Communications between comrades on a medium such as the Internet is in no manner a decrease in the centralisation of the CPC as a whole. The capability for comrades to exchange ideas, advice, and criticisms about the CPC's theoretical and practical work is integral for the de-

velopment, and armourment of Marxism-Leninism amongst the membership. The recent arguments over COMPARTY, such as the ANTI-STALIN debate, is definitely the cause for this drastic call for censorship. To discard a device such as COMPARTY or like mediums within our limited arsenal and resources; would be a mistake. The suggested restriction or dismantling of the CPC's tool, COMPARTY, (with such reasoning), is in direct contradiction of the CPC's 1992 convention documents. Which states:

Documents of the 30th Convention of the CPC Dec. 1992, from the section, International Affairs:

“Marxist social science will probably have to be studying the sudden collapse of the Soviet state for years to come.”

From the section, The Party: Revolutionary renewal and continuity, Causes of the Crises, D. Theoretical Stagnation:

“The separation of theory and practise, which Lenin warned was a recipe for disaster, is one of the most serious and longstanding errors of the past whose cumulative effect over at least two decades was to grease the skids for revisionism and liquidationism in the CPC.”

From the section, The Party: Revolutionary renewal and continuity, The road ahead, G. Theory:

‘Too often, each of us failed as scientific socialists to answer our personal conscience by not speaking out when troubled by departures, real or apparent, from Marxism-Leninism; too often each of us failed individually and collectively to provide a political climate and culture in which

comrades would feel comfortable in speaking out. This must never happen again.”

“We mustn’t be afraid to re-examine those parts of our theory, including the theory of the Party, which are dated and which may be erroneous. Criticism and self-criticism must be subject to wide theoretical analysis and debate. We need to consider what is new in the content of working class internationalism in the new world conditions, for example. We also need to consider the negative lessons learned in struggling against the distortions of democratic centralism. We need to test all theory in practise to ensure that nothing is bogus, and that theory and practise are dialectically interconnected as they were meant to be in the struggle for democracy and socialism.”

“Socialism, democracy and transitions to socialism in the new period must be examined. Imperialism and the new world order; the new right, ecological survival and the anti-war movement; all need to be the subject of broad and on-going discussion. The thing is not to conclude these discussions and studies, but to start them.”

From the section, The Party: Revolutionary renewal and continuity, The road ahead, H. Education:

“And education and theory department should be set up and this together with educational materials and plans (including videos, papers, books, etc.) made available to clubs and Party committees.”

The statements made by that convention were not an attempt to push the party inwards or belittle the practical, mass work of the CPC.

We propose to extend the People’s Voice to the internet, there are many ways one could do this but we propose a blog style format in which one can post replies on current events on a forum set up specifically for the peoples voice (if they pay for a subscription, which will grant them a hard copy of the PV along with participation in forum discussions and will help our party reduce the number of petty anti communists/sectarians who would disrupt discussions[or at least we would get some financial compensation for having to deal with them]). The forum would also act as a political discussion bulletin for the communist party (though members would also need to get a subscription to the PV to reply as

well), but would also help give some distance between the legal repercussions for the party if say like one former comrades of now Quebec nationalist bent goes on a tirade about how Osama had the right idea.... In this forum we could also have club specific organisational blogs (open to party membership only) to help promote transparency and understanding of what comrades are doing across the country. The forum format is much less intrusive into ones life then a list serve and as membership participation in discussion increases, their will be an unrealistic amount of emails for members to deal with in their account, not to mention the extra functions like direct URL links and such will only facilitate education of cadre. Such a concentrated effort, to extend beyond COMPARTY, will provide an opportunity for Comrades to discuss and educate themselves in Marxism-Leninism. Sending comrades into battle without appropriate weaponry will not create any opportunities for the CPC. By improving the accessibility for comrades to interact and learn together will mean that newer comrades will become better, unified, organisers, theorists, and leaders amongst workers. ■

A simple approach to our dues

Hanne Gidora, Lower Fraser Club

I am disappointed with the proposed new dues structure. I was hoping that in the 21st century we would finally get away from the archaic system of tithing. Instead the system has been expanded so the highest dues are now double what they used to be, even though workers’ disposable income has decreased over the past 20-30 years. Is this supposed to

attract new members?

One of the arguments in favour is that the new structure is “fairer” as it makes a more accurate connection between members’ incomes and their dues. It does not however reflect people’s different circumstances. In order to be scrupulously “fair” we would have to take into consideration such issues as a member’s dependents. Obviously somebody who has five children will have very

different living conditions from a single, childless person, even if they both have the same pay cheque. Do we really want to turn our club treasurers into mini-taxation officers in order to address all those issues? Or do we turn a blind eye to members who are paying less than they should because of their family circumstances? In the latter case, why bother with a structure?

Another argument is that the dues

structure is “political,” that it reflects the level of commitment. What does a member’s income level have to do with his level of commitment? Commitment to a cause is not expressed in paying a prescribed amount of dues, but in participating in Party activities and making voluntary donations. It would be far more “political” for clubs to have a frank and open discussion about the Party’s financial needs and to develop a fundraising plan for the club that combines personal pledges as well as, most importantly, collective ac-

tivities that raise not only money but also the profile of the Party. This kind of planning should take place on all levels of the Party.

I would like to see a very simple approach to our dues: two levels, “waged” and “unwaged”, \$1 or \$2 per month for “unwaged”, no more than \$5 per month for wage earners. That leaves members the option to make voluntary contributions to the best of their abilities - and we all know that our members are very generous to the needs of the Party.

We are being told that the dues

are not a significant factor in the Party’s overall income. If this is true, why are we tying ourselves into knots trying to figure out how much we should charge for the privilege of Party membership? At the moment, dues do play a role in the income of clubs, regional and provincial offices. Any significant change to the way we collect dues would have to address those needs. That is the kind of approach I would have liked to see for the dues review, as part of our overall financial picture. ■

A Communist Vision of National Development - Put Canadian Workers First

Sean Currie, Edmonton Club

“Capitalism in general, and imperialism in particular, turn democracy into an illusion - though at the same time capitalism engenders democratic aspirations in the masses, creates democratic institutions, aggravates the antagonism between imperialism’s denial of democracy and the mass striving for democracy. Capitalism and imperialism can be overthrown only by economic revolution. They cannot be overthrown by democratic transformations, even the most ‘ideal’. But a proletariat not schooled in the struggle for democracy is incapable of performing an economic revolution. Capitalism cannot be vanquished without taking over the banks, without repealing private ownership of the means of production.” - VI Lenin (1)

Canada is under attack! The massive sell off and transfer of Canadian resources into US control is unprecedented. It is occurring precisely at a time when Canadian workers insist on greater authority and influence in the

economic and democratic decisions over the country as a whole, while an intransigent alliance of US and Canadian parasitical elite seek uncontested power and maximized profit while subverting parliamentary democracy and accelerating the plunder of Canadian energy resources. Wayne Fraser, the Ontario and Atlantic director of the United Steelworkers of America said, “What’s going on now is a 21st Century version of raping and pillaging”. (2)

This ruling class obstinacy and arrogance employ a shady coalition of petty bourgeois apologists and economists, anti-communists and privileged liberal intelligentsia in the profession of undermining Canadian sovereignty. They attempt to sell workers the ideology of capitalism, or some variant of it, as the only system capable of managing the economy.

A continuous and callous chorus of indifference, class division and wealth accumulation doctrine serves only to mask their class hatred, and conceal the looting of the Canadian economy. TD Bank economist Eric

Lascelles said, “You might have 1,000 people losing their job - that’s a horrible thing for them - and you might have 30 million people saving \$50 on their new television which is pretty good for them... So overall you might say the financial impact on Canada is maybe a win situation, but clearly for some people its a big loss.” (2)

Harper, backed by big US industrial oligarchs, banks, war profiteers and “coupon clippers” (3), subverts Canadian parliamentary democracy, allows unregulated and wide-open resource exports, leading the most reactionary section of the Canadian ruling class in the greatest and unmatched accumulation of profit in Canadian history.

Weakening of Canadian Industrial Capacity

Canadian Chemical Producers Association Chairman Larry MacDonald complained that while chemical exports to the US grew by 6% to \$US14.4B operating profits slumped by 7%. MacDonald warned,

“Demand for our products is strong, but high energy prices combined with a high dollar are jeopardizing the future of manufacturing in Canada” (4)

Rapid declines in Canadian manufacturing are the result of high-energy costs, NAFTA, limited capacity in machine tools and the abandonment of Canadian manufacturing development by provincial and federal governments in favour making peace with US finance capital.

In exchange for surrendering control of basic industry and submissive obedience of Canadian economic policy to US finance capital, Canadian industrialists seek to enrich themselves at the expense of workers jobs and lives. 258,000 jobs have been lost in manufacturing between August 2002 and May 2006 (5) and 5 workers are killed every day in the workplace (6) while profits soar. The crisis is deepening and becoming more acute.

Industrial and agricultural activity account for only 30% of Canada’s US\$1.111 trillion GDP. (7) Large-scale industrial expansion consume enormous quantities of steel; raw pipe, industrial vehicles, rubber, plastics, chemicals, power cable, electrical and electronic control equipment, machine tools, heavy lift and heavy haul equipment, transportation infrastructure, and engineering and manufacturing technologies. All of these products, and more, can be produced in Canada.

A Workers Program of Canadian Economic Policy

“Put Monopoly Under Control” was Tim Buck’s vision of a Canadian path to socialism. The Party outlined a vision of Canadian economic progress. It called upon Canadians to challenge and suppress monopoly power and use the state in the service

of worker’s desire for peaceful national development. Today, a similar “up to date” vision, one that describes a Canada where resources are used in the service of workers, will elevate the Party’s national profile.

Engaging workers in a national discourse of a life without corporate control of Canadian sovereignty means mounting a campaign for a national program of industrial and manufacturing development; it means building coalitions around the vision of Canadian economic development; it means developing socialist economic policy; it means publicly and consistently discussing these policies in the Party press; it means national tours of leading Party officials in policy communication and it means developing constituency campaigns around these programs for the next federal election.

Political Strategy and Economic Policy Communication

The key tasks for political strategy in the development of a comprehensive Communist vision of economic development policies are:

1. Immediately following the National Convention, establish local club political committees reporting to the Provincial Executive Committee, to formulate and develop basic regional economic development policies to be completed within 4 months of the National Convention;
2. People’s Voice to carry in every issue a section from each of the reporting regions on a completed section of regional economic policy;
3. Regional Committees to establish a monthly policy pamphlet to be distributed to regional mailing lists and carry out public policy meetings discussing the regional policies;
4. The CC to compile, approve and consolidate the regional policies into

a comprehensive Canadian economic development policy document;

5. CEC to convene a national tour to publicly promote the document and policies;
6. Issue a special issue of People’s Voice to coincide with the national tour, establish a series of “People’s Voice Presents” nights;
7. Make this the concentration task of all Party clubs.

Some Economic Issues of Importance

Some of the issues which need to be discussed and included in the development of a CPC economic policy paper are:

1. Energy and Nationalization
 - a. Nationalization of energy, mining, forestry, transportation, health, chemical, biotechnologies, digital, satellite and voice communications, fisheries, steel;
 - b. Repatriation of “leased lands” from foreign control, increase royalties to 75% of gross profits;
 - c. Expansion of a Trans-Canada pipeline into Quebec and through Northern Ontario - Halt the ENCAN Pipeline to the US for the export of raw bitumen, develop the Mackenzie Delta and Beaufort Sea for northern industrial expansion;
 - d. Development of nuclear energy - expansion of cheap power to manufacturing in eastern Canada;
2. Finance
 - a. International trade (eliminate US single market trade), End NAFTA and export of raw products for processing in US manufacturing;
 - b. Demilitarization of Canadian industry - transfer federal funds to the service of national construction programs;
 - c. Development of national housing programs - build a million low

cost homes for young families, seniors and disabled - expand CMHC and eliminate mortgage insurance costs, federally guarantee mortgages;

d. No foreign control of major industry, Canada must have a minimum 51% stake in any major development;

e. Increase capital gains tax on values of over \$5M, end income and royalty trusts, use bank assets in the development of Canadian industry;

3. Transportation

a. Expand Canada's merchant fleet, develop a national ship building industry for the transportation of Canadian exports and imports, develop a deep water port in the Arctic for northern trade;

b. Expansion and development of rail transport for freight and passenger service across Canada - expand a southern route through British Columbia and major service to the north, transportation service to Northern Ontario;

4. Agriculture

a. Expansion of marketing boards, cattle and pork; wheat - protect the CWB - end the corporate quota system, develop a national program for national food protection and inspection;

5. Forestry

a. Increase pulp and paper production, halt shipments of raw timber to foreign markets, increase wood fabrication tooling, mills, furniture and building materials;

6. Manufacturing

a. Retool eastern Canada to supply raw carbon and alloy pipe, high tolerance down hole chokes and valves for Canadian offshore drilling, structural steel, machine tools;

b. Build large scale industrial tire manufacturing to supply tar sands

heavy haul and industrial vehicles;

c. Develop a national heavy lift industry to manufacture and assemble cranes, gantries, crawlers for the ship building, construction, mining and forestry industries;

7. Engineering and Infrastructure

a. Renovate and construct public schools and recreation centers, put a nurse in every school, build integrated child care facilities up to 12yrs of age, eliminate for profit text books, create a national text book center;

b. Develop a national engineering center for the expansion and export of Canadian technologies, alternate energy sources, carbon reduction technologies;

c. Investment into municipal infrastructure, bridges, roads, sewers, water treatment, recycling and reuse and waste disposal systems, parks and green space for urban areas;

d. Expansion and development of sanitation, water treatment plants and housing for first-nations and northern communities - subsidize food, clothing and transportation to levels of major centers;

e. Expand the CBC; implement a publicly funded national daily newspaper.

Socialism in Canada

The Communist Party of Canada is facing a historically important convention. The choice is to move to

combat the forces of reaction, opportunism and revisionism, move towards a grand vision of socialism in Canada aligned with Canadian workers' desire for peace, national economic development and social justice or remain side lined, abandoning the tasks to the class collaborationist social democratic policies of the new left, waiting until "revolutionary conditions are right". Clearly, the path to socialism is struggle. ■

Footnotes

1. VI Lenin, "Reply to P. Kievsky", Vol. 23, pp. 24

2. CTV.ca, Canadian Press, "Job cuts show decline of manufacturing sector", Nov. 27 2005.

3. VI Lenin, Imperialism, The Highest Stage of Capitalism, Vol. 22, Chapter VIII "Parasitism and Decay of Capitalism", pp. 277

4. Canadian Press, Edmonton Journal, December 20, 2006.

5. Canadian Labour Congress, "The Manufacturing Crisis: Impacts on Workers and an Agenda for Government Action", August 2, 2006. http://canadianlabour.ca/updir/The_Manufacturing_Crisis.pdf

6. Andrew Sharpe and Jill Hardt, "5 Deaths a Day: Workplace Fatalities in Canada, 1993-2005", Centre For the Study of Living Standards, December 2006. <http://www.csls.ca>

7. CIA World Fact Book. www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/ca.html

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Proposal for the Central Convention from the PCQ

The Parti communiste du Québec Convention held on Jan. 13-14 submits this proposal the 35th Central Convention:

“Il est proposé que l’organisation centrale soit chargée d’organiser au moins une campagne politique pan-canadienne par année, - part les élections. Cette campagne doit être dotée de matériel produit par le Cen-

tre (affiches, macarons, auto-collants (mac-tac), option présentation power-point, etc.). Le PCC doit acheter au moins une machine - macarons, et une quantité importante de matériel de production, afin de produire ses propres macarons.”

Translation: “It is proposed that the central organisation should be put in charge to organize at least one

pan-canadian political campaign each year, apart from electoral campaigns. This campaign must be equipped with material produced by the Center (posters, badges, stickers (mac-tac), power-point presentations, etc.). The CPC must buy at least one machine to produce badges and an important quantity of production material to produce its own badges.” ■

Proposed Amendment to the Main Political Resolution

From the Rosa Luxemburg Club, Ottawa

Proposal to amend the Main Political Resolution, Paragraph 24, lines 9-10 (in reference to Cuba), by deleting “ending racial and gender oppression and inequality” and replacing it with “making giant strides towards the elimination of racial and gender inequality.”

Amendment to the dues proposal

From the Manitoba Nominating Convention

Motion to amend the initiation fee and schedule of dues proposed by the Central Committee in Bulletin No. 1 as follows:

	CC proposal	Manitoba Nominating Committee proposal
Net Monthly Income	Monthly Dues	
Under \$600	1.00	1.00
\$601-1,000	4.00	2.00
1,001-1,500	8.00	4.00
1,501-2,000	12.00	6.00
2,001-2,500	16.00	10.00
2,501-3,000	20.00	20.00
(other brackets remain the same...)		