

Call to the 36th Central Convention Communist Party of Canada

In accordance with Article 7, Section 2 of the Constitution, the Central Committee hereby issues this Call to the 36th Convention, to be held February 5 – 7, 2010 in Toronto. The Convention shall commence its work Friday February 5, at 9:30 am, at the USWA Hall, 25 Cecil Street, Toronto. Registration shall be open at 8:30 am Friday morning at the USWA Hall.

Registration shall commence Thursday evening at 7 pm, at 290 Danforth Avenue. Billets and childcare arrangements can be picked up at this time as well as on Friday morning at 25 Cecil St.

The main work of the 36th Convention is to adopt the main Political Resolution, a Plan of Work, consider amendments to the Party Constitution, elect the incoming Central Committee, Audit and Appeals Committees, and ratify a new Executive Committee and Party leader.

Basis of Representation

In accordance with Article 7, Section 3, the number of delegates to be elected from each province and from Quebec shall be determined by the number of Convention Assessments and Initiations purchased in each province and in Quebec on and

before Thursday December 31, 2009.

The basis of representation shall be one delegate for every 8 members or major fraction thereof, except in Quebec where the basis of representation shall be one delegate for every 4 members or major fraction thereof. Alternates shall be determined on the same basis.

Provincial Committees and the National Committee in Quebec shall be advised of the number of Delegates and Alternates to be elected in each province and in Quebec not later than Tuesday January 5, 2010.

Members of the outgoing Central Committee, Audit Committee and Appeals Committee, who are not Delegates, will be seated at the Convention with voice, but not vote.

Nominating Conventions

Delegates and Alternates to the 36th Central Convention shall be elected by secret ballot at Provincial Nominating Conventions in BC, Manitoba and Ontario, at Regional Nominating Conventions in Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Atlantic. At Nominating Convention where there are less than 5 members, 1 delegate shall be elected.

Delegates and Alternates from Quebec shall be elected by secret ballot at a Nominating Convention of the PCQ.

Alternates shall be elected on a separate ballot, following the election of Delegates.

The Nominating Conventions shall be held on selected weekends between Saturday January 9th and Sunday, Jan. 24th, to be determined by the Committees concerned in consultation with the Central Executive Committee.

In addition to electing delegates and alternates to the 36th Central Convention, the Nominating Conventions shall organize a thorough discussion of the Draft Political Resolution, and shall

(continued on page 2)

Issue No. 1

October 1, 2009

Call to the 36th Convention / 1

Appel à la tenue du 36^e
Congrès / 3

Making Contributions to the
Discussion Bulletin / 6

Draft Political Resolution / 7

discuss and vote on all amendments to the Political Resolution and to the Constitution properly submitted to the Nominating Convention and may conduct any other business relevant to the 36th Central Convention.

Those amendments or resolutions receiving the support of a Nominating Convention, together with all other amendments and resolutions, shall be forwarded (by mail, email or FAX) to the Central Conventions Committee by 6 pm EST, Monday January 25, 2010.

Any member in good standing, Party Club, or elected Party Committee, may submit an amendment or resolution directly to the Central Convention, however members are strongly encouraged to place amendments before the Nominating Convention.

Nominating Conventions shall also consider nominations to the Central Committee, Central Executive, Audit and Appeals Committees, and Party leader, and shall express their collective opinion in a secret-ballot vote. In accordance with Article 7, Section 6, delegates shall give due regard to each candidate's 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, and take into account the systematic advancement of women, persons with disabilities, Aboriginal People, People of Colour, and lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans persons.

Those nominations receiving the support of a Nominating Convention, together with all other nominations, shall be forwarded to the Central

Convention Nominations Committee by 6 pm EST, Monday January 25, 2010.

Size and Composition of the Incoming Central Committee

The outgoing Central Committee recommends that the incoming Central Committee be smaller and more operative, comprised of 20 members made up as follows: BC – 5; Alberta – 1; Manitoba – 1; Ontario – 8; Quebec – 4; Atlantic – 1.

Eligibility for Nomination and Election

As set out in Article 7, Section 3, to be eligible for election as a delegate or alternate 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 as a member or alternate 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 be on the payroll of the Party, and shall be within access of the city in which the central headquarters is located.

Delegate and Alternate Fees

Convention Fees are \$40.00 for

Delegates and \$20.00 for Alternates, and shall be paid by the Provincial or Regional Committee in the province, which elected them, and by the PCQ in Quebec.

Transportation, Billets, Child Care, Accessibility

The Centre will pay transportation costs of accredited delegates. Airline tickets will be purchased centrally by the Convention Committee in consultation with each delegate. Airline flights must be booked *as soon as possible after delegates are elected* to keep costs down.

Delegates from Ontario and Quebec are asked to carpool, with extra seats going to alternates as a priority.

The Convention is open and accessible to all members, and the Central Committee invites all of our members and friends to attend the 36th Convention.

Requests for billets and childcare should be submitted to the Convention Committee by Monday January 25th or earlier, on the forms attached.

Requests for assistance with special needs of any kind should also be submitted to the Convention Committee by Monday January 25th or earlier.

The Convention facilities are wheelchair accessible.

Discussion Bulletin

The Discussion Bulletin will publish written contributions of up to 1,000 words, submitted by members, clubs, and committees 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 the second contribution will be limited to 500 words or less, and only one contribution per member will be published in each issue of the Bulletin. The word limitations are to help ensure that all contributions are translated and published in both English and French.

The Discussion Bulletin will be distributed to all members of the Party, through the clubs, or in the case of members at large, through the appropriate Provincial 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 by email to: Kimball Cariou (pvoice@telus.net) and Pierre Fontaine (bretfon@usa.net), Editors, Discussion Bulletin, CPC. Comrades without access to email can send printed contributions to: Discussion Bulletin, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1.

Comrades, the 36th Convention takes place in the midst of deep economic Depression and relentless attack on the living standards, rights, and aspirations of working people across Canada and around the world. Imperialism seeks to take back the gains fought for and won by the working class and its allies over decades. It threatens the world's peoples with regional and nuclear wars and environmental devastation, leaving little for future generations

but the spectre of super-exploitation, national, racial, and gender oppression, war, and a world in chaos, chained to the most powerful and greed-driven corporations in the world.

The work of our Convention will be to chart a course forward to defeat this attack, to fight for a counter offensive led by labour, to fight for a broad People's Coalition, and to struggle for a socialist Canada where the motive force is people's power and the objective to meet the needs and aspirations of the people for peace, jobs, democracy, equality, sovereignty, and socialism, and to build a new world where humanity is truly liberated.

We invite all of our members and friends to attend and participate in the preparations for the 36th Convention. We have a world to win!

*Central Committee, CPC
August 22, 2009*

Appel à la tenue du 36e Congrès central du Parti communiste du Canada

En vertu de l'article 7, alinéa 2 de la Constitution, le Comité central lance, par la présente, l'Appel à la tenue du 36e Congrès, qui aura lieu les 5, 6 et 7 février 2010. Le Congrès commencera ses travaux le vendredi 5 février à 9h30 du matin dans la grande salle de l'USWA (United Steel Workers / Syndicat des métallos), située au 25, Cecil Street, à Toronto. Les inscriptions commenceront vendredi matin à 8h30 dans la grande salle de l'USWA.

Les inscriptions commenceront le jeudi soir, à 19h00, au Bureau central

du Parti, situé au 290 Danforth Avenue. Les arrangements concernant le logement et les services de garderie pourront être faits à ce moment-là et le vendredi matin au 25 Cecil Street.

Les tâches principales du 36e Congrès consisteront à adopter la Résolution politique, un Plan de travail, à considérer les amendements soumis relativement aux Statuts du Parti, à élire les nouveaux Comité central, Comité d'audit et Comité d'appel, ainsi qu'à ratifier le nouveau Comité exécutif et le chef du Parti.

Base de représentation

Conformément à l'article 7, alinéa 3, le nombre de délégués/ués à élire dans chaque province et au Québec sera déterminé par le calcul du nombre de cotisations et d'initiations («Convention Assessments and Initiations») payées dans chaque province et au Québec jusqu'au jeudi 31 décembre 2009.

La base de représentation sera de une/un délégué/ué par 8 membres ou par fraction plus grande, sauf au Québec, où la base de représentation sera de une/un délégué/ué par 4

membres ou par fraction plus grande. Les suppléantes/ants seront déterminées/és selon la même base.

Les Comités provinciaux et, dans le cas du Québec, le Comité national seront informés du nombre de déléguées/ués et de suppléantes/ants devant être élues/us dans chaque province et au Québec au plus tard le mardi 5 janvier 2010.

Au Congrès, les membres du Comité central, du Comité d'appel et du Comité d'audit sortants qui ne sont pas des déléguées/ués auront le droit de parole mais pas le droit de vote.

Congrès de nominations

Les déléguées/ués et les suppléantes/ants au 36e Congrès central seront élues/us par vote secret à des Congrès provinciaux de nomination en Colombie britannique, au Manitoba et en Ontario et à des Congrès régionaux de nomination en Alberta, en Saskatchewan et dans les Maritimes. Aux Congrès de nomination réunissant moins de 5 membres, une/un seule/seul déléguée/ué sera élue/u.

Au Québec, les déléguées/ués et les suppléantes/ants seront élues/us par vote secret à un Congrès de nomination du PCQ.

Les suppléantes/ants seront élues/us par vote séparé, après l'élection des déléguées/ués.

Les Congrès de nomination auront lieu au cours d'une fin semaine qui sera choisie par le Comité concerné en consultation avec le Comité exécutif central entre le samedi 9 janvier et le dimanche 24 janvier.

En plus d'élire les déléguées/ués et les suppléantes/ants au 36e Congrès, les Congrès de nomination organiseront un débat approfondi sur le Projet de Résolution politique, discuteront et voteront sur tous les

amendements à la Résolution politique et aux Statuts soumis en bonne et due forme au Congrès de nomination, traiteront de toute autre question pertinente relative au 36e Congrès central.

Les amendements et les résolutions qui auront été appuyés à un Congrès de nomination, et tous les autres amendements et résolutions, seront envoyés (par courrier électronique ou par télécopieur) au Comité d'organisation du Congrès avant 18h00 (heure normale de l'Est) lundi le 25 janvier 2010.

Tout membre en règle, toute cellule ou tout Comité du Parti pourra soumettre au débat, directement au Congrès central, un amendement ou une résolution, mais les membres sont fortement encouragés à soumettre un tel amendement ou une telle résolution au Congrès de nomination.

Les Congrès de nomination pourront également considérer des nominations au Comité central, au Comité exécutif central et au Comité d'appels et au poste de chef du Parti, et exprimeront leur opinion collective par vote secret. En vertu de l'article 7, alinéa 6, les déléguées/ués devront tenir compte de différents aspects : la capacité de diriger des candidates/ats, leur liens avec la classe ouvrière et avec les forces démocratiques, le caractère multinational du Canada, la représentation des régions, l'équilibre entre camarades d'expérience et camarades moins expérimentés tout en veillant à promouvoir des camarades plus jeunes, l'avancement systématique des femmes, des personnes handicapées, des Autochtones, des gens de couleur, des lesbiennes, des gais, des bisexuelles/els et des personnes trans-sexuelles.

Les nominations ayant reçu l'appui d'un Congrès de nomination ainsi que

toutes tous les autres nominations devront être annoncées au Comité de nomination du Congrès avant 18h00 (Heure normale de l'Est) lundi le 25 janvier 2010.

Nombre de membres à élire au Comité central et distribution à travers le pays

Le Comité central sortant recommande que le Comité central à élire soit plus petit et plus fonctionnel, qu'il comprenne 20 membres distribués de la façon suivante : Colombie britannique : 5; Alberta : 1; Manitoba : 1; Ontario : 8; Québec : 4; Maritimes : 1.

Conditions d'éligibilité au Congrès de nomination et vote

En vertu de l'article 7, alinéa 3, pour être éligible comme déléguée/ué ou suppléantes/ants au Congrès central, il faut avoir été membre en règle sans interruption depuis au moins un (1) an.

En vertu de l'article 7, alinéa 6, pour être éligible au Comité central, il faut avoir été membre en règle sans interruption depuis au moins deux (2) ans.

En vertu de l'article 9, alinéa 9, pour être éligible au Comité central d'appels, il faut avoir été membre en règle sans interruption depuis au moins cinq (5) ans.

En vertu de l'article 10, alinéa 2, pour être éligible au Comité d'audit central, il faut avoir été membre en règle sans interruption depuis au moins cinq (5) ans, ne pas être membre du Comité central, ne pas être une/un salariée/é du Parti et vivre à un endroit accessible de la ville où se trouve le Bureau central du Parti.

Frais d'inscription des déléguées/és et des suppléantes/ants

Les frais d'inscription au Congrès, qui sont de 40,00\$ pour les déléguées/és et de 20,00\$ pour les suppléantes/ants, seront payés par le Comité provincial ou par le Comité régional de la province qui les aura élues/us, et, dans le cas du Québec, par le PCQ.

Transport, logement, services de garderie et accessibilité aux fauteuils roulants

Les frais de transport des déléguées/ués élues/us seront payés par le Centre. Les billets d'avion seront achetés de façon centralisée par le Comité d'organisation du Congrès en consultation avec chaque déléguée/ué. Les vols d'avion doivent être réservés *le plus tôt possible après l'élection des déléguées/ués* pour réduire au maximum les frais.

Les déléguées/ués de l'Ontario et du Québec sont priées/iés de voyager en covoiturage et d'accorder prioritairement les sièges libres aux suppléantes/ants.

Le Congrès est ouvert et accessible à tous les membres, et le Comité central invite tous les membres et les amies/is du Parti à participer au 36e Congrès.

Les demandes de logement et de services de garderie doivent être soumises au Comité d'organisation du Congrès en remplissant et en envoyant à ce dernier les formulaires ci-joints au plus tard lundi le 25 janvier.

Les demandes concernant des besoins spéciaux de tout genre doivent être soumises au Comité d'organisation du Congrès en remplissant et en envoyant à ce dernier les formulaires ci-joints au plus tard lundi le 25 janvier.

Le lieu où se tiendra le Congrès est aménagé pour assurer l'accessibilité

des installations aux fauteuils roulants.

Bulletin de discussion

Le Bulletin de discussion publiera les textes soumis par les membres, les cellules et les comités avant le Congrès comme contribution au Projet de Résolution politique ou à toute autre question. Les textes devront avoir au maximum 1 000 mots. Le Bulletin de discussion sera publié au moins trois fois, et davantage si le nombre de contributions l'exige. Tout membre ou cellule pourra soumettre plus d'une contribution, mais la seconde contribution devra avoir au maximum 500 mots, et seulement une contribution par membre sera publiée à chaque numéro du Bulletin. Les limites de mots fixées visent à assurer que toutes les contributions seront traduites et publiées à la fois en anglais et en français.

Le Bulletin de discussion sera distribué à tous les membres du Parti par l'intermédiaire des cellules ou, dans le cas des membres en général, par les Comités provinciaux ou régionaux appropriés. Les dirigeants de cellules sont priés d'organiser, au cours de la période précédant le Congrès, des réunions spéciales de leur cellule pour assurer la tenue de discussions théoriques et politiques énergiques sur la Résolution politique et sur les autres questions avant le Congrès. Les cellules ainsi que les membres devraient approfondir leurs connaissances et leur réflexion sur les questions importantes et exprimer leurs points de vue dans le Bulletin de discussion pour que tous les membres et que toutes les cellules puissent réagir et soumettre leurs commentaires.

Les contributions doivent être envoyées par courriel à Kimball Cariou <pvoice@telus.net> et à

Pierre Fontaine <bretfon@usa.net>, rédacteurs en chef du Bulletin de discussion du Parti communiste du Canada.

Camarades, le 36e Congrès aura lieu dans un contexte de crise économique profonde et d'attaques implacables contre le niveau de vie, les droits et les aspirations des travailleuses/eurs partout au Canada et dans le monde entier. L'impérialisme essaie de reprendre les gains que la classe ouvrière et ses alliés avaient obtenus au cours de décennies de dures luttes. Il fait peser sur les peuples du monde la menace de guerres régionales et de guerres nucléaires, de dévastation de l'environnement et n'annonce aux générations futures que le spectre de la surexploitation, de l'oppression nationale, raciale et sexuelle, des guerres et d'un monde soumis au chaos imposé par les entreprises les plus puissantes et les plus assoiffées de profit du monde.

Les travaux de notre Congrès ont pour but d'élaborer la voie à prendre pour parer à ces attaques, pour organiser la riposte que devront mener les travailleuses/eurs, pour bâtir une Coalition populaire ample et pour lutter pour un Canada socialiste, ayant pour force motrice le pouvoir populaire et pour objectif la satisfaction des besoins et des aspirations du peuple en matière de paix, de démocratie, d'égalité, de souveraineté et de socialisme, et la création d'un monde différent, dans lequel l'humanité sera vraiment libérée.

Nous invitons tous nos membres et toutes nos amies et amis à participer aux préparatifs en vue du 36e Congrès. Nous avons un monde à gagner!

***Comité central
Parti communiste du Canada
Le 22 août 2009***

Making Contributions to the *Discussion Bulletin*

With this Bulletin, we begin the period of oral and written party-wide discussion leading up to the convening of the 36th 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 Quebec National committee meetings and conventions, and at the Central Convention itself.

This Bulletin includes the Draft Main Political Resolution issued by the Central Committee for party-wide consideration, including

sections dealing with:

- The Deepening Crisis in Canada and Internationally
- The Political Crisis in Canada, and the People's Fightback; and
- Building the Communist Party: the Decisive Question.

We will publish several further Discussion Bulletins before the Central Convention. The next Bulletin will include the first round of submissions to the pre-convention discussion, and proposed constitutional amendments.

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.

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 Co-Editors of the Discussion Bulletin:

Kimball Cariou, 706 Clark Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 3J1, email <pvoice@telus.net>

Pierre Fontaine, email <bretfon@usa.net>

As stated in the Call, initial contributions should be limited to 1,000 words, with a further contribution up to 500 words in a subsequent issue of the Discussion Bulletin.

Please note that the final deadline for receiving amendments to the Draft Main Political Resolution is Monday, January 25, 2010.

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.

Notes:

Draft Main Political Resolution

1. Unprecedented developments are shaking global capitalism to its very core, less than two decades after its so-called 'final victory' over socialism. It is mired in the deepest world-wide economic crisis since the Great Depression of the 1930s. Meanwhile, structural aspects of its systemic decline continue unabated – especially militarism and war, and an intensifying environment crisis, both of which threaten the very survival of humanity.

2. The root cause of the crisis lies in the private ownership of the means of production and its contradiction with the increasingly social character of production. The maturing of this contradiction is rendering the capitalist system ever more volatile and destructive, with dire and sometimes unpredictable consequences. In the hope of reversing the falling rate of profit, ruling circles are stepping up a vicious offensive against our class in order to 'save' capitalism while transferring the cost of the current crisis onto the backs of working people. Democratic and social rights are under increased assault, and ultra-right, narrow nationalist and neo-fascist groupings are proliferating in many countries.

3. At the same time, the deepening crisis is having a radicalizing effect on sections of the working class whose economic and social conditions are sharply deteriorating and are increasingly driven to fight back. Anti-capitalist sentiments and advocacy of socialism as the systemic alternative to decadent capitalism are growing. *These are dynamic times indeed, full of dangers and challenges and also with the potential of resurgent socialism.*

4. This assessment provides the point of departure for discussions leading up to the 36th Convention of our Party, which must aim to lay out our tasks as Communists to help foster class unity and struggle in the face of this deepening crisis. Our orientation should focus on mobilizing and winning today's immediate (largely defensive) struggles, but always with the perspective of

building conditions for our class to mount a counter-offensive against the political and ideological edifice of capitalist relations and its state in Canada, winning state power and building socialism.

SECTION ONE

The Deepening Crisis in Canada and Internationally

5. When the mortgage-centred 'credit bubble' hit the U.S. domestic economy in 2007, signs of a much more comprehensive and devastating economic crisis were already becoming apparent. At its December 2007 meeting, our Central Committee noted that:

“The sub-prime mortgage crisis was the first shoe to drop, but it is likely not the last... The consumer 'credit crunch' is only one part of the teetering economy, to which must be added the staggering deficit and debt load of the U.S. federal government – the largest in history – driven primarily by massive military spending and whopping tax cuts to corporations and the wealthy... [I]t now seems clear that a crisis and recession on some scale is virtually unavoidable. A major downturn in the U.S. economy would certainly have international ramifications, not only because it is the single largest market in the world, but also because US dollars are widely held in foreign currency accounts in other countries... This in turn would further destabilize other domestic economies and international trade relations, developments which could spark heightened political conflict and war, as has happened in the past. Certainly the Canadian economy, with its lopsided trade dependence on the U.S. market and extremely high levels of foreign – mainly U.S.-based – corporate ownership, would be heavily impacted by any generalized crisis...”

6. By the fall of 2008, the looming crisis had finally matured, as stock values plummeted, corporate and bank failures mounted and unemployment spread across national boundaries. Our Party said at the time that the widening crisis had both cyclical and structural components, and that while neoliberal policies – free trade, deregulation, privatization, anti-labour employment policies, etc. – had intensified the reach and severity of the global crisis, it was not simply a failure of neoliberalism per se, but rather an inevitable outcome of the *systemic crisis of capitalism* itself. We further noted that although sharp differences were developing within bourgeois circles about how to deal with the crisis,

“What unites the ruling class is the desire to overcome the crisis at the expense of the working class – both directly through lowering the cost (price) of labour... and indirectly, through the use of public revenues (the bulk of which come from the pockets of working people) to insulate investors from losses and to prop up sagging profits. The differences between the two camps revolve around tactics, not any shift in *fundamental* policy... which [is] essentially directed at propping up capitalism. From the perspective of the working class, neither prescription is acceptable. With respect to so-called 'stimulation' financed by public revenues and/or deficits, the issue is not stimulation *as such*, but rather what types of stimulation, and whose [class] interests they serve.” (*from the main resolution of the Central Committee, January 2009*)

7. In the end, of course, the leading capitalist states had little choice but to intervene in a massive way to bail out the banks, financial and insurance companies and some of the largest transnational corporations in order to stave off complete economic collapse. The infusion of public funds by capitalist states around the world (bankrolled in large measure by mounting government debt) has been truly staggering. In

Canada, the January 27th federal budget brought down by the Harper Conservative government (and which passed through Parliament with Liberal Party support) included a widely-touted \$30 billion ‘stimulus package’ directed primarily at infrastructure-related projects. But this spending was dwarfed by the more than \$200 billion made available to the financial sector to buy shaky mortgages and other ‘toxic assets’ from the banks.

8. In the U.S., the world’s largest economy, the cumulative ‘rescue’ allocations to the financial sector have been exponentially higher – about \$12.8 trillion dollars. This is roughly equivalent to 90 per cent of the value of U.S. production last year. Yet despite such astronomical injections of public funds to keep the ‘captains of commerce’ afloat, liquidity (i.e., the willingness of banks and other financial institutions to extend new lines of credit to businesses and consumers) continues to be sluggish at best. The so-called ‘nationalizations’ of some financial houses in various countries are not efforts to restrict the power of capital or shift the balance of forces from monopoly interests to the people. On the contrary, these actions are intended to shore up capitalism using state funds until such time as they can be handed back to the private sector.

9. While the global crisis is still in its early stages and is unfolding unevenly, certain general features can now be identified, and conclusions drawn. **First**, that everywhere the crisis is attended by *growing impoverishment of workers and the masses of the people*, job losses and rising unemployment (particularly among full-time workers), economic insecurity and the degradation of public services and social conditions, especially for women, youth, seniors, Aboriginal peoples and the most vulnerable. The dismal employment situation has been worsened by the unscrupulous actions of financially healthy corporations which take advantage of the economic crisis to carry out radical restructuring (including job-shedding), often with the assistance of government funds.

10. **Second**, that the corporate/government drive to impose the costs of the crisis on the backs of working people has given rise to *an intense*

bourgeois ideological offensive directed at the working class to split its ranks between public/private sector workers, unionized and unorganized workers, and so on, and to scapegoat the unemployed, new immigrants, racialized communities, and women workers. A crucial part of this ideological campaign is the resurgence of virulent anti-communism, especially in Europe where efforts are being made to restrict the activities of Communist parties and like-minded organizations by falsely and hypocritically equating socialism with fascism.

11. *Another aspect of this ideological offensive aims to mollify working people with misleading and sometimes falsified reports that economic recovery is now in ‘full swing’*, even though such optimistic claims are belied by the facts. In Canada, for instance, unemployment now stands at 1.6 million workers (based on official statistics), and most economists predict that it will continue to rise. Foreclosures and bankruptcies (both business and personal) are on the increase, as is the percentage of working people slipping below the ‘poverty line’. Both domestic consumption and exports (as well as the composite ‘gross domestic product’ [GDP]) continue to languish, and new housing starts have ground to a virtual halt. Internationally, world trade is off sharply while most capitalist governments are mired in unsustainable debt. Why then all the banner headlines declaring that a ‘robust recovery’ has begun? Ostensibly, because of the recent ‘bounce-back’ of stock prices on the Dow, TSX and other Canadian and foreign exchanges. Similar reports of false recovery were commonplace during the last Great Depression – most notably in 1938, only to be followed by four more years of high unemployment. Some bourgeois apologists try to legitimize such wishful (and dishonest) reportage on the grounds that ‘good economic news’ helps to stimulate consumer and investor confidence. But it also serves a more sinister purpose, namely to delude working people into believing that the worst is over, and that they simply need to ‘bunker down’ and ride out the storm, rather than to organize and fight to defend their class interests.

12. **Third**, that *the crisis is aggravating contradictions among the leading imperialist states and blocs*, as each scrambles to defend its own industrial/financial interests at the expense of foreign competitors. Protectionist measures (such as the “Buy America” conditions attached to U.S. government-financed infrastructure projects) is further crippling international trade flows that have already fallen sharply due to shrinking demand and tight credit conditions. Notwithstanding the rhetorical defence of ‘free trade’ and ‘open markets’ spun at G-20, World Bank and other regional and global summits, the evidence unmistakably points to increasing economic nationalism and retrenchment. Over time, this will in turn lead to rising inter-imperialist tensions and rivalries – the historical precursor to imperialist aggression and war.

13. **Fourth**, that the current crisis has more fully exposed *the relative decline of U.S. economic might compared to other competing centres*. While the U.S. still remains the most powerful imperialist power, the weakening of its economic base is undeniable, as reflected in: (1) its massive governmental deficits, which now reach almost 50% of total government receipts, and its accumulated debt amounting to some \$12.8 trillion (by 2009); (2) its increasing dependence on foreign financing to service its debt (mostly in the form of U.S. government bonds and securities), and the net inflow of foreign direct investment to maintain its domestic production of goods and services: and (3) the steady decline of the U.S. dollar, which has lost almost two-thirds of its value relative to other leading currencies since 1971. This decline applies not only in relation to Japan and the EU, but also and even more significantly with respect to the PRC (China) and to a lesser extent, India and Brazil.

14. China’s economic advance over the past two decades has been particularly striking. Its ‘open-door’ policy, based on vastly-increasing levels of foreign investment and privatizations, have significantly improved income levels, domestic consumption and the expansion of its industrial base and

infrastructure. But these gains have been accompanied by growing disparities, unemployment and social tensions. Nevertheless, the growth of China and other ‘emerging powers’ underline the fact that U.S. imperialism is on the wane. The brief period of the so-called “unipolar” world, which seemed to have arisen following the dismantlement of the former Soviet Union and other socialist states in the early 1990s, has clearly given way.

15. And **Fifth**, that the *labour and people’s fightback against the consequences of the crisis has been slow to take flight and remains largely uneven and sporadic*, even though important advances have been made in a number of leading capitalist countries. This is due to a number of factors:

- (1) the impact of fear and insecurity among broad sections of the working class, weakening – if only temporarily – their capacity to unite and fight;
- (2) the imposition of state measures to restrict, and sometimes directly repress, organized dissent;
- (3) the disorienting effects of the bourgeois ideological offensive (referred to above); and finally
- (4) the betrayal of the right-wing, opportunist leadership of social democracy, and the failure of the trade union leadership to initiate – and in some cases, to actively obstruct – the development of a united and coordinated fightback movement.

16. Clearly, the current recession/depression will be deep and protracted, with ruinous effects on the living standards and social conditions of working people. It also takes a toll on their physical and emotional health in Canada and internationally, as documented recently in a study done by the Canadian Medical Association. The crisis brings into sharp focus capitalism’s stagnation and historical limitation, and the urgent need for its revolutionary replacement by socialism and ultimately communism. It follows therefore that *the economic crisis – together with the struggle against imperialist war and in defence of labour and democratic rights – needs*

to be the central and overriding focus for all of the labour and left forces in our country, and especially for the Communist Party, for the foreseeable future.

On Related International Issues

17. The global crisis is having a significant effect on international relations in general. In some respects, the economic turmoil has forced the U.S. and other imperialist powers to refocus their attention – at least momentarily – on their domestic problems. For instance, imperialist efforts to complete the imposition of its neoliberal “global architecture” of domination and plunder, utilizing such international institutions as the IMF, World Bank and the WTO, has been forced onto the ‘back burner’, at least for now. That said, it would be naïve to assume that the strategic ambitions of the various centres of imperialism – which both collude and collide with one another – have been abandoned or fundamentally altered.

18. Imperialist wars and occupations continue to mar the international landscape, often linked to the drive by major imperialist powers to seize control of oil reserves. While the U.S./British-led intervention in Iraq is finally scaling down, most of these occupation forces remain in place and could once again be pressed into active combat. Just as significant, some 200,000 corporate mercenaries remain in Iraq as a privatized army of occupation for U.S. imperialism. Meanwhile, the war and occupation in Afghanistan is being substantially ramped up with the addition of several thousand more ISAF (mostly U.S.) troops in order to prop up the corrupt Karsai regime. Canada continues to bloody its hands in that despicable, ‘unwinnable’ war. The Harper Conservative government, with the encouragement of Washington, London and the NATO brass, is quietly manoeuvring to extend the combat mission beyond the July 2011 deadline set by the Harper government. For its part, the Communist Party continues to call for the immediate repatriation of all Canadian troops – a demand shared by the majority of the Canadian people.

19. The Zionist State of Israel continues its decades-long criminal and illegal occupation of Palestinian lands, with the financial, military and political support of Washington. Israel’s ruthless attack on Gaza (Dec.-Jan. 2008/09) exacted a heavy toll in human suffering with almost 1,400 Palestinians – mostly civilians – slaughtered and thousands more injured or left homeless. Israel’s murder, torture and imprisonment of Palestinians, and its utter contempt for international law – as shown in Gaza, the 2006 invasion of Lebanon, and in countless other occasions during the years of occupation – leave no doubt that it is consciously pursuing a policy of ethnic cleansing, and constitutes nothing less than a *crime against humanity*.

20. Ottawa’s Middle East policy has tilted even more sharply in favour of Israel under the right-wing Harper government. Pro-Zionist groups, including the Canadian Jewish Congress, B’nai Brith and others, have stepped up their anti-democratic campaign to silence all criticism of Israel on Canadian campuses and in public discourse in general, on the specious grounds that anti-Zionism is equivalent to anti-Semitism. Our Party repudiates that false claim and calls for stepped up solidarity with the long-suffering Palestinian people and the implementation of all relevant U.N. resolutions, including Israel’s complete withdrawal from all lands it has illegally occupied since the 1967 war, the dismantling of the Apartheid wall and removal of all Israeli settlements, the formation of a viable and genuinely independent Palestinian State with East Jerusalem as its capital, the guaranteed right of Palestinians to return to their homelands, the certifiable de-nuclearization of Israel, and mutual security guarantees for all states in the region. Until such basic justice is achieved for the Palestinian people, our Party will continue to support the international campaign of boycott, divestment and sanctions (BDS) against Israel.

21. We also express our solidarity with the progressive, secular and democratic forces of Iran who are struggling against the Ahmadinejad government and the

repressive theocratic regime as a whole. As the Central Executive stated in July 2009, some progressives in Canada and elsewhere

“have wrongly concluded that because the regime has been targeted by U.S. imperialism and its regional gendarme, the Zionist state of Israel... [the anti-imperialist movement] should remain silent, or worse, even support the reactionary regime. This simplistic arithmetic, based on the flawed notion that ‘the enemy of my enemy is my friend’, is fundamentally flawed. The Ahmadinejad regime is not at all a progressive or ‘pro-worker’ government... It is a vicious, reactionary regime which has repeatedly attacked workers’ organizations, women, students and secular forces, including imprisonment, torture and murder against its opponents, over the past thirty years of its rule.”

At the same time, we emphasize that the conflict within that country must be settled by the Iranian people themselves. We vehemently oppose any move by U.S. imperialism or its allies to use the conflict and their ongoing “demonisation” of Muslims and Islam as a pretext to interfere, or worse, launch military aggression against Iran.

22. In Latin America, the left and anti-imperialist forces continue to register important advances, including the formation of progressive governments in a number of countries – Bolivia, Ecuador, Nicaragua, El Salvador, and Uruguay, among others, and in forging a number of important regional initiatives, not least the Bolivarian Alternative for the Americas (ALBA) and Telesur. The most developed of these transformative processes is of course the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela led by President Hugo Chávez Frias. We convey our revolutionary solidarity with all these anti-imperialist movements and governments, as we do with Socialist Cuba – *the first free territory of the Americas* – which continues to play the pivotal political and inspirational role in supporting and helping to guide this dynamic wave of change sweeping across the southern half of our

hemisphere. We send a militant salute to the Cuban Revolution and express our unwavering solidarity with its government, its Communist Party, the imprisoned Cuban Five and the Cuban people as a whole for their many achievements and internationalist contributions, especially in the face of unrelenting pressures, harassment and blockade from U.S. imperialism over the past half-century.

23. We denounce the recent coup d’état in Honduras and call for the immediate re-instatement of democratically-elected President Manuel Zelaya, along with a complete investigation and punishment of all conspirators involved in this criminal act. We are certain that such an investigation will confirm the covert involvement of U.S. imperialism – at least at some high level within its state apparatus. It will also likely show the Honduran coup to have been part of a wider sinister strategy to weaken and ultimately reverse the popular transformative process currently under way across Latin America, the most dangerous component of which is the ongoing construction of a network of U.S. military bases centred in Colombia and directed principally against its progressive neighbours – Venezuela and Ecuador – and against socialist Cuba. The return in 2008 of the U.S. Navy’s Fourth Fleet to the waters of the Caribbean and Latin America was another clear signal of U.S. imperialism’s intentions to regain political and economic domination of this region.

24. We also express our militant solidarity with the struggling people of Colombia who face increasing repression at the hands of the fascist Uribe regime and the oligarchic and imperialist interests it represents. These stepped-up attacks are directed primarily at the armed insurgency led by the FARC-EP, but are also aimed at the Colombian Communist Party, militant trade unions, peasant organizations and activists, and other democratic forces, many of whom are being executed or imprisoned as “*FARC politics*”. We call once again for the cancellation of the Canada-Colombia Free Trade pact and for the removal of the FARC-EP and all insurgent forces from Canada’s notorious “terrorist entity” list.

25. Another significant event in the recent period was the change in the U.S. administration with the election of Barack Obama and Democratic majorities in both Houses of Congress. This stunning rebuke to the ultra-right forces, and the election of an Afro-American as President were landmark achievements in a society still plagued by class and racial oppression. Some of the pronouncements of the new Administration, especially with respect to foreign policy, marked a welcome departure from the Bush White House. Nevertheless, it is important to not harbour any illusions about the Democratic Party, which remains a capitalist party in the most powerful imperialist state on earth, still committed to neoliberal dogma and policy, and in which corporate interests continue to prevail in its hierarchy and around all crucial issues. This reality was confirmed during the recent debate around healthcare reform, when leading Democrats added their voices to the Republican/corporate onslaught against a rather limited and tepid reform package. The decisive task for the U.S. working class continues to be breaking the stranglehold of the two-party system through the establishment of a genuine labour/people’s mass party.

26. Finally, we address our attention to the peace, anti-imperialist and Communist movements at the international level. During the bleak days of the Reagan administration in the early 1980s – which many came to refer ‘Cold War II’ because it marked the end of the short period of “détente” in favour of U.S. imperialism’s renewed drive to achieve overwhelming military superiority over the former Soviet Union – our Party advanced the slogan “Peace is everyone’s business”. It was quickly taken up by the broad peace movement across the country because it spoke to the fact that (1) the arms race and the danger of world war directly affects and threatens everyone; and (2) that therefore the peace movement should be as broad and inclusive as possible. And yet, while international conditions and the world balance of class forces have changed significantly (for the worse) since then, imperialism’s drive to aggression and war have hardly abated; in fact, local and regional wars

have proliferated, as the U.S. and its imperialist allies, including Canada, move to consolidate and extend their global hegemony. The human cost of war and militarization continues to accelerate – both for those it directly victimizes, and for those forced to pay for its preparation out of scarce resources diverted from socially-productive use.

27. 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 stands opposed to aggression and war should be welcome in this broad movement. That is why our Party continues to support the Canadian Peace Alliance (CPA) and local peace coalitions across the country. At the same time, we recognize the decisive importance of building up the most advanced anti-imperialist section of that movement, represented internationally by the World Peace Council (WPC). That is why the reestablishment of the Canadian Peace Congress (CPCong), an affiliate of the WPC, is a significant achievement. While it is still a fledgling organization, new branches are beginning to take shape and it will be hosting an important Trilateral Conference involving WPC affiliates in Canada, the U.S. and Mexico in October 2009 in Toronto. Our party must continue to give its active support to the CPCong's development and growth.

28. We salute all of the progressive, working class, anti-imperialist and national liberation movements around the world, including those in government as well as those struggling to win power. We reaffirm our view, stated at the 35th Convention that

“Now more than ever, the expansion and consolidation of a 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.”

29. But of all the various progressive

movements and currents which exist internationally, none is more important to us than the Communist movement itself. We say this not simply because we are Communists, but rather because history has shown time and again that it is the Communist parties, sharing a world view based on Marxism-Leninism and working class internationalism, and bringing together the most advanced, disciplined and committed fighters of our class in each country, which have been the bedrock and driving force of the broader movements fighting for peace, against imperialism and for socialism. Our Party remains wholeheartedly committed to the strengthening of the Communist movement internationally, and more specifically to the annual International Meeting of Communist & Workers' Parties (IMCWP).

30. Over the past dozen years, the IMCWP has grown both in terms of participating parties and with respect to its capacity to initiate and strengthen coordination and joint action. At the same time, we must note a growing differentiation among the parties on certain fundamental questions. While respecting the right of each member party to articulate its political analysis and line of march, and while working to foster unity-in-action despite a diversity of views, we reiterate our conviction that the essence and strength of our Communist movement derives from its fidelity to Marxism-Leninism, both in theory and practice, including our collective responsibility to respond to, and struggle against, all manifestations of opportunism (both right and 'left'), revisionism and reformism within our ranks.

31. Looking at the development of the global working class movement in recent years, and the profound crisis gripping the imperialist system, we are more confident than ever that socialism is the next historical step for humanity. Canada will not be an exception to this process. The 36th Convention of the Communist Party of Canada will help to build the revolutionary forces in this country, as part of the worldwide struggle for a future free from exploitation, oppression, war, hunger, and environmental catastrophe.

SECTION TWO

The Political Crisis in Canada, and the People's Fightback

32. The current economic crisis in Canada needs to be situated in the context of the country's overall distorted pattern of economic development – in the long-standing erosion of manufacturing and secondary industry and reliance on the export of raw materials. This process has accelerated dramatically, costing hundreds of thousands of jobs. The pattern of uneven development of the economy, and reliance on resource extraction, are objective factors behind the decades-long drive towards continentalism, and help to explain the Harper Tory agenda to accelerate this process, towards so-called “deep integration” which will fatally undermine any meaningful Canadian sovereignty.

33. Since our Party's 35th Central Convention in early 2007, the Canadian domestic situation has been characterized by a deepening of capitalism's interconnected economic, political, social and environmental crises. This has gone beyond the occasional cyclical recession or political upheaval; it has become a profound crisis threatening the future of Canada. But for the revolutionary forces, such a crisis also offers the opportunity to win working class support for fundamental change in society. The Communist Party of Canada calls for a truly dramatic shift away from the failed policies of neoliberal capitalism, and for the creation of a People's Coalition which can begin to take the country in such a new direction.

34. The economic crisis must also be seen in connection to the deepening political crisis in our country, which has resulted in a string of short-lived minority governments – each tilting farther and farther to the Right – and growing disillusionment among the electorate reflected in ever-lower voter turnouts. For the past three years, despite lacking a majority in Parliament, and with the electoral support of just over one-third of voters, the Harper

laws, court rulings, Parliamentary resolutions, and public opinion to impose their reactionary agenda. This deeply unpopular government has extended Canada's role in the dirty imperialist occupation of Afghanistan, encouraged the corporate assault on workers' pensions and collective agreements, and refused to sign the historic United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. Harper and his government deny any responsibility to tackle the global crisis posed by climate change. In short, at a crucial time of economic decline and environmental degradation, Canada is governed by one of the most right-wing parties in the capitalist world, a party lacking any legitimacy to carry out its far-reaching plans to destroy the social gains achieved by past generations of working class and people's movements.

35. In response to this profound crisis, the working class and its allies must develop new strategies to build a powerful resistance movement leading to a People's Coalition at both the extra-parliamentary and electoral levels. The Communist Party will continue to give its full backing to all such efforts, and to call for the goal of a socialist transformation of Canada as the fundamental solution to the economic and political crisis facing the country.

36. As comrade Figueroa said in his opening remarks to our 35th Central Convention, "defeating the Harper Conservatives has come to be the most central and pressing task for our Party, our class and for the Canadian people as a whole. ... The Tories under Prime Minister Stephen Harper have now become the preferred party of most sections of Canadian and international finance capital, not just the resource companies and military contractors, but also the banks and other monopolies."

37. We stressed at the time that working people should have no illusions that the Liberal Party, the petit-bourgeois nationalist BQ, or the NDP under Jack Layton, stand for a fundamentally distinct political alternative, one which breaks with neoliberal, pro-war and pro-integrationist policies of the Harper Conservatives.

38. Hoping to take advantage of weaknesses among the opposition parties, especially the Liberals, PM Harper cynically went to the polls in September 2008, ditching his own legislation on fixed-term election dates. The snap election was calculated to grab a majority before the economic crisis burst with full force. In the end, Harper's opportunist gambit fell short. The stock market 'meltdown', which erupted less than two weeks before Election Day, severely undermined Harper's credibility over his claims that "the fundamentals of the Canadian economy are sound". That, together with the Tories' anti-social and pro-war policies were sufficient to deny the Conservatives a majority.

39. In our post-election commentary, we predicted continued political volatility:

"Despite their claims, *the [minority] Tories have no mandate to impose their right wing agenda on the country.... The Conservatives will most likely attempt to 'bulldoze' legislation through the House as if they indeed had a working majority*, as they did during the previous session. ... The political terrain is now quite murky as the country enters into a deep and likely protracted economic crisis and recession. The post election battle lines will most likely centre around the struggle to block the attempts of finance capital and its big business parties – in the first instance, the Conservatives – from foisting the burden of the crisis onto the backs of the working class and working people. The challenge now for the labour and democratic movements will be to move the struggle back into the streets, workplaces and communities across Canada." [CEC Statement, October 15, 2008]

40. A few weeks later, federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty (a key figure in the far-right government of former Tory Premier Mike Harris in Ontario) introduced his "economic update", rejecting calls for any genuine economic stimulus. The immediate result was a Parliamentary crisis in late November 2008, in which the so-called "coalition" of the Liberals and the NDP, backed by the *Bloc Québécois*, vowed to bring

down the government on a confidence motion.

41. Confronted with the spectre of defeat, the Tories regrouped and launched a massive propaganda campaign, casting themselves as 'victims' of a conspiracy by the Liberal/NDP coalition, together with a chauvinist tirade against the "separatist" BQ and the national rights and aspirations of the people of Québec. Harper moved to suspend Parliament, a move with grave long-term implications for democracy in Canada.

42. The Communist Party considered the Liberal-NDP confidence motion as the only immediate practical alternative to continued Tory rule, an alternative which would have opened prospects for the labour and people's extra-parliamentary struggle to win certain concessions and set the stage to shift the political balance in Parliament in a future election.

43. But we also pointed out that the Liberal/NDP coalition likely would have had a short life-span, given the rivalry between the two parties, and the sharp cleavages within the Liberal Party itself. The dominant section of the Liberal leadership, represented by Michael Ignatieff, John Manley and others, were hostile to the Coalition concept, preferring instead to manoeuvre to regain the support of Big Business and pose once again as the 'government-in-waiting'. Dion's forced departure as Liberal leader, replaced by Ignatieff, signalled the death knell of the Coalition long before the 2009 budget was brought down.

44. This budget prioritized bail-outs for the banks and other lenders, and tax hand-outs to business, while ignoring the urgent needs of workers and the unemployed. Among the budget's worst features was the lack of action on Employment Insurance (EI), which the Tories stubbornly refused to improve. The EI changes subsequently announced by the Tories in September 2009 (Bill C-50) were a temporary fix which would extend a few weeks of coverage to barely 10% of the officially unemployed, and do absolutely nothing to reform the broken system that already excludes

coverage for over half those currently out of work. When millions of workers are being victimized by the impact of a devastating crisis brought on by the speculative greed of finance capitalists, and when billions upon billions of public funds are ladled out to banks and corporations to rescue their sliding profit margins, this feeble stop-gap measure is a monumental insult to both working and unemployed Canadians.

45. Taken together, the 2009 federal budget and the spreading implementation of the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) scheme constitutes yet another massive transfer of wealth from working people to finance capital in this country. But as the full weight of the recession/depression comes to bear on the Canadian people, the failure of Tory policies will come ever more sharply into focus and will engender increasing resistance and united mass struggle. No amount of bobbing and weaving by the Harper government or their accomplices on the "Opposition" benches will be able to avoid or subdue a rising tide of people's anger for long.

The Organized Working Class: Key Element of the Fightback

46. The current crisis is being used by monopoly to consolidate its positions, weaken its competitors and escalate its attack on labour. The attack on the working class and their institutions, particularly on labour unions, is nothing new; hostility to organized labour is an intrinsic part of capitalism, reflecting the antagonistic relations between exploiters and exploited. This assault not only strives to weaken labour so that more surplus value can be expropriated by capital; it is also motivated out of the fear of losing control and the knowledge that the working class has the potential to unite all the diverse forces of society – workers, farmers, Aboriginal peoples, women, youth, seniors, oppressed minorities, and even elements of the small bourgeoisie – into political movements that have the potential to overthrow them. That is the spectre of communism identified by Marx and Engels that haunts them, no matter how powerful they may appear to be.

47. In conducting its offensive against

the workers, capital helps to promote and take maximum advantage of elements within the labour movement itself who vacillate and retreat in the face of this attack, and in some cases collude with capital in undermining labour's resistance. The capitalists dream of an environment without trade unions, or of trade unions which have been "captured" and converted into control mechanisms. It follows therefore that for the workers to defend and advance their interests against this onslaught, they will be increasingly compelled to struggle not only against monopoly and its governments, but also against those within labour itself who advocate compliance with the corporate agenda. Actions and ideology that weaken the fightback are elements of corporate influence and strength within labour, and they must be exposed and isolated.

48. The working class, and especially its leading edge, the organized trade union movement, must develop forms of resistance and struggle suited to today's conditions. This needs to include the development of left leadership within organized labour capable of resilient tactics. Compromise, the ability to attack and retreat, transient alliances and stubborn resistance are all part of the same whole, and the catalyst is struggle.

49. As noted above, the monopolists and their state have escalated their ideological offensive to attack labour using the current crisis, unemployment and impoverishment to try and divide organized workers from the 70% of the working class who are not organized. They use the media to shift the blame onto "fat cat" organized workers who are portrayed as spoiled, overpaid and the cause of economic ruin. This tactic was employed, for instance, to demonize the CAW in order to 'soften up' that union to accept major concessions. A similar strategy was employed against CUPE municipal workers in southern Ontario during their recent strikes.

50. The main thrust of the attack has been against the manufacturing industrial base in Ontario and to a lesser degree in Quebec. British Columbia has not been ignored; over the last few years over 120 mills have closed and raw unprocessed logs are being shipped for

processing, mostly in the United States. In every province, the attack against labour, against social programs, pensions and working conditions, the sell-out of resources, de-industrialization and loss of sovereignty are escalating phenomena that require organized response.

51. There have been many militant struggles in recent years, both by public sector and industrial workers. There have even been significant actions by unorganized workers. Hundreds of thousands of industrial workers, disenfranchised and ejected from their plants, are having a hard time trying to conduct the fightback and handle unemployment simultaneously. The fact that our industries, energy and resources are largely foreign-owned or controlled further complicates matters, because the attack is orchestrated from outside our borders, as in the case of the Steelworkers fighting the Brazilian-owned Vale Inco Corporation. Inside our borders, health care workers, teachers and other public workers have been under attack by provincial governments.

52. However, generally speaking the fightback has been slow to develop. There are many reasons for this, including the intensity, speed and escalation of the assault.

53. Another is the weakness of the left in the labour movement, which puts the need to build our Party on the agenda. The Cold War attack on the left and the socialist states also ushered in the dominance of right wing social democracy as the main ideology of the trade union leadership, with some sizable elements of open bourgeois support. This has definitely hampered attempts by organized workers to develop extra-parliamentary political struggles to resist plant closures and economic attacks as militantly as the French or the Greek workers.

54. But workers have not been passive in the face of the attack. There has been notable resistance by public workers and educators in Atlantic Canada. The anger of GM workers who closed down the GM Head Office in Oshawa showed their ability to mobilize. The CUPE workers who took on the City Councils in Metro Toronto and Windsor put up a stubborn defence of their benefits and

wages. The Steel Car Workers in Hamilton defied lock-out and refused to give in without a fight. The embattled Steelworkers in the US Steel (Stelco) chain have fought innovatively and well for many years; currently the same union is squared off against Vale Inco in Sudbury, Voisey's Bay and Port Colborne. The British Columbia struggles for the last ten years have been difficult and hard fought; the 2004 strike by the Hospital Employees Union almost sparked a general strike, and the next year the BC Teachers defied the Campbell Liberals and the courts to force the government to negotiate. CUPE civic workers in Vancouver held out for months in 2007 against an attempt by the NPA Mayor and Council to gut their contracts; their courageous strike helped defeat the NPA in the 2008 civic election. Currently the paramedics in BC are on strike, but forced to work as an essential service. The BC ferry workers are facing an impending attack and preparing a defence. The CSN in Quebec put out a militant proposal for demonstrations on May 1st, the international day of working class solidarity. There are smaller strikes and skirmishes going on across the country. Their struggles are not reported in the corporate media, except in many cases as lost causes or objects of sneering ridicule.

55. But there is a problem. It could be seen in Oshawa, in Windsor and in the Manufacturing Matters campaign. In each of these cases, Labour managed to mount significant campaigns at the initial stages, but has not found a way to make the second, follow-up step in these struggles. This has allowed the opponents of labour to adopt a policy of containment with predictable results. The Toronto Labour Council was able to assemble 1200 stewards and activists early in 2009 for a fightback conference, but failed to bring this resource to bear in the CUPE strike. The CAW workers in Oshawa mounted a creative struggle shutting down the GM Head Office for several days, but were dismissed by a simple court injunction. CAW workers in Windsor occupied a plant and then settled for a minor portion of the severance owed them. The CAW again mounted an impressive pension demonstration in Ontario that showed their ability to mobilize. The ability of

workers to organize is a given – but what next?

56. These trends are also evident in the trade union movement in Quebec, despite its higher level of militancy and working class consciousness. Following the election of Jean Charest in 2003, his Liberal government adopted a series of laws attacking trade union rights. The largest mobilization of the Quebec trade union movement since the 1970s came the next year with a national day of disruption by a common front of the unions, including a demonstration of 100,000 on May 1, 2004, in Montreal. This mobilization culminated in a 24-hour political general strike, involving the public and private sectors, and all the major trade union federations. Unfortunately, this fightback was sabotaged from within. The government seized the occasion to enact a special law imposing poorer working conditions, a 2-year wage freeze, and increases below inflation for the next three years. The law also imposed penalties so excessive that a violating union's very existence could be threatened. Because they failed to truly unite and conduct an independent political response to the Charest government's anti-working class offensive, the trade unions in fact suffered a major defeat.

57. With the onset of the economic crisis, trade unions in Quebec, particularly within the CSN, attempted to mobilize a broad front across Canada to demand improvements to Employment Insurance, starting on May Day 2009. Unfortunately this important initiative was not picked up by the CLC. More recently, a common front of the Quebec unions has been formed for the renewal of collective agreements for public sector workers, which will expire in March 2010. This common front, along with measures to discourage raiding within the Quebec labour movement, provides an encouraging outlook for a more unified and militant labour strategy.

58. The attack from the corporations and their governments will escalate. The corporate drive to force two-tier wages, pensions and benefits on youth is an attempt to split the generations and ultimately destroy labour by cutting off

its future. The appointment of a "blue-ribbon" panel to examine the strike history of employees under federal jurisdiction is an ominous signal that the Harper Tories are preparing to gut the collective bargaining rights of these workers, particularly if the Conservatives manage to win a majority in Parliament. The Harper agenda also includes plans to privatize significant parts of the operations of Canada Post. In BC, Quebec and other provinces, 2010 will be a year of negotiations for public sector workers. In other words, major working class struggles are on the horizon.

59. The problem of leadership – or lack thereof – in the fightback against the corporate agenda is not primarily organizational, but rather *ideological* in character. It is absolutely essential to build the left and provide workers with a vision of something larger, of a road that leads somewhere. This could begin with modest accomplishments. A vital first step would be to pressure the CLC to call a special emergency conference of affiliates, the Québec Federations and its social justice allies to develop a comprehensive strategy to confront the impact of the current crisis. One of the key issues of such a conference would be labour unity and the cessation of raiding between unions. This must be a prerequisite for an extra-parliamentary fightback program that has a perspective of ultimately creating its own anti-monopoly parliamentary expression – a People's Coalition led by the working class and its allies.

60. But to build the fightback and forge such a People's Coalition, it is also necessary for the left – while fighting always for unity and alliances – to sharpen its criticism of tendencies of compliance within our class, to explain the danger of such tendencies to the workers and demonstrate alternatives. This competition for ideological leadership between the left and right forces is actually an integral part of the fight for unity, the unity of the left and centre.

The People's Movements in the Struggle for Change

61. Other broad democratic movements

are also in action against the Harper Tories and the corporate agenda, with varying degrees of success. These movements are all key sections of a potential People's Coalition to steer Canada away from the dangerous right-wing course pursued by the present government.

62. The political crisis in the country takes place against the backdrop of the imperialist war in Afghanistan, where US/NATO bombings continue to inflict huge casualties on civilians. The occupation forces now admit that their efforts to crush the insurgency have failed. Public opinion across Canada has tilted decisively against the war, and a majority want the troops brought back home before the "exit date" of July 2011. The fraud-ridden August 2009 elections and general corruption within the Karsai puppet regime have further eroded support for the war in Afghanistan. Ending this imperialist occupation is more urgent than ever as the 'field of combat' has now extended into Pakistan and may develop into a regional conflict.

63. But even as Canadian casualties in Afghanistan mount, anti-war forces under the umbrella of the Canadian Peace Alliance have not been able to mobilize large protests in the recent period. There are several reasons for this frustrating situation, not least the huge propaganda blitz by the Harper government, the corporate media, and the Canadian military brass, branding any vocal opposition to the war as "unpatriotic." While this PR campaign has not increased support for the war, it has made it more difficult for anti-war movements to get larger numbers of Canadians into the streets. Another factor is the belief by millions of Canadians that their views are simply ignored by the Harper Tories. This view is fuelled by the failure of the parliamentary opposition parties to make more than token gestures against the war. The NDP, which once advocated bringing the troops home immediately, has retreated under right-wing pressure. Jack Layton now speaks about "supporting our courageous troops," issuing regular statements praising their "sacrifices for our country." While the NDP remains formally on record against

the war, the Layton leadership does nothing to encourage its members to join in building anti-war protests.

64. In a related development, the Harper Tories are attempting to whip up chauvinist and militarist sentiments by posing as "defenders of Canadian sovereignty" in the Arctic. This is ironic to say the least, given the Tory record as strong advocates of the Security and Prosperity Partnership and other projects to accelerate the process of "deep integration" of Canada with the USA. While the government revives Cold War rhetoric about the "Russian threat," the only real threat to the sovereignty of Canada and that of the Inuit people is posed by U.S. imperialism. Plans for huge military spending in the North are a cover for opening up the region for massive exploitation of oil and gas reserves by U.S.-based transnational corporations. Far from protecting the North, this approach will only expand hydrocarbon emissions which lead to further global warming and the melting of the Arctic icepack. The Communist Party condemns the Harper government's hypocrisy on this issue and calls instead for policies oriented on international cooperation to protect the Arctic, including a ban on exploitation of sub-surface resources in this region, and an end to militarisation of the Arctic.

65. Peace actions must be stepped up across the country through the Canadian Peace Alliance and the network of local anti-war coalitions. We also welcome the renewed and expanding presence of the Canadian Peace Congress, with its explicitly anti-imperialist perspective. The anti-war movement is an important part of the broad people's forces for a fundamental change of policies in Canada, away from militarism, environmental devastation and corporate domination, and in favour of peaceful economic development across the planet.

66. The Communist Party welcomes the upsurge of militant struggles by Aboriginal peoples in recent years in defence of their inherent national rights, and to demand an end to racism and the appalling living conditions imposed by centuries of colonial domination. The heroic land reclamation in Caledonia by

the Six Nations, the occupation of the Tobique Hydro Dam by the Maliseets in New Brunswick, the Grassy Narrows blockade in north-western Ontario, the resistance against tourism expansion on unceded territories by Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia – all these and many more such struggles prove that far from being crushed, the Aboriginal peoples within the borders of the Canadian state remain a powerful force of resistance against the corporate agenda. We will continue to extend our solidarity to all such struggles and to encourage every effort to build wider unity of all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal popular movements on the basis of recognition and support of the just struggle to win the inherent national rights of Aboriginal peoples to their tribal sovereignty and historic territories.

67. The youth and student movement remains another key source of popular opposition to the corporate attack. While the student movement in English-speaking Canada is hindered by splits caused by right-wing forces on a number of campuses, the Canadian Federation of Students and the militant and progressive sections of the student movement in Quebec have continued to fight against the rapid escalation of tuition fees across the country. Post-secondary students have been extremely active in anti-war actions, opposition to the apartheid policies of the state of Israel, free speech movements and many other progressive issues. Young workers' groups aligned with Labour Councils have been prominent in the fight to increase minimum wage rates, the rights of youth in the workplace, and related demands in many areas. Since our 35th Convention, the Young Communist League/Ligue des jeunes communistes has held its refounding convention, and clubs are active in several provinces. The YCL and its magazines *Rebel Youth* and *Jeunesse militante* have become an increasingly visible presence within the wider youth and student movement, helping to build these struggles and to advance the perspective of a socialist future for youth in Canada.

68. Recent years have seen ongoing resistance against government policies of deregulation, contracting out, "public-

private partnerships” and other expressions of the neoliberal attack on the public sector. There have been important struggles around the defence of Medicare and opposition to P3 projects which undermine public and democratic control of the health care system. These movements have succeeded in preventing many such initiatives and in maintaining strong public support for the principles of Medicare – universality, portability, etc. We note that the Harper Tories have refused to counter the outrageous lies being spread by the U.S. corporate health sector against the Canadian Medicare system; in fact the Tories welcome such attacks, which will help them prepare the next steps in their assault on public health care in Canada.

69. In several provinces, moves by provincial and municipal governments to privatise key elements of the hydro and water systems have met with vocal opposition. These actions have been closely linked with the wider campaign against the so-called “Security and Prosperity Partnership” which has been undertaken by the Council of Canadians, many trade unions and other groups. The SPP, as our Party has already noted, is backed by corporate bodies such as the Canadian Council of Chief Executives, and is intended to “harmonize” Canadian and Mexican laws and standards to US levels. The campaign against the SPP and similar brazen moves to wipe out the remaining elements of Canadian sovereignty has helped to slow down the Harper government’s drive to privatize the public sector and sell out Canada to transnational capital.

70. Women in Canada still face persistent inequality, such as the infamous wage gap of about 30% compared to men with similar qualifications. Violence against women remains a widespread reality and women face higher rates of poverty across Canada, especially Aboriginal and immigrant women. While their participation in the labour force matches that of men, higher numbers of women are engaged in ‘self-employment’ or in temporary, part-time or other forms of precarious employment. The National Action Committee on the Status of Women, which emerged in the 1970s

as the major coalition of equality-seeking groups, became a powerful political force. This led the pro-corporate Chrétien Liberal government of the ‘90s to slash funding for NAC, a process which continued into the current decade and led to NAC’s demise. Similarly, women’s programs, coalitions, shelters and other groups have faced drastic funding cuts by all levels of government in recent years, imposing incredible hardships on the women’s movement. Following the Harper government’s initial attacks on women’s programs, the Ad Hoc Coalition for Women’s Equality and Human Rights emerged to promote the continued struggle for pay equity, a country-wide child care system, and other critical demands of the women’s movement. The Communist Party will continue to support this initiative to rebuild a strong Canada-wide women’s movement, which is an essential element of any future People’s Coalition alternative to the right-wing agenda.

71. As awareness grows of the threat to human existence posed by climate change and global warming, the environmental movement across Canada has played an important role campaigning to reduce reliance on fossil-fuel energy. This objective has become evermore urgent given that the Kyoto targets, which aimed to restrict global temperature to a two degree (Celsius) increase by 2012 (compared to 1990 levels), have already been exceeded. The Copenhagen Summit on Climate Change in December 2009 will be a crucial test whether or not such increases (caused mainly by carbon emissions from fossil fuels) can be arrested and reversed.

72. However, there are sharp differences within the environmental movement around the possibilities for radical shifts under the present capitalist system. The Green Party of Canada, like its counterparts in other countries, considers itself ‘above the left-right divide.’ In practise, this often means that the policies of the Green Party and some large environmental groups are based on the implicit acceptance of private property relations and attempts to encourage “green capitalism.” This factor played a negative role in the May 2009 B.C. election, when some prominent environmentalists backed the

Campbell Liberals’ plan for privatizing rivers in the name of “green energy” projects with the potential for severe consequences to other aspects of the ecology. The presence of environmental groups with a keen awareness of the dangers of corporate control of resources is urgently needed in the movement to build a powerful People’s Coalition in Canada.

73. A critical part of the environmental crisis relates to the production and use of energy resources, especially in our country. In September 2008, our Party issued a *People’s Energy Plan for Canada* which noted that:

“Our world – and our country – are entering a period of grave dangers, an era of potentially devastating climate changes, widespread hunger and chaos, all linked to the unchecked growth of fossil fuel consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and wars to control oil reserves. In response, the Communist Party of Canada proposes far-sighted and radical policy changes, requiring a courageous struggle to take urgent and decisive action... The *most decisive aspect of such a policy – the cornerstone upon all other measures must rest – is the public ownership of energy.* Any meaningful transformation of the energy “system” is impossible without wresting control from the private energy monopolies – both domestic and foreign-based – and returning that ownership and control to Canadians, including the Aboriginal peoples whose lands have been ravaged by Big Oil.”

The incoming Central Committee should be directed to give wider circulation and publicity to these proposals, and to support all broad campaigns around energy and the preservation of our environment that are consistent with the objectives outlined in this “People’s Energy Plan”.

74. Yet another movement which has played a visible role in opposing the right-wing agenda is the struggle to defend the rights of immigrants and undocumented workers in Canada.

Groups such as No One Is Illegal have done much to expose the racist corporate drive to exploit such marginalized workers, to deprive them of democratic and civil rights, and to use them as disposable sources of profit extraction to be deported back to their home countries at the whim of employers and governments. Employees brought in under the Temporary Foreign Worker Program and the Live-In Caregiver Program are denied most of the legal and political rights of Canadians. In a world where corporations and right-wing governments seek to eliminate all barriers to the actions of big capital, it is vital to defend the rights of workers to seek employment and to enjoy equal rights wherever they live, including the right to organize and bargain collectively and to seek citizenship in Canada. The struggle to unite all workers must include principled efforts to fight for the rights of immigrants and undocumented workers and to oppose scapegoating campaigns such as the Harper government's racist attacks against Roma people, Mexicans, and others seeking refugee status in Canada.

75. The struggle to defend civil and democratic rights in the post-9/11 political environment has become another key component of the movement to create a genuine alternative to the right-wing agenda. The Communist Party of Canada has played a leading role in the legal and political battle to protect and expand the electoral rights of voters and small political parties, and also works to resist the campaign of "racial profiling" against Muslims, Arabs and other minority groups. We condemn "security certificates" and other measures to remove the legal and civil rights of non-citizens, which also pose a grave danger to the rights of all Canadians. We are outraged by the shocking treatment of Maher Arar, kidnapped and sent to a Syrian jail with the complicity of Canadian security services; Suaad Hagi Muhamad, the Canadian who was blocked from returning home after a trip to Kenya; and Abousfian Abdelrazik, trapped in Sudan for over a year by the government's refusal to issue him a Canadian passport. Similarly, the government refuses to lift a finger to bring home Canadian child-soldier Omar Khadr, who remains jailed without trial

at the U.S. Guantanamo concentration camp for over seven years, in blatant contravention of international law. For the Harper Tories, Canadian passports are virtually worthless pieces of paper, not even accepted as ID to cast a ballot in elections.

76. Restrictions against free speech have become increasingly common in recent years, with the overt encouragement of the federal government. This applies particularly to movements on university campuses to express solidarity with Palestinians against the apartheid policies of the state of Israel, and the preparations for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver-Whistler. The struggle to defend free speech and all civil and democratic rights for all who live in Canada is a necessary element of the wider movement to protect the interests of working people.

77. The hostility of the Harper Tories towards hard-won social equality gains is increasingly evident in their bigoted treatment of the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) communities, and the "trial balloons" by backbench MPs aimed at testing the waters for legislation to undermine women's reproductive rights. The struggles to defend and expand LGBT equality and women's rights are integral to the broader movement to build a united opposition against the Tory agenda.

78. In western Canada, the Tory push to destroy the Canadian Wheat Board by attempting to eliminate single-desk sales of wheat and barley is further clear evidence of the Harper government's role as the agent of transnational capital, in this case the big grain monopolies. Tory agriculture ministers have repeatedly trampled on the legal and democratic rights of family farm grain producers who are another important component of the class forces which must unite to build a People's Coalition.

79. There are other significant developments in the struggle to build a stronger people's movement for such a shift in economic, political and social policies. In Québec, the December 2008 elections to the National Assembly saw a crushing defeat of the far-right *Action Démocratique* Party (ADQ); and the breakthrough election victory of Amir

Khadir, the co-leader of *Québec Solidaire*, the broad progressive party which has the support and participation of our Party at the provincial level. The election of Khadir as a member of the National Assembly representing the working class riding of Mercier on the island of Montréal was a significant victory for working people in Québec.

80. Another victory was the improved showing in Vancouver's November 2008 civic elections by COPE. After overcoming divisions which had threatened its unity, this labour-left civic reform coalition party is now marking its 40th anniversary. During these four decades, COPE has elected many activists and leaders of grassroots movements, including a number of Communists to City Council and School Board. The examples of *Québec Solidaire* and COPE show that even during periods when the struggle against corporate domination has had only a muted parliamentary echo, significant electoral advances can be achieved through consistent tactics and strategies designed to build genuine unity around working class policies.

A Comprehensive Action Plan to Defend People, not Profits

81. All of these struggles need to be addressed in the context of the overarching economic crisis which is driving the right-wing attack. What is required today is a comprehensive action plan – an economic and political solution which serves the interests of people, not profits – including the following:

- protections for Canadian working people through the immediate introduction of plant closure legislation to stop the exodus of manufacturing jobs;
- emergency measures to protect secondary industries, along with iron clad guarantees preventing layoffs, job cuts, wage or pension reductions, and requiring corporations to reinvest in the domestic economy;
- the expansion of EI to cover all workers for the full duration of unemployment (including the elimination of the waiting period), with benefits at 90% of former earnings;

- a moratorium on evictions and mortgage foreclosures and utility cut offs due to unemployment;
- an immediate increase in the minimum wage to \$16/hour, along with legislation to protect and improve wages, benefits and pensions for all workers, to help raise incomes and stimulate domestic consumption;
- emergency action to support Aboriginal-led delivery of effective economic and social interventions in Aboriginal communities;
- a massive public investment program to construct affordable social housing, to rebuild Canada's decaying infrastructure, in environmental protection and conservation, and in job creation programs for youth and the arts;
- sweeping progressive tax reform based on ability to pay, the revocation of all corporate tax breaks, write offs and deferrals at every level, abolition of sales taxes, and the introduction of wealth and inheritance taxes – measures that will shift the tax burden from working people onto the corporations and the wealthy;
- emergency steps to protect and extend our public healthcare, education and other social programs, including the establishment of a public system of universal, quality, affordable childcare with Canada wide standards; and
- Canada's immediate withdrawal from the disastrous war of occupation in Afghanistan, and a 50% cut in military spending.

82. The security and effectiveness of these anti crisis actions requires more transformative measures to safeguard the jobs, incomes and services for the Canadian people, including (amongst others):

- The nationalization of the auto and steel industries in Canada;
- Public ownership under democratic control of the big banks, insurance and other financial institutions in Canada;
- the nationalization of the energy industry to guarantee domestic supply and to provide the material

basis for the economic rebuilding of Canadian industry and the creation of hundreds of thousands of jobs, especially in projects such as renewable energy, mass transit, and the mass production of a more fuel-efficient Canadian car;

- Canada's immediate withdrawal from NAFTA, a halt to the "Security and Prosperity Partnership" (SPP) negotiations, and the adoption of a much more diversified, multilateral trade policy based on mutual benefit; and
- the introduction of a liveable, guaranteed annual income (GAI) for every individual, as well as a shorter work week with no loss in take home pay.

83. We are not surprised, given the class interests represented by the Harper government and the Ignatieff Liberals, that such policies have not been considered by Parliament. Yet this is precisely the kind of far reaching set of demands around which the organized labour movement and its allies in the broad people's movements – Aboriginal peoples, youth and students, women, farmers, seniors and all those democratic forces engaged in the struggle for peace, for the preservation of the environment, and for equity rights – need to unite and fight at this crucial time.

84. Only united action on a mass scale, drawing millions of working people into struggle, can breathe real life into such a comprehensive anti crisis plan. That is why we have urged the leadership of the labour movement – the Canadian Labour Congress, the labour centrals in Quebec, and all of their key affiliates – to come together along with its allies in the social movements in an emergency conference to articulate such a unified program of demands, a fightback strategy based on escalating mass action, and with committed resources to see it through.

85. Such a perspective could help to bring together a broad People's Coalition which our Party has long advocated. Such a Coalition would of course emerge largely from the united grassroots struggles in communities across the country, fighting in the workplaces and on the streets to defend the people's vital interests. As it

matures, a People's Coalition would become Canada-wide in character, moving the mass struggle onto the offensive, eventually taking on an electoral expression. This is the kind of Coalition required by our class and our country at this time of profound economic and political crisis, and our Party will work tirelessly to help forge such a new alternative.

86. At the same time, we are keenly aware that another federal election may soon be underway. The working class cannot be indifferent to the outcome of this election, whether it takes place this fall or later. As in the 2008 election, the Communist Party will call for the defeat of the Harper Tories – the most deadly expression of the corporate domination of Canada – and to block the right, by also denying a majority to the pro-corporate, pro-war Liberals under Ignatieff, whose differences with the Tories are primarily over the pace and scale of imposing the continentalist and corporate agenda.

87. We are deeply concerned over the increasingly evident rightward shift by the NDP leadership in the recent period. As noted above, Jack Layton has retreated a long distance from his party's earlier stand of calling for a swift end to Canada's military mission in Afghanistan. In the area of the economy, while the NDP supports certain reform measures to reduce the impact of the crisis on working people, Layton has also yielded considerably to big business pressures. We recall his comments last January to a luncheon sponsored by one of the foremost bodies of monopolists, bankers and financiers in this country, the Toronto Board of Trade: "It's that courage of the Canadian people which makes our country strong. Let's match that quiet courage with smart investments for the future... It's that kind of courage workers will need to take a pay cut so your friends at the plant can keep their job."

88. At the August 2009 federal NDP convention in Halifax, much of the media attention was on resolutions which proposed a name change for the party, dropping the word "New". These resolutions and other 'controversial' matters were shuffled off the agenda, while leading spokespersons vigorously denied that the NDP would support 'old

ideas' such as public ownership of the banks or the energy industry.

89. These shifts in NDP policy reflect a strong tendency at the leadership level to accommodate to the demands of big business. It would be wrong to conclude, as some have, that there is no longer any difference between the NDP and the big business parties. But under Layton's leadership, that difference has narrowed, to the detriment of a powerful and united working class response to the corporate attack. Instead of gaining votes and seats, the NDP may well lose support from working people who see less reason to go to the polls to support a party lacking a clear-cut progressive alternative platform.

90. Similarly, there is no sign that the Green Party's overall policies have shifted in a progressive direction. While the Greens take some positive positions on matters of peace, democracy and civil liberties, they remain wedded to the incorrect view that environmental change can be won primarily through measures to encourage "green capitalism".

91. In this situation, the Communist Party of Canada will once again enter the next federal election by nominating about 20-25 candidates in selected ridings across the country. The Communist campaign will strive to win votes and support for the immediate measures in our platform, and to strengthen the ability of the working class to mount a longer-term fight for a People's Coalition to turn this country in a progressive direction, and ultimately for socialism.

92. There is no contradiction between advocating a powerful and united mass movement to tackle the immediate problems facing the working class, and the Communist Party's goal of a socialist Canada. In fact, a larger and stronger Communist Party would help to overcome the passivity and retreat which today characterize the top leadership of the CLC and the right wing leadership of the NDP. The public and electoral campaigns of the Communist Party are a necessary part of the political and ideological struggle which is needed to raise the need for a united mass fightback, and for the kind of People's Coalition which is so desperately needed to overcome the political crisis in Canada today.

SECTION

THREE

Building the Communist Party: the Decisive Question

[Please note: a more detailed organizational report and draft Plan of Work will be presented in the next issue of the Pre-Convention Discussion Bulletin for Party-wide consideration.]

93. As the corporate assault on workers' rights and living standards intensifies, so does the ideological assault. The massive transfer of wealth from the working class to the largest corporations, mass permanent unemployment and the relative and absolute impoverishment of millions, have to be justified by affixing blame onto the working class, and organized labour in the first place.

94. As \$20 billion was handed over to the big five Canadian banks, \$14 billion to the auto companies in Canada, and billions more in stimulus funds to corporations across the board, an unprecedented attack campaign on the "greed" of Canadian autoworkers was unleashed by the combined might of the auto companies in Canada and the US, the Ontario, federal and US governments, and the collective clamour of North American capital and media. Their demand was to strip billions of dollars from the deferred wages, benefits and pensions of the strongest and best organized section of workers in the Canadian labour movement, to strike terror into the labour movement, and to recruit the unemployed, the unorganized, and the dispossessed to join in the attack.

95. It happened in just a few weeks last winter, and it set the pattern and the pace for the attack on both private and public sector workers across the country and the continent. More is coming.

96. Throughout this last twelve months, the Communist Party has been campaigning to expose the great danger from the right that the media, corporations and state apparatus are doing everything possible to cover up.

There is no recovery on the way that will benefit or include the working class, women, youth, labour, the unemployed, and the poor. In fact, it is corporate profits that will recover, on the backs of the workers who create that wealth. Recovery for the workers, on the other hand, is directly tied to the development of a mass militant and united struggle to curb the power of the corporations, bringing the people into the streets, and building class political consciousness to ultimately challenge the system itself.

97. This is the message that our two newspapers, the tour by Comrade Miguel Figueroa across Canada, and the distribution of 50,000 leaflets at demonstrations, plant gates, picket lines, Labour Councils, and union meetings this past spring have delivered. We have issued a call to action to the CLC to convene an emergency summit of the labour and democratic movements across Canada, to develop a plan of action and a counter offensive that can lead the people back into the streets in escalating strikes and demonstrations to bring down the Harper government.

98. It is these ideas, policies, program, and strategy that make the Communist Party much bigger than the sum of its still far too small membership.

99. Our policies and strategy have the potential to bring down governments, and change the direction of Canada. When these liberating ideas and demands are taken up by the masses of the people, they become a material force for change. This is why the ruling class and the state loathe socialist ideas, and will do everything possible to blunt the growth of the left forces, and especially the Communist Party. It is our revolutionary essence, and our objective potential to grow in size and influence as the systemic crisis of capitalism deepens, that makes the Communist Party a potent threat to the capitalist system and a consistent force in the struggle for fundamental change and for socialism in Canada.

100. The task of the Communist Party is to help fuse these revolutionary ideas with the working class movement, to help the working class understand its immediate tasks as well as its historic

leading role in the struggle against imperialism, war and reaction. Armed with scientific theory, the working class is freed to struggle politically, to fight with vision and clarity on the economic, political and ideological fronts. *'Theory without practice is sterile', said Lenin, 'and practice without theory is blind.'*

101. Providing working people with a real and full analysis of what is taking place, of what can be done, of what is being done by working people struggling across the country and in other parts of the world, as we work hard to do in the pages of *People's Voice* and *Clarté*, in *Spark!*, and in the many leaflets and flyers we publish, strips away the corporate arguments and gives workers and their organizations the means to fight more effectively.

102. This is the battle of ideas, and it is an arena in which the Communist Party can contribute more and better and in the period ahead. More articles and materials on the urgent issues before us, more frequent publication, and much broader distribution and circulation can strengthen the left and progressive forces and provide ammunition to workers struggling with vicious corporations and reactionary governments. The urgency of the situation is obvious.

A bigger, stronger Communist Party

103. To become larger, more effective, and more influential in the working class movement, among youth, and among women – this is the most urgent and decisive task. All efforts in the next three years must be directed to accomplish this objective. A stronger Communist Party will mean a stronger, more effective labour movement, a stronger and more united left, and a stronger, more effective fightback.

104. Party clubs and committees across the country must take stock, and take whatever measures are necessary to strengthen their Leninist core, and their links with the working class and peoples movements. Every club and committee should have an organizer, education director, press director, and plan of work. Every club should be connected with the main organizations in its area

of responsibility, including the labour councils and local affiliates, peace organizations, youth and women's organizations, and the fightback movements and coalitions in each area. Clubs should take the initiative wherever possible in the struggles developing in their areas, giving particular attention to strikes, picket-lines, workplaces, struggles of the unemployed and unorganized, and struggles involving youth.

105. The Central Committee, National Committee in Québec, and Provincial Committees should provide leaflets and materials needed by the clubs to campaign and help make the clubs and the Party more visible and influential in each area. Cadres must be developed at the club, central and provincial levels to provide leadership to the Party, and within the mass movements. Educational work must be regularized and become a much more integrated part of club and Party life. The development of new members needs special attention.

106. Leninist organizational principles of collective leadership, assignment and check-up, criticism and self-criticism, must be more vigorously applied at every level, starting with the Central Committee, to make our work most effective and productive. We need to raise the élan of the Party, and to do it by getting better results.

107. In May, the Central Committee sent Comrade Sam Hammond to work in BC to help turn the situation around there. In a short period of time, good results began to be achieved. Now the CEC and Central Committee have asked Sam to make himself available to continue working in BC for another two years. We hope this will help the BC Committee and the members in British Columbia to strengthen Party work on the West Coast. Comrade George Gidora is stepping down after having served as BC leader for 15 years, and the entire Party extends thanks and appreciation to him for the work that he did during this time and for his continuing contributions in whatever ways he is most able.

108. Across the country there needs to be more assistance from the Centre to help Party committees, on the prairies and in the Atlantic in the first place and

in Ontario and Québec as well. The incoming Central Committee needs to work more closely with these committees to determine what is the best way that help can be given and work improved.

109. While membership has not registered significant net growth since the last convention, the composition of the Party has continued to change, with a younger membership overall, and many new members from South Asian, Latino, and Middle Eastern and other new immigrant communities. We need to give more thought about how to work with the labour and mass organizations in these communities, and at the same time identifying the most progressive and politically active individuals to recruit to the Party. It is becoming increasingly important that we translate and publish some of our materials in a number of languages in addition to French and English, both during election campaigns and in our extra-parliamentary activity.

110. Materials which can be circulated electronically, through email and our website are also increasingly important and more and more people reach us this way. More attention and resources need to be given to our electronic publicity and outreach work.

111. In Ontario, the Party has built 2 new clubs and re-established another since the last convention. These are the Shafik Handal Tri-City Club in Guelph-Kitchener, the N'kosi Club in Windsor, and re-establishment of the Eric Blair Club in St. Catharines. These clubs are comprised mainly of younger people, and are located in industrial cities where the Party was influential in the past. These new clubs have fielded candidates in the last 3 federal and/or provincial elections, the Shafik Handal club providing 3 candidates in Guelph and Kitchener last year, enabling us to put forward our policies and ideas in important centres where we have not run candidates for many years. In Guelph, the Party club includes leading members of a thriving YCL club, and both the Party and YCL have a strong profile on the University of Guelph campus.

112. There is also a new club in Calgary, the Punjabi People's Club, which is comprised of comrades active in the South Asian community.

113. In BC, the Upper Fraser Club was established almost 2 years ago, and is very active in the South Asian community there. In Trail, a new club is also possible as a result of the very lively and effective provincial election campaign this spring by Comrade Zack Crispin, our candidate there – the first Communist campaign in Trail for almost 50 years. The Party and YCL have new friends and contacts as a result of this effort.

114. In Québec, the PCQ is also well connected in the immigrant communities, in the arts and in the trade union movement. The LJC-YCL is also very active.

115. The new members who have joined since the last convention are very welcome and most are active in the Clubs where they have joined. Many are interested in the Party's educational and theoretical work, yet with the exception of BC which has a summer school every year "rain or shine", schools have not been sufficiently regularized across the country.

116. Schools for new members, club educationals, provincial schools, the Central Committee's recently launched central summer school – all these are crucial for building strong and theoretically-grounded Communists. They are also important in bringing our members, friends and supporters together to discuss Marxist ideas and problems as they relate to today's conditions, and to assess our practice.

117. Yet the rate of recruitment overall is still too low in relation to the potential for Party growth which exists today. Response time to new enquiries and membership applications is still too long, and more work must be done to improve this process, both at the central and provincial levels and in terms of follow-up by local Party clubs.

118. As well, more attention must be paid in the clubs to recruiting in mass organizations and in the workplaces

where our clubs and members are active. This is where the bulk of new members should be coming from, and where we need to put more emphasis and resources.

Our Press: Organizing, Educating, Agitating

119. The Communist press – *People's Voice* and *Clarté* – is the main vehicle with which we reach out to 'organize, educate and agitate' working people in the sharp struggles around us. It comes as no surprise therefore that a significant portion of our energy, resources and new fundraising is directed to maintaining these publications. This commitment is necessary and appropriate today and into the future.

120. Our readership base allows us to speak with our supporters and sympathizers on a regular basis on all the main subjects of the day. This is consistent and on-going agitational and ideological work that we need to build on to keep up an active dialogue with our friends, while also maintaining our press financially.

121. Distributions are also important, since that is an important way of reaching new contacts who are not yet subscribers. Regular distributions at Labour Councils, trade union meetings, at demonstrations and on picket lines (with stories about their strikes and struggles featuring prominently) are an excellent way to reach activists in the labour and democratic movements. Timely personal follow up is the key to building readership of our publications. Sales at local and left and progressive bookstores also help our press to reach out beyond the current readership.

122. Gains have been made over the past year in circulation, particularly with the special \$2 introductory subscription drive in 2008. These advances must now be consolidated with renewals – the decisive factor in increasing overall circulation. The Party Club is the most important instrument in building our press. Where clubs have press directors, there is good connection between the Party and press work; otherwise, there is a poor connection and the paper suffers.

YCL: Struggle to Learn! Learn to Struggle!

123. Shortly after our 35th Convention, the Young Communist League of Canada was successfully refounded after a long absence dating back to 1991. From a fledgling start, it is now an established and very active organization from coast to coast in English-speaking Canada and Québec. The YCL has been particularly active on campus and has developed relations with many other youth organizations through its work, and has resumed its international work through membership in the World Federation of Democratic Youth (WFDY). It is publishing *Rebel Youth* on a more regular basis, as well as maintaining its own website, blogs, etc. Congratulations are due to the hard work of all young comrades leading this work, especially Cde. Johan Boyden, the YCL's bold and energetic leader.

124. Wherever the YCL and Party work very closely together, this has helped to ensure more effective work for both our organizations, more visibility and broader outreach to members, supporters and new contacts alike. The Party will continue to support the YCL in every way possible, including assigning young Party members to the YCL and in supporting their initiatives and activities as best we can.

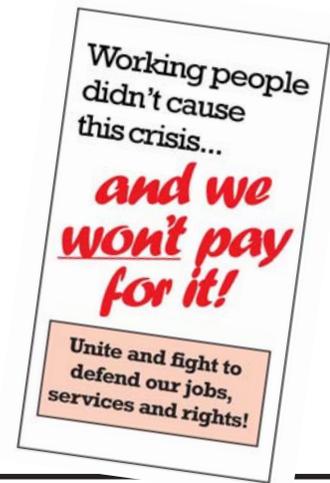
90 Years of Struggle!

125. 2011 will mark the 90th anniversary of the Communist Party of Canada. In every respect, the history of the CPC is the history of the class struggle in Canada. Our roots are sunk in the rich experience of working class struggles throughout the decades. Many of our leaders were also mass and labour leaders of some of the most significant struggles in Canadian history. Our history is closely linked to the fight for universal socialized medicine, for universal public pensions, for unemployment insurance, for trade union rights including the right to strike, for women's rights including reproductive choice, pay and employment equity, for the rights of the Aboriginal peoples and new immigrants, the fight for Canadian sovereignty, democratic and equality rights, and the



right to live free of the threat of nuclear annihilation.

126. We will mark this anniversary not simply to remember the past, but to light up the future. Another world is possible, urgent, and necessary, and Communists today will fight to force open those doors to social progress and socialism with as much determination and commitment as those who came before.



Notes: