

Changing the Mantra: Power, Privatization, and Provincial Inequalities in Canada

By Daryl Shandro, Sudbury

The McClure Club of Sudbury has discussed the bulletins and proposes a review and will recommend resolution(s) affecting section 69 (page 16, Bulletin 1), and section 83-85 (page 18, Bulletin 1).

In October 2009 Premier Shawn Graham of New Brunswick announced that an agreement in principle had been reached for the purchase of New Brunswick Power's generation facilities and transmission lines by Hydro Quebec.

A brief description of the MOA follows. Hydro Quebec will pay the New Brunswick government 4.75 B for NB Power lines and chosen generation facilities, including a refurbished (at NBs cost) Point Lepreau nuclear facility. Those generation facilities not included in the MOA will be owned, maintained and operated by New Brunswick, until Hydro Quebec mandates their closure.

As well as the 4.75 B cash payment, a 5 year rate freeze on NB residential power prices (with a "heritage consumption level" cap), and a rate reduction for corporate customers will be in place. Over and above the consumption cap, power will be paid for at international spot market prices, the cost of which will be deferred until after the 5-year rate freeze. "Surplus consumption" will then be billed to NB's Hydro

Quebec customers, with interest.

The purchase of NB Power by Hydro Quebec is the first purchase of one provincial power utility by another, and has profound consequences for democratic control of power production, transport and sale, for Nova Scotia, Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island and Maine, USA; none of which have access to the integrated eastern North American power grid without access to, through, and from, New Brunswick Power lines. Since Canada does not have regulations requiring access for "energy islands" to the integrated power grid, NB Premier Shawn Graham has referred Newfoundland's Danny Williams and Nova Scotia's Darrel Dexter to the US Federal Energy Regulating Commission, in lieu of a written commitment to guarantee these provinces' access to the grid. Prince Edward Island's Robert Ghiz is attempting to negotiate a separate deal with Hydro Quebec. In Maine, the push is on to ensure that US markets feeding New York, such as Maine, will not be in any way isolated or subverted by Quebec's public utility.

Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, provinces formerly in talks to have an undersea cable laid from Cape Breton to the southeastern Newfoundland shore, while Newfoundland readied to embark on the second stage of Labrador hydro development, may each now be

unilaterally stymied by Hydro Quebec's control of the NB Power lines (the exclusion of access by these provinces has, in past, been accomplished by New Brunswick power through regulatory means, as it is formally illegal). In future, Quebec Hydro will control whether or not any Atlantic Canadian novel, green, or regional power initiatives will be permitted access to the

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**DEADLINE FOR
BULLETIN #5:
Monday, Jan. 18**

integrated power grid.

The CPC mantra of power and energy politics and fightback in Canada equates “nationalization” with “democratic control”, and the loss of “democratic control” with “privatization”. Our most egregious analytical errors are founded on the assumption that the provinces, because they each have governments that are popularly elected and similarly defined powers vis-a vis the federal government and each other, are somehow “equal”. This has led to flawed political analyses that fail to recognize the potential for inter-provincial conflicts that have broad policy ramifications, especially when they may pit the interests of the Province of Quebec against poorer provinces.

As a result of these factors, prior to this occasion, the CPC has not accounted for the growing interprovincial inequalities that now permit one province’s “democratically controlled” public power utility to usurp the democratic control of 3 others, while handing the regulation of access to the eastern North American grid by the whole of Atlantic Canada, to the United States of America’s regulating agency. This deal would also foreclose the possibility of green energy development. Popular control of power generation in Atlantic Canada will be permanently alienated leading to the end of experimental projects such as the wind farm on PEI’s northern shores.

Henceforth the Province of Quebec is set to become the “offshore” enforcer of the political will of the Harper Tories in Atlantic Canada. This should suffice nicely to demonstrate the weakness and futility of the Atlantic Canadian fightback against the Harper Government’s default on the terms

of the Atlantic Accord, which included electing governments in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia which remain diametrically opposed to Ottawa’s agenda. Meanwhile, Harper is situating himself for a slim majority government after the next federal election, hoping for modest gains in The Province of Quebec, which will most likely materialize.

Fightback in Atlantic Canada can no longer be understood as fightback against Canadian or international corporations and the Harper Tories. It is now necessarily a concentrated and urgent fightback against the terms of the MOU, the Province of Quebec, and Hydro Quebec (North America’s largest public utility). The CPC understandably avoids entering into many inter-provincial political squabbles that may alienate groups

with whom we wish to maintain solidarity. Like most other national parties, the CPC sometimes demonstrates a reluctance to appear critical of the internal politics of the Province of Quebec. We must, however, not allow our political alliances and ambitions in Quebec to prevent us from diligently producing analyses, policies and programmes that recognize changing the material conditions of struggle for working people in different parts of Canada.

Certain questions beg to be raised: Given the urgency and enormity of the battle faced by Atlantic Canadians between now and March 15, 2010, when the Hydro Quebec purchase of NB Power is set to be finalized; which side are we on? And what are we going to do about it? ■

Proposed Amendments to the Draft Main Political Resolution

Submitted by the McClure Club, Sudbury

To be inserted at the end of section 69, page 16, Bulletin 1:

“Ongoing struggles against the sale of public power utilities by Canadian provincial governments have become more urgent, and must be triaged, analyzed and prioritized and actively supported.

Given the urgency of this struggle in Atlantic Canada, the CPC calls for the immediate suspension of the Memorandum of Understanding between Hydro Quebec and NB Power. If the MOU is not suspended, the CPC must fight alongside the Premiers and people of Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and Nova Scotia for a written

guarantee from Hydro Quebec, appended to the MOU or proffered directly to the Atlantic Provincial governments, stipulating extended, unobstructed access to NB Power lines after the transfer of ownership to Hydro Quebec (slated for March 15, 2010).

Furthermore, the Federal government of Canada must create an arm’s length Canadian regulating counterpart to the US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) that would disallow monopoly pricing for access to wholly-owned power lines and creating “energy islands” such as Maine, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, after the Hydro Quebec takeover of NB Power.”

To be inserted between sections 83 and 85, probably at the end of section 84:

“The ability of public utilities to encourage small, experimental or alternative power generation [to access integrated power grids] must be maintained by disallowing any out of province or private purchases of a province’s power lines that would create exclusive out of province control of access to provincial power lines.

The major struggles now being waged against interprovincial purchases of public utilities in Atlantic Canada must be joined in order to avoid a loss of democratic control of power generation and transmission in the region.

The sale of NB Power to Hydro Quebec could exacerbate economic inequalities in Canada by permitting Hydro Quebec to control the rate of economic development in Atlantic Canada to the benefit of the Province of Quebec. Favouring

one group of workers over another is historically a successful tactic of the capitalist classes in North America. What we and other groups who hope to create any sort of popular fightback must do is join the people’s fightback in the Atlantic while educating and pushing labour in Quebec to fight the Hydro Quebec purchase of NB power by pressuring their MNAs, and taking public positions against the Hydro Quebec purchase of NB Power. ■

Proposal regarding the Party Emblem

By Elwyn Patterson, Vancouver East Club

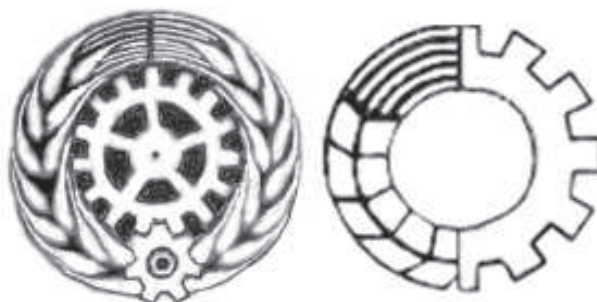
I have a counter proposal re. Constitution Article 2, Party Emblem, which reads, “The emblem of our party shall be a gear and pinion flanked by ears of wheat, on a background of a maple leaf, symbolizing the unity of the workers and farmers of our land.” Comrades, my counter-proposal is not at odds with the decision to remove the maple leaf from our emblem. The inclusion of the maple leaf has been an irritant for the peoples of Quebec and many others. I will have more on that later tracing back through history the royal /military marriage of red white and maple leaf.

That having been said, comrades we have a problem. Which emblem are we removing the maple leaf from? We seem to have two. The description cited is the one in our constitution and on our party pin, and has been there many years before the adoption of our party program of 2001 (33rd. Convention). Also in use and running parallel with the

cited emblem has been the half gear and wheat ear on a maple leaf background, which appears on most of our publications and on the party program of that same convention. Where did the half gear and wheat ear come from? And by what process did it become official? Did our membership adopt it? If this is somehow our symbol, why does the proposed change cite the symbol in our constitution and on our pin?

Before I get to the specifics of my proposal, I think we need to look at the meaning of the parts and colors of our emblems. As time passes we can lose the meaning of symbolism within the socialist context, often with good intentions and sometimes with poor information. Over-simplifying or over-complicating can lead to the same end. Our symbol (either one) for the most part is clear

in concept when properly applied. Gold gears and gold wheat ears united on a crimson red background have specific meaning. Why both gold? - Agriculture worker (represented by wheat ears) in unity with Industry worker (represented by gear) create the majority of all wealth, hence the over-all representative color of wealth. The crimson red background stands for the blood workers have lost creating that wealth. Various crossed implements of agriculture and industry in gold on crimson all have the same meaning. These emblems are a visual counter to the ruling class assertion that capitalism creates the wealth of the world and we prosper only because of their benevolent control. Symbolic meaning can be lost through good intentions; it happened in 1980 - the Soviet Union deviated from their norm when they changed their flag color to an almost scarlet red. Anger ensued, this color was that of royal robes worn by Russian monarchs. This color change was supposedly to make the flag



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Added to our symbol/s confusion is the odd blue half gear on one of them. See the color version of our party program. I have heard differing opinions re the blue gear (some very fanciful) but no one seems to know for sure. A blue gear does not represent industry in any sense and would even be abnormal in the world of gears in real life. (I worked with gears and metal finishing). In any case both wheat and gear should be one symbolic color to represent the concept stated earlier. From what I have been told so far, the blue gear on that emblem is a mistake that migrated from an earlier technical use. The danger, if left it will become official by virtue of continued use. When we need to change add or delete aspects of our symbolism we tend to lay this task on the shoulders of our CEC. This can be an enormous burden given our numbers and what work we expect the CEC to do.

One of my questions at our Van East Club meeting Dec.10th.was why did the membership referendum on our party emblem not take place as planned. Comrade Cariou addressed this, pointing out that Central Committee could not reach agreement on the best designs to put back to the membership for referendum. I think given the work load of the CEC it is unfair of us as a whole to expect them to carry out this particular duty which really should be done by the overall collective. I believe the logical way we can come to a consensus is to get busy and send the CEC our concepts, designs, scribbles stick drawings (whatever skills allow). They or volunteers could then compile these only, not choosing the best and send the whole works back to the membership to reject, change or endorse. Maybe once a year (if we have to) till we arrive at something we all like (mine would

be star, gear, wheat combo similar to our 50 yr. pin). This can be a good (and fun) learning process, as it means getting to our books and reexamining what we are, where we are in history and how we will reach our socialist future.

Now - proposed article 2 changes.

#1. It is unclear which emblem is sited for change. Therefore, after removal of the maple leaf from both we need to choose by referendum, which will be official.

#2. Failing the above process taking place, that the gold gear and pinion flanked by ears of wheat in gold on a red background be used as it appears on our party pin minus the maple leaf with white surround and that it be subject to future change by referendum.

#3.and that the half gear and wheatear not be used as it appears on our color publications till the gear color is corrected back to gold on red (minus maple leaf). ■

Raise the theoretical level of our members

By Antonio Artuso, Montreal

To strengthen the Party, raise the theoretical level of our members

The leadership of Communist Parties and of the International Communist Movement must unify ideologically by organizing the study (1) of texts by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and others for all members, (2) of the history of the International Communist Movement and (3) of the current debates in the ICM, in order to raise the theoretical level.

Although my knowledge is limited, I would like to present the following opinions:

-The CPs and the ICM are weak but they are recuperating. They are now developing ideological, political and organization unity based on Marxism-Leninism and fighting revisionism;

-Parties will strengthen only if the leaderships develop an organized study program of the "classics" (texts by Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, Mao and others) and on the history of the International Communist Movement;

-Several CPs have organized important debates after what I believe were 50 years of revisionist leadership, which brought the collapse of the Soviet Union and the

terrible weakening of the ICM. This question is no longer "taboo" (forbidden, proscribed). CPs are discussing the questions of Stalin, Khrushchev and Mao. Underlying are debates on the peaceful or violent way to socialism, the future of China, Cuba, Venezuela, what is to be done.

-CPs can grow only if they are revolutionary. "Without a revolutionary theory there is no revolutionary movement" (Lenin). "To make revolution, one needs a Communist Party" (Stalin).

- The criticisms made after the 20th Convention of the CP of the Soviet Union (1956) by many CPs (China, Albania, Brazil, among

others) were correct. I believe that Khrushchev's revisionism line was devastating: it caused the collapse of the Soviet Union, of the destruction of the ideological, political and organizational unity, and of the weakening of the International Communist Movement (ICM);

-We must fight for Marxism-Leninism against revisionism. But 2 important questions must be dealt with correctly: (1) the violent way to socialism; and (2) the dictatorship of the proletariat.

(1) On the one hand, in 1848, Marx and Engels wrote in the Manifesto: "The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible (AA: violent) overthrow of all existing social conditions (AA: in French 'the past social order'). Let the ruling classes tremble at a Communistic revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Working Men of All Countries, Unite!"

(2) On the other hand, in 1895, Engels wrote a preface for Marx's 'Class Struggles in France 1848-1850' (written in 1850). He protested to 'Vorwaerts' (run by Bernstein and Kautsky) that his text was amputated and made him seem as a peaceful worshiper of legality. He explained that socialists must adopt the tactics of electoral struggles in Germany, in Germany only, temporarily, under the threat of anti-socialist laws and due to the fact that insurrections with barricades could no longer be won;

-This is why in 1903, at the 2nd Convention of the Russian Party, Lenin presented a program in two parts: (1) the maximum program (the essential task of the Party: to overthrow the power of capitalists

and to establish the dictatorship of the proletariat); and (2) the minimum program (to overthrow the tsar, to establish a democratic republic, the 8-hours-day, the end of serfdom, etc.). Lenin's program was adopted;

-In 1935, the 3rd International proposed the tactic of the united front against fascism and war. This tactic has correct and wrong applications, which lead to the defeat of Nazism but also to revisionism. Such a question must be studied by the members.

-Bernstein and Kautsky became revisionists and betrayed the workers and the peoples (support to war and later to fascism). Khrushchev introduced the revisionist theory of the "peaceful way to socialism". In Chile, this theory led to illusions and unpreparedness. One cannot trust the bourgeois democracy. Is the peaceful way possible? Lenin took the State. No government took the means of production from the bourgeoisie without an armed revolution or without being destroyed by a coup d'État. CPs should be theoretically prepared for a protracted armed struggle. A Marxist-Leninist Party knows that bourgeoisies do not respect Constitutions or human rights. What is going to happen in Venezuela?

The CP of Venezuela has an important role to play. Marx and Engels wrote texts analysing in detail the class struggles to fill more than 50 volumes and Lenin 45 volumes. They wrote it to guide communists and they must be studied by members of every CP.

-CPs are not promoting a violent revolution in bourgeois democracies, but they must be ideologically prepared ideologically

to support armed resistance in other countries and to organize armed resistance if fascism takes over in their own country;

-Cps leaders and members must know very well theory in order to vote for a correct line at conventions otherwise the CPs will follow rightist or ultra-leftist lines. Ignorance of theory is very harmful for the CPs.

-CP members should study on a regular basis:

1) the texts of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin and Mao and others;

2) the history of the ICM (History of the Russian CP published in Stalin's period is essential);

3) the present debates between CPs, to guide the CPs and rebuild the ICM:

Very helpful is the reading of "The Polemic on the General Line of the International Communist Movement" (Foreign Languages Press, Peking, 1965, Reprint by Red Star Press Ltd, 1976), a compilation of documents between the CP of China and the CP of the Soviet Union (1963-1964).

-members of CPs must (1) be guided by the revolutionary theories of scientific socialism; (2) be prepared ideologically to fight against opportunism, both right and "left" and against its deviations such as reformism and revisionism, or ultra-leftism and adventurism; (3) contribute to bring to a higher level the unity of the PCs and of the ICM (1) ideologically, (2) politically, and (3) organizationally;

-the CPs must consolidate themselves as Marxist-Leninist parties, with members and leaders capable of fighting under bourgeois democratic conditions or under revolutionary periods of open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, fascism and war. ■

U of T amendments to the Draft Resolution

Amendments to the Draft Resolution, submitted by the U of T Club, Toronto

Regarding climate change, insert the following between Paragraphs 17 and 18:

Imperialism's efforts talks around United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the post-Kyoto Protocol negotiations deserve special attention. Imperialist countries have generated billions in profits from industrial production creating historic levels of green house gas (GHG) emissions in the last two decades. GHG emissions are actually accelerating. But in what might be described as "carbon neo-colonialism" imperialism is trying to force the burden of climate change onto the working people and the Third-world, restricting development while refusing to fund sustainable and renewable energy technology. Reflect these efforts, a more marked shift in the public policy debate on climate change has arisen since our last convention. Capital has generally replaced its tactic of denying human-caused global warming with efforts to co-opt or hijack climate solutions.

For example, the European Union's Emission Trading System has revealed the cap and trade approach to be a polluter profits, not polluter pays solution. Similar approaches are being advanced in North America, with the Chicago Climate Exchange, Obama's model, and the Western Climate Initiative. Business is making profits selling offsets or Clean Development Mechanisms like planting trees,

which is also ineffective. As the recent Delhi declaration of the Workers and Communist parties said, "Capitalism's proposal for restructuring in the name of climate change has little relation to the protection of the environment. Corporate inspired 'Green development' and [the] 'green economy' are sought to be used to impose new state monopoly regulations which support profit maximisation and impose new hardships on the people."

Canada is the second-highest per-capita producer of Green House Gasses (GHG) in the world. The major contributions come not from the people but business, especially the Alberta Tar Sands, while the military is also a major GHG producer. Canada will also suffer severe consequences from rising temperatures including destruction of boreal forests and agriculture, coastal flooding, devastating impacts on water resources and fisheries, as well as transport and health; events internationally could be catastrophic. Hardest hit will be aboriginal, working class, poor and racialized communities. Despite the emergency situation, successive governments have blocked even modest reforms. Liberal governments have supported intensity-based emission targets, for example; while the Harper Conservative's policies have been unabashedly been drafted by natural resource capital. Canada played a retro-grade role in negotiations leading up to the Copenhagen agreement, to replace Kyoto.

In fact, the effects that the Kyoto Protocol was supposed to prevent have already begun. That some

warming will occur is now certain; Kyoto's goals must be far surpassed if a reduction in warming is to be made. But while some earnestly believe that global warming can be reversed if humanity is confronted with the dilemma "socialism or barbarity" we can not rely on people's fear of a climate Apocalypse as an ideology. A political solution is needed. The environmental struggle is part of the struggle against monopoly. The historic direction of this fight is for an approach based on social planning, and for a socialist system that puts nature before profits. The urgent, immediate need to stop and reverse global warming calls for a bold emergency response.

It is time to "pay the climate bill" - the debt or reparations owed to the oppressed peoples, nations and countries of the world, a view supported by the UN Framework on Climate change - and make deep cuts to GHG emissions in imperialist countries. Mitigation efforts including climate change agreements must be strong, legally binding, comprehensive, and audacious, and be based on international solidarity, peace and respect for sovereignty, self-determination and democracy, as well as employment and social progress. So far there is no other alternative - unless we accept the nightmarish so-called "Plan B" responses that some military researchers as well as NASA and the British Royal Society are investigating in case other efforts fail: geo-engineering technologies like simulating a volcanic eruption, or use of nuclear bombs as stop-gap measures.

On Africa: Insert between paragraphs 21-22

Imperialism's genocidal policies across the African continent continue to foster wars, occupations, aggressions, and coups, as well as mass impoverishment, gendered violence, disease, malnutrition and famine. With only about 12 per cent of the world's population, Africa has over 60 per cent of AIDs cases, and epidemic levels of deaths from tuberculosis and malaria – a situation exacerbated by avaricious actions of pharmaceutical corporations. The UN estimates that, coming on top of the food and oil crisis's, the economic crisis will cause a surge in unemployment, the creation of 27 million African poor in 2009, and the loss of 20 per cent of the per capita income of the 390 million people living in extreme poverty in the sub-Saharan African countries. Viewed in this context, the recent establishment of US African Command (AFRICOM) is clearly part of US imperialism's efforts to destabilize governments, directly engage in inter-imperialist rivalry, and create an archipelago of bases for more military interventions. The rejection by virtually all African countries to host AFRICOM's headquarters is an expression of the resistance of the African nations and peoples, as is their protest at the Barcelona and Copenhagen climate negotiations. The Communist Party calls for the immediate removal of all non-African forces, including those of France, Britain, Belgium, Canada, the US, as well as NATO and Israeli troops, from Africa.

In North Africa Morocco's domination of Western Sahara continues, while imperialism's direct intervention in Sudan,

including Canada, has exacerbated regional conflict. Canada is also participating in the US/NATO "anti-piracy" mission around the horn of Africa and Canadian resource capital is in collusion with numerous imperialist intrigues throughout the continent. Our party stands in solidarity with the resistance of the Zimbabwean peoples against imperialism and for sovereignty and calls for Canada to end its economic sanctions, while also condemning the suppression of labour, civil and democratic rights in that country. Also in southern Africa, since our last convention the African National Congress has shifted away from the neo-liberal project at its 52nd conference in Polokwane. This year Zuma's ANC won an overwhelming electoral victory. Our Party sends internationalist salutations to the people of South Africa, the ANC and the South African Communist Party on the twentieth anniversary of the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. We also view as positive the recent summit of the South between African and Latin American countries in Venezuela.

On the youth movement: Paragraph 67, insert after first sentence:

There are signs of an increasing polarization of the youth and students in response to the economic crisis. Neo-nazi organizations have seen some growth, such as in Calgary among poor and working class white youth, while many privileged and wealthier students have been drawn to support the attacks on progressive students and defederation campaigns orchestrated by the Conservative Party.

On net neutrality and copyright: Between 67 and 68 insert the

following:

An emerging struggle of growing concern especially in the youth movement is the future 'throttling' or 'traffic shaping' of the internet, potentially restricting access to certain web pages (and allowing tracking of internet use) being pushed by telecommunications corporations. Our party supports demands for net neutrality and also calls for fair copyright and the abolition of Crown copyright, and immediately making private, non-commercial copying of content legal.

On ethnic communities: Between 74 and 75 insert the following:

Ethnic groups and communities fighting for full equality are also another potential democratic force of the people's coalition, not least as racialized communities are expanding the ranks of the urban working class. The Harper Tories' recent inadequate apology for the Komagata Maru "incident" angered many in the South Asian Canadian communities who continue the battle against racism including anti-Hinduism and anti-Sikhism, as well as Islamophobia. In recent years reactionary forces have particularly tried to whip-up Islamophobia in Quebec. Chinese-Canadians, the second-largest ethnic group in Canada, recently successfully won an apology and limited redress against the racist Head Tax and Exclusion Act but continue to fight many forms of racism like the attacks on the Asian Anglers. Black Canadians, Afro-Caribbean and African Canadians also face particularly acute racial discrimination such as housing, employment, education. Our party,

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in calling for people's unity for social transformation, opposes national chauvinism and reaffirms its support for affirmative action.

On the NDP: In paragraph 89, replace "But under Layton's leadership, that difference has narrowed," with:

"In progressive struggles across English-speaking Canada, NDP supporters and NDP members are often among our best allies, and this side of the party does not fail to get some reflection in NDP policy. We want to ally with NDPers and with the party itself wherever we can in support of progressive policies,

but that does not depend only on us. The official NDP has been active in defense of employment insurance, pensions, child care and the environment, but it has retreated on the defense of peace, Canadian sovereignty and other issues, [...]

On the Green Party: In paragraph 90, replace the first sentence with:

"There has been some shift in the Green Party's earlier more pro-business stance, but the party is still far from identifying itself with the interests of Canada's working class majority."

Paragraph 97: Regarding the

press, add the YCL's 'Rebel Youth magazine' after 'two newspapers.'

On the Central Committee: Between 106 and 107 insert:

In driving the agenda of the Communist Party forward, the role of the Central Committee is the political heart and brain of the party apparatus centrally, just as the club is the heart and brain of the party operation locally. Electing a vigorous, powerful CC is a vital task of our convention. The Convention instructs the CC to address the revitalization of three aspects of its work. First, the CC has to identify and solve the political obstacles to

Making Contributions to the *Discussion Bulletin*

This Bulletin continues 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.

We will publish further Discussion Bulletins before the Central Convention. **The deadline for contributions to Bulletin #5 is Monday, January 18, 2009.**

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 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.

Deadline for Discussion Bulletin #5 - Monday, Jan. 18, 2009

the efficient operation of our commissions, especially the trade union commission, the central education commission and the women's commission. Secondly, the CC should clarify the character and forms that report-back/check up and criticism/self-criticism should take today and the role of party activists and cadre. Thirdly, the CC needs to identify where the party must go in terms of raising the standards of our work. It is essential

for the CC members to actively reinforce the CC's role, empowering the Provincial Committees and the Quebec National Committee to initiate the kind of united momentum that is necessary to expand the party.

On internet work, delete the entire paragraph 110 and replace with:

“Canada's high internet use is reflected in our own membership, friends and allies. The Party's many

websites – Peoples Voice, the Spark, Clarte, the PCQ site and the main Party site – have become a crucial point of connection with these militants and new recruits. After several years of neglect, some progress was being made in this area on the eve of the convention. Our convention instructs the incoming Central Committee to grasp the significance of this area and support and guide the continued improvement of this work. ■

What is it to be a Communist?

*Tooraj Samiee, Davenport Club,
Toronto*

In discussion bulletin No.3, there appears an article by comrade Salih Waziruddin under the heading “Who ever said anti-imperialist solidarity means solidarity with progressives only?” in which he argues that our party has to be in solidarity with all the “anti-imperialist” forces around the globe disrespect of their broader ideological and political outlook and practices. According to him, “This simple idea is Lenin's concept of anti-imperialist solidarity in ‘Imperialism: the Highest Stage of Capitalism’ solidarity is NOT just with workers and progressive but with all forces targeted by imperialism abroad.” And also he states: “The Main Political Resolution (See Bulletin #1) is dogmatic about anti-imperialist solidarity, especially point #21 where it not only opposes solidarity with Iran's government just because it is targeted by imperialism (not reason enough?!...)” and at the end he proposes an amendment which states: “We also express our solidarity with Iran which is the target of a campaign ...” and also

“We convey our revolutionary solidarity with the anti-imperialists in Iraq and Afghanistan resisting direct occupations by NATO countries....”

I found comrade Salih's article interesting because it opened the door to some fundamental questions such as: “What is it to be a communist?”, “Is to be a communist equal to be anti-imperialist?”, “What are our criteria in Solidarity with other political entities in Canada and around the globe?” and “Shouldn't our solidarity with other forces, domestic or internationally, be based on a solid ideological and political understanding from these entities?”

In the following I will try to answer some of these questions:

It might seem superfluous, but it is necessary, to state that communism, as a political force, is based on specific ideological basis which is described in Dialectical and Historical Materialism. It is based on a specific philosophy about the nature, human as an individual, knowledge, human society, the evolution of the human society, history and so on and so forth. We, as communists, have a particular

analysis about the present level of development of our human society, have an estimate of the deep causes and vast dimensions of the present problems and have a particular vision for the future. A vision which beside solving these problems will elevate the human society to a higher level. According to communist's vision, the man in the socialist and finally communist societies will possess characteristics such as: higher level of wisdom, deeper sense of solidarity, a higher level of affection for others including the opposite gender and so on and so forth.

It is clear that we are against imperialism not for the sake of being solely “anti-imperialist”. We are anti-imperialist because according to our analysis, imperialism is the root cause of the present humanity's problems and is an obstacle to the progress of the human society to a higher level as we have defined it.

Of course, globally speaking, we are living in a complicated world with many forces interacting with each other. Each of these forces view the social phenomena, including “anti-imperialism”, from

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their own ideological and political stand point. Just because similar or same terminology is used to represent a phenomenon, it doesn't necessarily mean the same thing. This is why a deeper understanding of the ideology and political standing of forces is needed to understand what they mean by using certain terminologies. As an example, Mr. Ahmadi-Nejad in Iran claims to be an anti-imperialist force (and it seems that comrade salih also agrees with him), but the question is that does his understanding of "imperialism" have anything in common with what we understand of "imperialism". Mr. Ahmadi-Nejad's understanding of imperialism have nothing to do with the "Concentration of Capital", "Monopolies", "Capitalism" or any other thing that truly explains the structure and the function of the present day capitalism. What he views as imperialism, and I don't think it is

an exaggeration, is a corrupt society (according to his criteria) with corrupt people who are governed by some corrupt individuals. Are we talking about the same thing?

Furthermore, what is absolutely necessary is to put their claim of "anti-imperialism" into the broader context of their attempt to reorganize the society according to their ideals. For this also, Iran is a good example. If anybody follows the events during the thirty years of the "Regime of the Supreme Religious Leader", will see how reactionary and anti-democratic this regime has been. Despite what some people would like to believe (And it seems like comrade Salih is one of them), the uprising of the people in these dimensions is not a phenomenon made by the CIA and the imperialism, this honor goes to the "regime of the Supreme Religious Leader" and specially the apocalyptic part of it led by Mr. Mahmood Ahmadi-Nejad.

I think what comrade Salih is

proposing, an "anti-imperialist" solidarity, disregard of the ideological, political and social standing of the forces we stand in solidarity with, not only is irrational but also dangerous. Sooner or later, the people rise up against the reactionary forces and in particular regimes. Solidarity with these regimes means to stand against the progressive and democratic ideals of the people of these countries which I don't think as communists, we would like to be crowned with such an honor. To me communism means nothing but to fight for progress and democracy.

For sure Imperialism will try to intervene in the democratic struggle of the people and with all power in its disposal (which is not less at all) tries to direct it according to its interest. There is no doubt that this has to be countered and it definitely adds to the level of complication of the struggle of the progressive forces. But "Who ever said that life is not complicated?" ■

Greetings from the Young Communist League

Dear comrades, dear friends,

On behalf of the Young Communist League's Central Executive Committee and all our members, we extend warm, militant greetings to the Communist Party of Canada as your 36th Central Convention discussions unfold.

The economic crisis is of cardinal importance today in the militant kinetics of people's politics. It menaces the future of the youth. We would like to respectfully elaborate on the meaning for youth and students' of your five "general features and conclusions" on the crisis.

1. Growing impoverishment. Close to half a million young workers are unemployed. Youth unemployment remains over 15% after September's 20.9% record. British Columbian youth unemployment grew 56% since last year. No other age group has been hit as hard, in Canada and internationally. One in five youth are unemployed in the United Kingdom. The United States AFL-CIO labour union central calls this the "lost decade" for young workers. Among the third-world and global South's unemployed, youth are a majority.

Other dangerous developments

include reduced accessibility and privatization of education, transit, housing, dental care, and childcare; lower rates of youth unionization, ageist two-tier collective agreements, and poorer wages (about half of all young workers earn less than poverty-line wage); and even more debt (Canadian student debt is over \$13.5 billion) with the rise of "pay day loan's" extortionate fees and interest. Aboriginal youth, youth from racialized communities, and young women are hit hardest. The future of millions of youth is basically being thrown in the trash. Our League is active to connect justified anger of youth with mass

campaigns for better work and better wages.

2. The intense ideological offensive designed (a) to divide the working class, including scapegoating, racism, anti-communism, etc, and (b) convince people that a recovery is in full-swing. There's a sophisticated effort to convince the youth through the corporate media and culture (i.e. Macleans OnCampus blog or Virgin Mobile's Screw your recession.ca announcing the crisis' end). The ultra-accessibility of credit to youth fosters a "false consciousness" of economic security and separation from older worker's grievances. The new anti-consumer critique ("la décroissance") that ignorant hordes with their 1.5 kids, dogs, SUVs, etc. and polluting jobs caused a now inevitable post-Kyoto climate chaos, also mistakenly blames workers dividing us. Attacks on the vital solidarity between young workers and industrial and public sector workers also dangerously 'races to the bottom.'

3 & 4 Aggravation of inter-imperialist contradictions, a precursor to war; exposure of US economic might's relative decline. Imperialism's rivalries also play-out in response to climate change and emphasis the mass support of youth for peace and anti-imperialist forces both in oppressed and imperialist countries. In Canada, anti-war sentiment is particularly strong among young Québécois. As the World Federation of Democratic Youth and Students' November Paris seminar concluded, "The capitalist crisis is a proof of the system's weakness. Young people should take advantage and courage at this weakness by strengthening their anti-imperialist struggle" –

especially against military bases and occupation armies. Student activists are making a very positive contribution in the Troops Out of Afghanistan campaign and resistance to military recruitment, which the YCL also champions. More effort is vital.

5. The labour and people's fight back against the crisis has been slow and sporadic due to a general sense of weakness and caution by working people, state restriction and even repression, ideological disorientation, and the betray of opportunist leaders.

The question of cautiousness among the youth deserves further reflection. Generally, young people are discounting electoral struggle – both voting and political parties. Youth extra-parliamentary struggle shows some polarization. More young people are choosing more radical progressive positions. Yet the Conservative party is ramping-up campus activity. A tiny, violent number youth are joining neo-nazi organizations. Fascism's claws operate among members of the corporate elite, who are among the ultra-rightists erecting the "Victim's of Totalitarian Communism Memorial" in Ottawa (condemned by the YCL).

Among progressive youth there is a sharpened critique of reformist solutions. Young union activists, the future of militant class-struggle trade unionism, generally reject business unionism. Millions of youth are scandalized by the Harper Tories – like at Copenhagen and their prorogue of parliament. As your convention meets, young militants are calling out for "no Olympics on stolen native land." Anti-capitalist perspectives do not spontaneously lead to socialist consciousness. But it does lead to a

renewed search for a deeper analysis of the crisis of capitalism, for profound social and political change, and that leads young people to look at the Communist movement.

Key is militant leadership, building the progressive, united critical mass for an anti-imperialist, anti-corporate, pro-people agenda and coalition. After all, right-wing social democratic forces within labour are also trying to capture the aspirations of young activists through training retreats (emphasizing political struggle mainly through the NDP), lures of promotion, rewards, money and – when that fails – simple pressure tactics.

Student politics, while divided along national lines between Quebec and English-speaking Canada, is the youth movement's most organized component. On campuses the students are fighting a sharp struggle against Conservative Party-orchestrated attacks on Palestinian solidarity, and now a developing struggle against 13 de-federation campaigns from Canadian Federation of Students. The YCL is supporting the broad and powerful unity against the right-wing attack.

In the youth movement, especially on campuses, we encounter many left formations. Only the Communist Party of Canada, however, presents an assessment with such scope and vigor. The YCL's relationship with the Party is political and ideological unity combined with organizational autonomy. This is a creative relationship.

We must discuss, discover, and invent. Struggle for ideological clearness is essential to chart a way

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forward, especially among youth and the YCL which warmly welcomes all young socialists. The documents are important because they are a starting point for deeper discussions. They bring under the revolutionary Marxist microscope the basic and decisive questions for

all youth and student activists: what's new? What are the main dangers? What are the prospects for change? What do we do?

For these reasons we look forward to your 36th Central Convention's outcome for guidance. We fully agree with the urgency – and the

need to overthrow this system based on exploitation and oppression, replacing it with something guarantying peace, jobs, environmental sustainability, and real democracy. Here is a mission worthy of a new generation. Socialism! ■

Submission of Rosa Luxemburg Club (Ottawa)

In the first paragraph of the introduction to the Draft Main Political Resolution, we believe that hyperbole distorts the points being made. First, the developments that are shaking capitalism are not obviously “unprecedented”—didn't ones like them occur in 1929? Second, it is not at all clear that global capitalism, although clearly shaken by the crisis, is being shaken “to its very core.” However serious, the current economic downturn doesn't even qualify as a global *depression*. Finally, militarism and war and the intensifying environmental crisis clearly threaten the lives of millions of humans, but there is no reason to believe that they threaten “the very ¹⁰survival” of humanity.

In the third paragraph, it is

claimed that “anti-capitalist sentiments and advocacy of socialism ... are growing.”

Where? In Latin America? Probably. But no evidence is produced to counter the clear impression that it is right wing policies that are gaining support in both North America and Europe—certainly that they are not losing any support. Yes, there are progressive protests, but that has always been the case, in politically good and bad times. On the other hand, witness the Harper government's near majority polling numbers, Obama's declining popularity and the Republican's rising support, Gordon Brown's near-certain defeat in the next election by the British Tories, Sarkozy's and Merkel's

relatively strong support in France and Germany.

In paragraph 10, it is claimed that there is 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... We agree about the offensive designed to split unionized and **unorganized workers**, but see no evidence (yet) of this offensive regarding the public and private sectors of the economy.

In paragraph 15, it is claimed that the people's fightback against the crisis has been uneven and sporadic, even though “a number of important advances have been made ...” Which important advances and where? ■