

People's War

DIGEST

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*"Without a People's Army
the people have nothing" (Mao Zedong)*

The Canadian Proletariat and the World Situation: **How We Intend to Fight**



DOCUMENT ISSUED FOR THE CANADIAN REVOLUTIONARY CONGRESS

ISSUED BY THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST PARTY
(ORGANIZING COMMITTEES)



DIGEST

People's War DIGEST (PWD) is a Canadian publication entirely dedicated to advocate and promote peoples' war. This publication is for struggle and is truly internationalist. But at the same time, it is totally devoted to the Canadian working class, to its struggle for socialism and for its own liberation.

With People's War DIGEST, we want to propose to the revolutionary activists in Canada a selection of articles and documents produced by a variety of Maoist parties and organizations (or by other revolutionaries if it happens) that will help to understand and to give a wide overview of what the strategic line of people's war is all about. To produce progressively a clear and solid understanding of the people's war, by enlightening the weaknesses and hesitations here and there with the strongest we can find elsewhere: that is the first goal of PWD.

With People's War DIGEST, we want to bring our contribution in producing a true and genuine liaison between the Maoists across Canada—a tool at the service of all activists who wish to develop a true and significant revolutionary practice, like what our comrades from the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP[OC]) are doing in Québec.

Feel free to reproduce, circulate and discuss total or part of its content!

The People's War DIGEST Committee



CONTENT :

THE CANADIAN PROLETARIAT AND THE WORLD SITUATION:

How We Intend to Fight

The Initiative the Canadian Proletariat Needs!	4
To See From Below or From Above?	5
The Burning Fires	7
The Necessity of Unifying a Revolutionary Movement	13
The Struggle of the Proletariat in Canada	14
Why Is It Right to Constitute the Revolutionary Communist Party Now	18
What We Have... and What Do We Want!	21

This special edition of People's War DIGEST features the main document issued by the Canadian Revolutionary Congress' Correspondence Committee in preparation for this event, to be held in November 2006 and whose main objective is to support the founding of the Revolutionary Communist Party.

The document deals with a series of burning questions, which are at the heart of the revolutionary struggle in Canada. We enjoin all of you not only to read it, but to discuss it in a lively manner; you can notably send your comments to the Correspondence Committee by using the Congress website (www.pcr-rcpcanada.org/crc).

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Call for the *Canadian Revolutionary Congress*:

Workers of Canada, unite under the banner of revolution!

“Workers of all countries, unite!” are the last lines of the *Communist Manifesto*, written by Marx and Engels in 1848. This was the call made by the founders of the emerging Communist movement for workers to organize, act like a class for themselves, and take the lead in the historic struggle to end capitalism and build a new society, free of all forms of oppression and exploitation. How have we done 150 years later? In Canada, who are the proletarians Marx and Engels were talking about?

In this country, there are almost 20 million of us with nothing more to hope for than have our labour exploited and the best of our lives given to the capitalists and their corporations. At best, we earn just enough to stay alive; at worst, we get so poor and over-indebted that some of us end up taking their own lives in despair.

The hundreds of thousands of immigrants who have come to live here are over-exploited, underpaid and disrespected. In a country where bourgeois wealth accumulates while poverty grows, thousands of refugees remain without status, without papers, and facing deportation.

Women workers from Newfoundland to Vancouver are among the most underpaid wage earners, working in the most insecure conditions even though they are often their family's only support.

Over one million aboriginal people spread over the whole territory have been scorned for centuries, their rights as peoples denied in a country that boasts about being one of the most advanced in the world.

The unemployed, marginalized from an economic system that shows them no mercy, get to read in the papers every day about the scandals and corruption cooked up between capitalists and bourgeois politicians. Young proletarians are not even out of high school before they find themselves crushed in the infernal cycle of low-wage jobs, school and rent, and end up never graduating.

All of them carry the anger of proletarians against capitalism. They would like to change their lives, the society, the system... if it was possible. If only they'd realize the tremendous force they have by uniting around the emancipating project of communist revolution.

It is up to each of us to help unleash the power of the working class, the strength lying with all the oppressed and exploited of the world, including in Canada. It is up to us to breathe new life into the great call made by the *Communist Manifesto*. Because even today, it is still this document that best and most truly expresses the reality of capitalist exploitation and the need to put an end to it.

Comrades active in struggles today, from all strata of the proletariat, are striving for this. And this will be the goal of the Congress being organized next November under the initiative of the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees).

Prepare for the *Canadian Revolutionary Congress*!

Five years ago, a conference brought together activists, workers and revolutionary communists in Montreal to create the Revolutionary Communist Party (Organizing Committees)—RCP(OC).

Much work has been accomplished since then. A programme, based on Marxism-Leninism-Maoism, the revolutionary ideology of the proletariat, was widely discussed and adopted by the members of the RCP(OC). The comrades waged political campaigns and different actions to win over activists in Québec and in other Canadian cities.

But this is far from sufficient. By this fall, when the *Canadian Revolutionary Congress* is held, we need to be hundreds and more from across the country to support the founding of the RCP. The Congress will be preceded by the publication of new documents analyzing social classes, bourgeois democracy and all other political issues that are of interest to the Canadian proletariat and sometimes a source of division among us. This political campaign will aim to organize debates with groups, committees, collectives, or comrades and individuals who wish to respond, exchange, and eventually unite at the Canadian Revolutionary Congress for the founding of the RCP.

We call upon activists, workers and proletarians of every condition, communists and revolutionaries to get together, discuss and debate with us and participate in creating a party the like of which we have not seen for decades: a revolutionary communist party.

A Party that is a weapon, not an extinguisher!

When we hear the word “Party” the reaction tends to be: another party...what for? To lengthen the list at the next elections? To come around soliciting us every four years and ignore us the rest of the time? To send MPs to the Parliament of the rich?

The Revolutionary Communist Party will be a weapon, not an extinguisher of class struggle. Contrary to left parties claiming to be “citizens’” parties or “civil society” parties that exist only on paper or in the abstract, the RCP will be the political arm of the proletariat. It will be

the arm of the working class that actually exists and suffers, and of all those who want to fight the bourgeoisie and its power. This party will reject bourgeois elections and the fake democracy of the Canadian parliamentary system. Its aim won't be limited to resisting, but will include waging Communist revolution to give power to the proletarians, to the working men and women.

This aim of power for the proletariat and the strategy required to reach it makes the RCP(OC) and the Party it wants to build radically different from what already exists in the Canadian left.

This left and its parties (the NDP in English Canada, and the *Québec Solidaire* Party in Québec) refuse to acknowledge the need to destroy capitalism. They especially refuse to recognize that a large proportion of the poor and exploited people in this country reject the bourgeois electoral system. Instead, they put all their energy into convincing us to believe the lie that is democracy and to vote in each election for the bourgeoisie's single party—Parliament itself! The head of the Bloc Québécois, Gilles Duceppe confirmed this in spite of himself during the last election campaign when he bragged that his party had voted “on the same side as the (Liberal) government 80% of the time” in the past 18 months. As for the NDP, and even the fringe group calling itself the “Communist Party of Canada”, their perspective is to pressure the Liberals or the Conservatives into throwing a few crumbs their way.

By encouraging people to remain imprisoned within the framework of bourgeois legality, the left has abandoned the task of developing the consciousness of the proletariat as an exploited and subjugated class in society. It dooms us to accept the bourgeoisie's legal, parliamentary and judicial dictatorship; including when it calls to create self-managed spaces in the margins of capitalism, just like the anarchist current advocates. We are distressed (though not surprised) to see, for example, that the *Québec Solidaire* Party's statement of principles has not a single mention of a simple yet fundamental word from our daily lives, the word “worker.” By negating that society is divided into classes, this “left” party has in fact abandoned the idea of transforming power to give it to the workers, and consequently to struggle for socialism and communism. They only “transform” reality on paper, with concepts and speeches on the “common good”, but in action or in strategy all they propose are elections, *awareness* campaigns and some tax reforms!

The bourgeois class, the capitalists and the imperialist states will not hand over their power willingly to the poor, the proletarians or the majority of the population. On the contrary, they use THEIR police, THEIR armies, THEIR World Bank, THEIR IMF and THEIR UN every day to stay in power. We are not the only ones saying so. The history of class struggle and the proletariat's attempts to make revolution over the past two centuries illustrates this. The theoreticians of the revolution (Marx, Engels, Lenin and Mao) understood it through their own experience. This is the experience we must build on and develop by fighting for revolution and by creating revolutionary communist parties here and all over the world.

We must change Canada, but also the world!

We are far from alone. In our call to create a revolutionary communist party in Canada, we want to join forces with a revolutionary current asserting itself ever more strongly around the world. The places where people are advancing most successfully in the struggle against oppression and imperialist tyranny, where the masses of people are the best organized, is where there are parties and people's liberation armies following Maoism and applying it creatively.

In Nepal, the Communist Party of Nepal (Maoist) and the strategy of protracted people's war have allowed autonomous people's government to come to the fore in over 80% of the territory. The tyranny of King Gyanendra, clutching at power by repressing the most elementary rights of the people in the capital Kathmandu, is being brought down thanks to the CPN (Maoist).

The revolutionary successes of the Maoists in Nepal are now spreading into India, a country of over one billion, where the Communist Party of India (Maoist) carries out spectacular actions in most states throughout the country.

We enthusiastically support and defend these experiences and the development of a new revolutionary current in the world, embodied in the Revolutionary Internationalist Movement (RIM).

Organize to make a huge success of the Canadian Revolutionary Congress!

This call is addressed to those who want to organize now in their neighbourhoods, their cities and with their friends and comrades to attend the *Canadian Revolutionary Congress*. During the weeks and months to come, the RCP(OC) will publish documents on its website that will nourish the discussions and debates among whom ever would like to participate in the Congress, and who feel one with the call to found the RCP and with the current programme of the RCP(OC).

Contact us now to organize a new committee in your region or neighbourhood in preparation for the Congress.

**The Communist Manifesto still rings true!
Prepare for the Canadian Revolutionary Congress!
Workers in all of Canada, unite to create the RCP!**

THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE OF THE RCP(OC)
February 2006



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THE CANADIAN PROLETARIAT AND THE WORLD SITUATION:

How We Intend to Fight

The Correspondence Committee of the **Canadian Revolutionary Congress** is submitting for discussion the following document to all the revolutionary activists in Canada as well as all the Organizing Committees, cells, and communist groups that currently struggle for rebuilding a new Revolutionary Communist Party in this country.

In the current world situation and facing the gigantic capacities that all the big bourgeois classes—of which the Canadian bourgeoisie—attributed to themselves, the rebuilding of such a party would constitute a huge victory in the field of propaganda!

The Correspondence Committee is undertaking maintain and organize this discussion, by distributing this document, while making available—in various forms—the texts, comments and contributions which will enrich during the next weeks our understanding of the current situation and reinforce our common will to win this first victory.

The Initiative the Canadian Proletariat Needs!

A PERIOD OF CRISIS OF AN EXTRAORDINARY SCALE is at hand. The first signs of crisis have been accumulating for years all across the globe and continue to appear month after month, day after day, without end.

This period of crisis will be the crisis of the entire imperialist order: of its capitalist economy, production, and surplus value and of its distribution; of the well-being and income of the masses. It will be a major social and political crisis, which will put in danger the solidity and the future of bourgeois democracy.

The coming of these crises is quite apparent, for example, in the current chaos and destruction created by the imperialist wars in Afghanistan, Iraq, Gaza and Lebanon, and in the major economic movements which modify production and circulation at a global level. On the other hand, the most of it still remains undisclosed and sometimes hidden.

Often veiled, or made invisible with the illusions and ideological interpretations produced by the bourgeoisie, the current premises of these crises are still, to use an analogy, like huge underground tanks filled up with a powerful and barely contained energy. For the time being, this energy can be controlled inside these vast steel hulls, but eventually it will become too plentiful and powerful and the energy

will overflow. This momentous event is unavoidable. The pressure of this clandestine energy will force apart even the strongest steel, cracking it like an egg shell.

This overflow (which, under capitalism, is primarily an overflow of various contradictions, restrictions and oppression) will quickly take the form of shocks, explosions, and upheavals.

The decades to come will change the face of the world, creating huge problems and shattering the foundations of our society. But they will be, precisely because of that, dramatic and magnificent decades of both victory and failure; success and defeat. They will be decades of revolution!

We have decided to come together this year and meet at the **Canadian Revolutionary Congress**, in order to make the necessary first step toward the struggle for socialism in Canada, as the only solution to this crisis. This first step is to support, by our common desire for change, the creation of the new Revolutionary Communist Party of Canada. The goal of this Congress, along with the revolutionary form of political practice we intend to introduce, **is to take up with a revolutionary practice, based on the historical and present conditions of Canada.**

And like the thousands of workers, the poor and the young, from one city to another and from a province to another, this party will adopt a philosophy of resistance. To resist is our moral attitude, an attitude which forges the possibilities of the future. And the future is what we are most concerned with.

At the same time, we know that this expression—to resist—is excessively evoked and its meaning twisted by many different elements, especially in times of crisis, to be representative of, and speak for, the “people at the bottom.” Ministers, brokers and radio parrots, artists, reformist politicians and well-established trade unionists have all, at one time or another, used the word resistance to accumulate support. “To resist!” But to resist what? Resist who? How? With what tools and weapons?

As the army of the shades did in times past—a poor and discreet, but tough and determined army of men and women who toiled one day through miserable lives only to wake up the next, face to face with the dismal figures of Fascism and collaboration, defining their resistance with refusal and fight—we call all the proletarians of Canada to establish this movement in accordance with this same historical direction of refusal and fight.

We are about to give a material form—a real, living, strong and flexible framework—to our resistance against capitalist exploitation and injustices produced by bourgeois society. A framework that will make the acts of refusal and fight possible. To refuse alone is no longer sufficient. Even when shouted as loud as possible it remains an abstract and unsubstantial idea, and everybody knows that the bourgeoisie fear these abstract and powerless protests as much as a lion fears a fly!

We too are poor and discreet, but we are also tough and determined. We too come from the shadows and the dull and grey daily life of the cities and villages, the schools and offices, the factories and construction sites, where the capitalist economy is in the final process of producing the most contradictory human society in history: prosperity and poverty, culture and ignorance, abundance and shortage, lethargy and uncertainty, luxurious peace and violent suffering.

We are from everywhere, and of every age, race and gender. We are the youth working for \$7.50 per hour, who are supposed to be “benefiting” (!) from this current “prosperity.” We are from the humble homes where the modest conditions of the workers’ existence are being reproduced thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of times all across Canada.

We are in the shadows when living in the popular neighbourhoods and in the workers’ cities. We see the wealth and prosperity slipping away like a thief, leaving behind more “dead work” than “living work.”

We are in the shadows, hidden and forgotten everywhere throughout this large and mostly unknown network made of factories, construction sites, production plants, workshops, garages, trade shops, exchanges and transportation, where the proletarians continue to produce, to provide and convey all the goods and services which serve as the source of the huge profits of the bourgeois.

We barely exist, often without regular work. We live in the reserves and the cities of the North. We go to school. We learn skills. We end up on the streets when there is no way out. We know the monotony of parks and shopping centers filled with designer clothes and expensive watches and shoes. We are in the shadows because the glaring spotlight of bourgeois society is shining on the beauty and perfection of Hollywood, on millionaires and celebrities and “50 Cent,” but never on the “street punks” or on the towns of Nova Scotia, never on the realities and truths of society.

Through the Revolutionary Communist Party, we will cultivate and organize our resistance. In other words, organize our struggle and our refusal to submit to capitalist exploitation. This struggle in turn will transform the shape of society in a thousand ways. We cannot fully measure it at this point. But unquestionably, the aspect of these transformations will be spectacular. All that is currently in the shadows will become clearer, more obvious and impossible to hide. And this begins with the proletariat, the class the rich despises, and who will appear under a new light: different, daring, brave and sure of itself. The proletariat will transform society and transform itself at the same time.

Did not Karl Marx, Communist philosopher and surely a daring man, write, to this purpose, that the proletarians would learn that “the coincidence of the changing of circumstances and of human activity or self-changing can be conceived and rationally understood only as revolutionary practice.”¹ This transformation by revolutionary practice always has been and will continue to be a push of intelli-

gence in the minds of societies: “It is not enough for thought to strive for realization [through struggle], reality must itself strive towards thought.”²

The questions and concerns that will be put forward at the CRC can be summed up in a single sentence: What does our current reality push us to think?

To transform the social conditions, to change ourselves and our society; to think and produce new knowledge which corresponds to reality—this is the thinking of the CRC. It is also the radical desire of the conscious proletariat: To transform! To transform! And transform again!

Six busy years have gone by since November of 2000 when the RCP(OC) was created; six years of struggle, of examination and discussion with various groups of proletarians; six years of learning about the real conditions of the struggle, as well as the development of a programme and general political line, have led us to a certain number of conclusions which we will expose here.

These conclusions will be used as guides in our actions to come. We consider that all workers, all employed, all unemployed and all students who share these same conclusions should consider linking their actions, without delay, with the Revolutionary Communist Party. This is, to date, the most promising and adequate place to organize the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

To See From Below or From Above?

WHEN SEEN FROM BELOW OR SEEN FROM ABOVE, the same reality is often viewed very differently. Two different points of view, which generate two different understandings, and consequently, two different kinds of feelings and reactions, such as hope and fear.

We all remember the incredible event of a US bomber pilot during the Vietnam War who was marveling at the effect, from the sky, of the bombs he had just released: “Oh my God, it’s beautiful! It’s beautiful!” However, on the ground, the reality was far from beautiful. The napalm bombs spread liquefied fire and death across the fields and plains, extinguishing all life within hundreds of meters in a matter of seconds. That must have been the most terrifying thing to witness. But was it a beautiful show or a terrifying reality?

The first revolutionary act in class struggle is to recognize, understand and to seize the world from below! We must not fall into the trap that is believing that the bourgeoisie’s hallucinations from above are truthful reality.

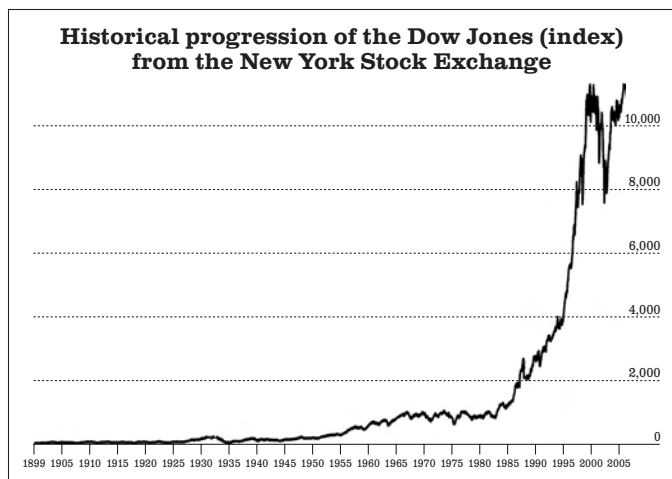
The current world situation is a good example of this double-standard, this two-faced way of seeing things. Seen from above, everything is prosperity, enrichment, wealth and democracy. Seen from below, it is crisis, corruption, war and misery.

“A democratic Middle East is being born” according to the US government. “The jobs of tomorrow will be abundant, more gratifying, more powerful and more valuable.” The expression “new economy” has been constantly redefined by bourgeois circles for twenty years, used over and over as if to indicate that every five or so years is a new step reached by society—a new gain in quality and prosperity, a new historical step forward—whereas in reality this expression only indicates the sectors where the most gain for capitalists is being made.

At the end of the Sixties, a society called by some as “the leisure society,” began experiencing, for the first time, a period of mass layoffs which would reach full swing after the Seventies’ crisis. In 1993, a “liberal” author, Michel Gaudet, wrote a book called *L’emploi est mort, vive l’activité!* (“*Work Is Dead, Long Live Activity*”). By activity, he was of course talking about trips, sports, leisure and other recreational and domestic.

For sure, at the top, the daily reality meant money, luxury and prosperity. It is part of the rich classes’ habits and needs, like eating soup or watching hockey is for us.

Trade agreements made it possible for profits to multiply. Stock exchange capitalization has reached new heights. Some financial transactions, like mergers and acquisitions, involve trillions of dollars, which make investors and shareholders dizzy with excitement. The swelling—on paper—of heritage has been enormous. Financial assets are reaching immeasurable levels. The revenues drawn (in various forms) from surplus value have multiplied as if they were self-sufficient, giving the feeling to the bourgeois that money drawn from the profits was creating more money unceasingly, like a snowball as it rolls down a hill.



Another sign of this triumphal feeling of enrichment is the fact that within the highest 30% of bourgeois society (i.e. the bourgeoisie, its servants, functionaries and the social players who reproduce the same way of life), luxury consumption, waste and unproductive social functions (false-expenses) reached levels that are unequalled in the history of capitalism.

Thus, seen from above, there is no reason for that image of prosperity (in both its virtual part—true on paper only—and in its real part) to not be projected upon society as a whole, like a universal truth. But this projection is only an ideological glint and a promise deprived of real basis (example: the “new economy”).

Marxism has pointed out that the ruling ideas are always the ideas of the ruling class. We could say, as Marx and Engels, that those who determine social relations (the bourgeois) are also those who “...regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age.”³

Seen from below, however, the world does not fit with this image of prosperity, nor can it be summarized by this misleading glint and these thoughts and ideas produced and distributed by the bourgeoisie. Seen from below, and with a liberated point of view—which is a very precious tool—the current world situation looks more like the “waiting room” of a world in crisis.

Class antagonisms are taking on new proportions. Every change in the economy upsets the lives of millions of proletarians, workers and farmers. The big bourgeoisie and the leading imperialist elites can no longer control these rising forces. They can no longer control production or trade, nor can they control the third rising force, namely the people’s desire for emancipation, their desire to take power. This force is on the rise virtually everywhere.

This third force is the one that the imperialist bourgeoisie and their valets can least control. The best they can do is to contain it, by bombarding it ideologically, by imposing a new cycle of wars and by the over deployment of security and repressive mechanisms.

Of course, as Marx demonstrated, crises in the capitalist mode of production take place first in the process of circulation, that is, the transformation of capital and the creation of value, surplus value, and its distribution among the ruling class. That is exactly what is happening. This process is the succession of moments and opportunities where the “invisible” machinery of capitalism is set off, where overproduction devalues capital and securities, and gives rise to a crisis. The process is all the riskier these days because virtual capital abounds and those living from its proceeds are all eating from the same trough.

Furthermore crises are contagious. They have a snowball effect and spread beyond circulation to other sectors. They can shake the entire foundation of society.

The crisis in the years to come will be politically and physically unstoppable. It will shake the imperialist order right to its summit, to the superstructure of bourgeois democracies, the so-called “liberal democracies.” The contradictions and struggles to come will reveal that these democracies are not democratic at all, certainly not as those at the bottom understand it. Liberal intellectuals have to admit: “The term democracy... has been purged of the notion of collective power and evokes only individual freedom. The term itself has been liberalized.”⁴

Bourgeois democracy does not contain the necessary qualities nor the resources or tools to satisfy the needs and aspirations of the broad masses of people around the world. It does not allow for the working classes (the proletariat, the peasants and small crafts people) to control production and trade, and therefore makes their emancipation unlikely under the current regime. The opposite is much more foreseeable. Clashes, conflicts and confrontations are to be expected between the majority's desire for emancipation that takes the form of rebellions, struggles and mass movements and this so-called democracy that is unsatisfactory and repressive. A French sociologist observed, following the legitimate uprising by the youth in the suburbs of France in the autumn of 2005: "When we talk about rioting in the suburbs, we have seen nothing yet! It will continue, spread and get stronger, and the response by the authorities will also be tougher. A dynamic of really tough urban conflict has been unleashed between youth, the police and state authorities..."⁵

Underprivileged youth are not the only ones who will be striking out and beaten back. The entire proletariat is the whipping boy of the capitalists and the governments at their service. Seizing the world from the bottom up means taking action that will have impact and it is during times of crisis, and through revolutionary struggle, that changes in the world take place. We must observe and understand **burning fires** and learn how to take action, learn what actions to take and when to take them, and with what goal and what objectives. Rather than denying the signs of fire, as do the upholders of capitalism and bourgeois institutions, we must look at reality and realize that these will have to burn.

We are the men and women at the bottom! We are not the nice little petty-bourgeois "socialists" whose rallying cry is a daring: *Long live income taxes!*⁶ These people will never change anything.

We are the ones at the bottom who are not afraid to say we will fight and we will take up arms to defend our rights, our existence and our dignity as workers. Proletarians, let's remember that when we are close to the flame we too can get burned if we remain immobile. But if we take the right action we can turn that flame and all other flames into a fire that will overthrow the ruling classes and change the world in a positive way, for the benefit and welfare of the immense majority of men and women of the world.

The Burning Fires

WHAT WE CALL BURNING FIRES ARE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC AREAS where the world is in "flux", where things are truly in movement, grinding together. It is the movement of tectonic plates, ready to collide.

The First Fire • The number of proletarians, industrial workers, farm workers and employees is greater than ever before in history, and their number has been growing since the beginning of the 21st century. The proletariat from the most developed capitalist regions (Europe, North

America and Japan) has continued to exist over the past 20 years, despite the complexity of social relations that have evolved. And the proletariat from most of the other regions is growing quickly. This demonstrates, as Marx wrote, that "...accumulation of capital is, therefore, increase of the proletariat."⁷

At the end of 2005 there were approximately 2.85 billion people over 15 years of age considered "active" or part of the workforce in the broad sense. (Hundreds of millions of children under 15 years of age are also in the labour force.)

Of this number, 1.1 billion, or slightly over 40%, work in agriculture. Six hundred million work in industry—a 16% increase from 1995 to 2005—which means more than one worker in five (21%). In the so-called "developed" countries, as well as Central and Eastern Europe, East Asia, the Middle East and North Africa, the proportion is one worker in four (24.8%, 27.4%, 26.1% and 25% respectively). As for workers in the private or government service sector, they make up 39% of the labour force worldwide (from 24% in Asia to 71% in the developed countries).⁸

Furthermore, the proletarian categories in any one of these three sectors, that is, the wage earners who are neither self-employed, contractors, merchants, employers nor craftspeople (in other words they do not own land, workshops or any tools of production but rather exchange their labour for a wage) are to varying degrees on the rise everywhere in developing countries.

In a world, both north and south, where social safety nets are either disappearing or never existed, the increase in the number of dispossessed who can neither set up a small business, work at a trade or be part of a family business to survive, makes economic and social problems more acute and complex. This leads to massive unemployment, monetary and financial crises, fraud, strings of business bankruptcies and governments defaulting in their payments of employees' wages.

Meanwhile, this fire continues to heat up as the size of the proletariat swells with the growth of private property and makes the ground under the feet of the capitalists and the ruling imperialist elites more and more slippery. Inevitably, it ushers in an era where, as Marx so brilliantly described: "The proletariat executes the sentence that private property pronounces on itself by producing the proletariat."⁹

Second Fire • The worsening inequalities and impoverishment of workers is the fundamental trend and as a result the insecurity and difficulties that workers face are getting worse and will persist longer in space and time. The World Bank likes to point out that 50% of the world population lives on less than \$2 a day (in 2002) compared to 66% in that situation 20 years ago (1981) and calls this "progress."¹⁰ But let's remember that means 2.614 billion people today (2002) compared to 2.450 billion people in 1981, and that's 230 years after Adam Smith wrote his book, *The Wealth of Nations!*

And what about the hundreds of millions of others who live in countries where the productive forces are developed and who have to make do with \$2.50, \$3, \$4 or \$5 a day? Or as high as \$12.60 a day which the US Department of Agriculture considers to be the poverty threshold—a chasm is more accurate—and which was the plight of 35 million Americans in 2002.

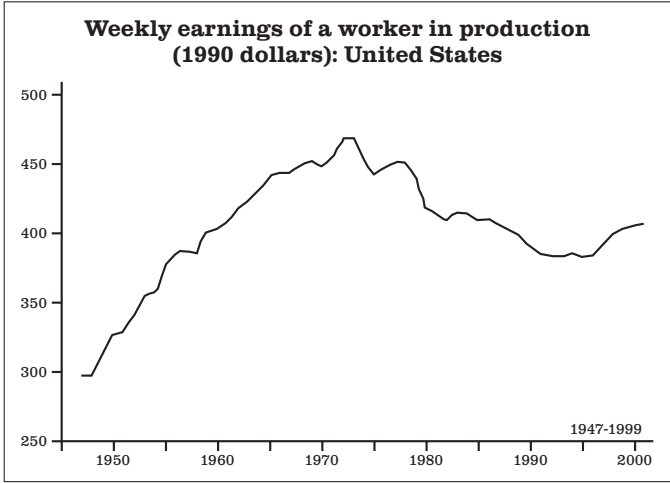
Around the world the vast majority of workers and their dependents in agriculture, industry and services, live on an income, which, even when it increases, hovers around the bare minimum needed to survive.

Capitalist relations of production that take root and develop bring with them income levels higher than ever before, create wages to pay the proletarians (workers or employees) that are higher than previous wages because they replace (not necessarily entirely, nor all at once) labour that used to be done for free in the non-market economy.

So on the surface, hundreds of millions of proletarians earn a bit more each year, because they are becoming “more proletarian.” Their wages have to pay for needs that are becoming merchandised and whose costs are rising¹¹, so many of them are getting poorer and the income gaps in the world are getting wider.

In 1820, the per capita income in Western Europe was three times higher than in Africa. Today, it is 13 times higher.¹² In the 1980s the average income of the richest 5% of the population worldwide was 78 times that of the poorest 5%. In the 1990s this proportion jumped to 114 times as much!¹³

The result is the same for the masses of workers in the most developed capitalist countries, including Canada. Massive unemployment in the 1980s and 1990s and the swelling of the reserve army of the unemployed had already pushed back the wages of the proletariat. The following chart clearly shows the decline in workers’ wages, using the American example.¹⁴



A multitude of other sources show the same trend. In North American industry overall the relation between the salaries of non-workers and the wages of workers went from 1.52 in 1982 to 1.72 in 1996—or from roughly one and a half times as much to one and three-quarter times as much in fifteen years.¹⁵ Without even considering the income of the owners of capital, we can see that workers’ real wages have decreased in relation to other categories of employees in administration, supervision, planning and management.

The plunge in proletarian income (real wages and social protection) covers a **very wide area** that stretches from the sweatshops right into the major categories of industrial workers. Higher debt loads, unstable housing, problems in public health, and dependency on “drugs of the poor” are increasing day by day.

A French author, commenting in an article in the *New York Times*, talks about “a great leap backward:” “...90-hour weeks, dirty washrooms and poverty! [...] Nameless workers in New York City are working in damp basements and alleyways scattered throughout the city. No pay for sick days, no health insurance and only one day off a week. [...] And all that for half the official minimum wage. [...] This is not a description of conditions at the end of the nineteenth century, but rather from June 2004.”¹⁶

The poverty doesn’t end there. In Canada the so-called prosperous years since 1997 (the basis for ideological concepts like “the new labour markets”) cannot hide the fact that most major groups within the proletariat have seen their wage levels drop. This is shown in the comparative table below.¹⁷

WAGE INCREASES FOR SOME EMPLOYEE GROUPS	
(taking inflation into account, from January 1997 to March 2006)	
Job title	Real increase
Executive and management jobs	16%
Finance and business professionals	12%
Administration and finance employees	9%
Jobs in the natural and applied sciences	6%
Professional jobs, government and social services ...	4%
Sales and service jobs	1%
Industry and construction	0%
Primary and secondary school teachers	0%
Transportation equipment operators	- 1%
Other industrial trades	- 1%
Jobs in primary industries	- 2%
Jobs in manufacturing industry	- 4%
Retail sales	- 4%

Third Fire • As significant shares in the production of surplus value (industrial and manufacturing) are shifted or transferred from one part of the world to the other, entire sections of the proletariat are hit hard. This shifting also accentuates the financial and predatory nature of the big imperialist ruling classes. The result will be a hardening of social struggles within the developed capitalist countries and the capitalist system itself will need to use all the financial and military “authority” vested in it by its leading centers (particularly US imperialism). And it will be more clearly exposed for what it is: “an operating fraternity of thieves” as Marx once wrote.¹⁸ An operating fraternity of thieves for sure!

Part of the shift in capital is due to inter-capitalist competition, for example in the automobile sector, where European and especially Asian companies are taking away a huge share of the market from American companies, plunging them (and the corresponding sector in Canada) into the deepest crisis they have seen in the last 80 years.

But the production of surplus value has also shifted to industrial zones where the costs of the labour force (wages and deductions by the state) are lower. For example, Audi automobile is now concentrating almost all of its engine production for the Volkswagen group in the Gyor plant in Hungary where the cost of labour is seven times lower than at the Ingolstadt factory in Germany.¹⁹

Much of the shift in production in Europe is going from Western to Central and Eastern Europe, and also to North Africa. Canada and the US are relocating their factories from the North to the South, including the southern US, Mexico and the Caribbean basin, where the average hourly wage is between \$1.30 and \$2.20, as well as to China. Japan is moving its production mainly to ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) and China.

According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTD), the share of value added in world manufacturing from 1980 to 2001, went from 13.7% to 23.7% in the developing countries.²⁰ The **Quebecor** company, belonging to the Péladeau family, recently announced that it would be transferring its “cost-sensitive and labour intensive activities to Mexico, Colombia and Peru.”²¹

The Canadian company **Gildan** is following this movement in the exploitation process. After starting its operations in the clothing industry essentially in the Montreal area, it progressively moved most of its production from Montreal, Valleyfield and the State of New York to Honduras, Mexico and Haiti. In Honduras, its factory in Rio Nance is like a small town in itself (it is the largest plant of its type in the world!). The average wage of workers there is approximately \$100 a week.²² In 2005, Gildan began setting up a similar huge factory in the Dominican Republic, where it will take advantage of even lower wages—about \$60 a week.²³

About 200,000 out of 2,000,000 manufacturing jobs in Canada—in the automobile, pulp and paper, clothing, furniture and other industries—were lost since the end of 2001, including 100,000 in 2005 and the first few months of 2006.

Capitalists in the richer countries like Canada, Western Europe, and the US take advantage of these shifts in the production of surplus value to strengthen their hand in the relations of exploitation and to reduce the value of the proletariat’s labour force domestically (through imports, among other things). They can pay their employees less and expect more submissive behaviour from them. Bank of Canada Governor Dodge summed up these changes thus: “Corporations have made many efforts to adjust. They’ve reduced their operating costs. Employees, for their part, have become more realistic. They are more prepared to change jobs than they were 25 years ago. There is more flexibility. It’s not the same economy at all.”²⁴

Fourth Fire • The new international division is obviously heading for a collapse. Shifts in the production of surplus value, even when they appear limited in scope, which they no longer are, necessarily bring changes in its distribution. Other capitalists come into the process and pocket a share, often new sub-contractors who are supplying parts, equipment, raw materials and energy. The construction and maintenance of fixed capital introduces yet other partners into the game through local participation in ownership of property and joint corporations; new States are also collecting a share of the surplus value in the form of royalties and taxes. Other layers of bureaucrats and parasites claim their payoffs and so on. The imperialists, especially the less competitive fractions, are showing losses. And yet the damn “fraternity of thieves” is betting that today’s losses will lay the foundation for an international division that will maintain its domination over the world.

This position was bluntly stated by an agent of finance capital in Canada, David Wolf, principal strategist at **Merrill Lynch Canada**, in talking about China: “China’s impact right now may be largely in supplying us with cheap manufactured goods, but the country’s growing income earned from that production will ultimately translate into demand for goods and services more broadly; our opportunity to satisfy that growing demand will doubtless depend importantly... on how we treat the Chinese at this sensitive stage of their economic development.”²⁵

Hundreds of thousands of people like David Wolf around the world are telling each other the same thing as they drool over the prospects of the feast before them. This imperialist model, where Canada also has its place, will look like this:

- The proletariat of the developing countries (DC) will produce at low cost (high technical productivity and low wages) a whole range of consumer goods: clothing, furniture, consumer equipment, home appliances, electronics, games, etc. The import of these goods into the imperialist countries will bring prices down and this will have a dual effect: decreasing the value of the labour force and securing the bourgeoisie’s plethora of financial investments by keeping inflation under control.

- This large-scale industrial production in the DC’s, which is thousands of times greater than it was in the 1960s, generates a surplus for the ruling classes and a mass of

income for workers. The imperialists, including Canadian imperialists of course, think that they will surely cash in on most of the demand that this surplus will create.

- The imperialists intend to channel this demand (as well as domestic consumption among the richer strata of their own country) towards a whole range of goods and services which they will supply and which will carry the imprint of a dramatically unequal, hierarchical and class-based world view. They're calling it the "new economy" and it includes: aeronautics, military production and its offshoots, security systems, technology and communications products, cutting edge transportation, pharmaceuticals and health products, consulting engineering services, high-tech medicine, luxury goods in all forms, fashion, brand name products, international entertainment, tourism, insurance, financial services, higher education, and so on. Here is an example of a new service the **Royal Bank of Canada** is offering in Montreal: "...RBC wants its share of this lucrative pie. Ultra-rich clients, who want to distribute their investments in various regions of the world, will be able to have a Quebec base... Our economy is stable, as is our political regime. We are one of the G8 countries and a good option in North America for this kind of client." ²⁶

- This plan will mean changes in the distribution of certain parts of the surplus: obviously, nothing for the masses of proletarians and much less for the industrial labour aristocracy; but much more for the upper strata of the petty-bourgeoisie and as much if not more for the strata of parasites feeding on finance capital who ensure the liquidity and the circulation of capital even if the cost is high.

Such a project is only possible if the authority of the world imperialist system backs it. And by "authority" one should say "violence." It is another neo-colonial project that can only unite the elements needed to make it work by increasing imperialist violence.

This project supposes:

- a) That the bourgeoisie in the developing countries, at least the largest ones, will place limits on capitalist reproduction in their countries.

- b) That the proletariat of these countries, as well as the poor peasantry and small craftspeople, will remain docile, passive, and exploited to the core while accepting to be dispossessed and thrown out on the street during crises of overproduction without rising up and without generating their own revolutionary and anti-imperialist dynamic. The example of people's wars in South Asia (India and Nepal), in the Philippines, and people's uprisings and progressive movements around the globe foretell other developments entirely.

- c) That the proletariat in the rich countries, still burdened by unemployment and a standard of living that is dropping dramatically, will also remain docile and will continue to bless its exploiters for a long time to come! All of this is part of an old bourgeois fantasy. It is based on the wish that there will be economics without politics, exploitation and oppression without resistance, and the violence of the capitalist order without proletarian revolution.

Fifth Fire • A series of crises of overproduction will totter the most fragile equilibrium. Around the world, partial crises of overproduction will take place in the coming years. There is an overproduction of buildings in China; a real estate bubble waiting to burst in North America, an overproduction of manufactured goods ("overheating of the economy" in the developing countries). There's a dangerous increase in household debt loans and a drop in mass consumption; and a partial overproduction crisis in the forest industry and other sectors in Canada.

There is the coming overproduction in raw materials that pay for investments in fixed capital, in buildings, public works and industrial production; an increase in demand and a rise in energy price; and then a slow-down in industrial production. "Marx points out that the more highly developed is capital accumulation, the higher the portion of fixed capital and the greater the shock created by a sudden increase in the price of raw materials that feed it, slowing down the use of machines, decreasing the value of fixed capital because of its disuse. [...] As a result, sudden price fluctuations create interruptions, serious disturbances and even disasters in the process of capital reproduction." ²⁷

On June 30, 2006, the Toronto *Globe and Mail* headlined: "Just one more day and manufacturing hits recession." The article went on to comment about the drop in demand and about the American economy: "Manufacturers are expecting tougher times ahead," "...we haven't seen the worst yet," "we're not getting enough new orders to keep capacity up." ²⁸

Capitalism is not a puzzle whose pieces all fit nicely together. This isn't true today any more than it was yesterday. On the contrary each piece is busy attacking the other. Assembling them does not create a harmonious juxtaposition of elements. Rather, it's a rag-tag chaotic mess that constantly needs to be rebuilt. Overproduction is the crisis that breaks the mess apart and disrupts the teetering balance. It involves destruction of value, productive forces, entire companies, and assets, and fundamentally, the destruction of entire groups of proletarians which were the active labour force till then—our mothers, fathers, brothers, sisters and friends who suddenly find ourselves redundant—literally thrown away like old potato peels... in Valleyfield, Murdochville, Kitchener...

Sixth Fire • Finance capital has rigged up an immense bureaucracy of parasites that sucks off surplus value, impoverishes the working masses, bloats virtual capital to incredible sizes and pushes market logic to absurd heights. Everything that fluctuates becomes a commodity, can be sold, and feeds the holders of equity.

The power of finance capital is paradoxically also the historic weakness of imperialism and capitalism. Today, it is of course the result of huge increases in the concentration of capital—small independent capital as well as the savings of the well-to-do classes. But it also lays bare the current contradictions in the capitalist system. It reveals the

downward trend in the rate of profit in industrial production (at the heart of the imperialist system), which dropped spectacularly in the 1970s, creating a surplus of capital that had to find added value artificially and through speculation. This surplus of capital in monetary form "...was obliged to venture into uncharted ground: speculation, outlandish bloating of credit, stock market bluffing, crises." ²⁹

The rate of growth in the OECD countries, which was 6% on average during the 1960s, dropped to less than 2% in the 1990s. ³⁰

Finance capital today is a disproportionate accumulation of various assets, mostly artificial ones (an illusion of wealth... that supports the lifestyles of the rich and the bourgeois) and whose paper value is extravagantly beyond the "real" value of corporations (productive forces, the fixed capital, the book value, inventory, etc.). This capital is a vast historic extension of the loan capital that Marx calls "fictional." Its value is pegged essentially on anticipated income, on the possibility of profit and future wealth. This capital becomes concentrated, groups together and multiplies (into thousands of billions of dollars) by itself, far away from material reality and becomes part of a kind of "unreal reality" that grows all the time, full of value to come—an ever-increasing sum of promises!

The entire structure of finance capital, and great segments of capitalism itself, particularly in the absolute center of international finance, the USA—on which Canada leans to a large extent—works on "confidence." It works on the assurance that there will be profit turned at the end of the month, the quarter, and the year. This capitalism is essentially ideological and political and requires an enormous apparatus to maintain, organize and prolong the confidence necessary to make it work: agents in the financial institutions, analysts, brokers, journalists, professionals in advertising, marketing, merchandising, accountants, lawyers, judges, civil servants, police, etc. This enormous apparatus, non-productive though it is, must be paid for. Its cost is covered ultimately out of the wealth produced by the working class (and by the workers of the entire world). This incredible waste gobbles up surplus value at an astronomical rate.

And the bourgeoisie will have to spend and waste even more as confidence in capitalism fritters away and continues its downward spiral.

Seventh Fire • This confidence is declining partly because the world population sees and is suffering from the way capitalists are wasting the natural resources; how they destroy ecosystems and how they continue—and will until their last breath—to produce by favouring anarchy and their own profit, rather than to plan for the social and collective interest of the population.

The uses of natural resources, as well as capital accumulation are closely tied to private interests and States. For

example, from a United States' perspective—by far the biggest polluter on Earth—a massive investment in managing environmental issues would have a negative effect on the economy in regards to its competitors, namely the other imperialist countries. This in return, also explains why the other imperialist countries don't want to move on the issue of global warming, unless the USA does so and why they tolerate inaction in order to justify their own passivity. This is why the Kyoto Protocol, as shaky as it could be, still gives so little results and why the USA rejected it if not messed it up. Still, this almost-dead protocol only demands a slight 8% reduction of greenhouse gas by 2012, to bring it back to the same level as in 1990!

Under capitalist system, the real cost for managing environmental issues as well as the immediate necessity for capitalists to make profits are huge if not impossible obstacles in the path that should be taken to implement long-term solutions.

Yet, despite the urgent challenges we face with global warming and the expected depletion of some natural resources used in the cycle of production—and at first stance, oil—the imperialist countries certainly win the championship in terms of hypocrisy and inaction. Let's take this statement from the US government that it won't commit to reduce its gas emission unless the Third World countries do the same. Other rich countries used the same argument against India, China and Brazil, as a reason not to take more serious measures on their own.

Everywhere we see devastation and outrageous exploitation of the Earth at a scale we have never seen before: depletion of soils, water and air pollution, global warming, animal and vegetal species dying out, human environmental disasters such as floods, poisoning of populations, etc. The imperialist corporations, on top of polluting their own country are plundering the natural resources of the poorest ones, with the shameful agreement of local ruling classes. Furthermore, the imperialist rulers are trying to make poor countries to become garbage cans for all outdated technologies and products, toxic and dangerous matters.

The huge change in the manufacturing sector, shifting more and more to Third World countries like China, has not created better conditions for the peoples in these countries. This is particularly obvious in China, since it returned to capitalism. If it has developed, this is firstly to become the biggest sweatshop of the world. The Chinese bourgeoisie and the imperialist capital are responsible for developing the industry with no consideration for the well being of the people of that country.

It is at first the existing relations between the capitalists more than the politics of these countries that are responsible for the industrial pollution in the Third World; we must then destroy and get rid of this backdrop if we want to save the planet.

Eighth Fire • Each time the proletariat and the oppressed peoples have been succeeding in their political struggles, in wars and mass movements of resistance against imperialism and the main forces of capitalism, the confidence in this system is decreasing, as well as its capacity to overcome its own contradictions. The big bourgeois apparatuses must invest now a quite huge amount of both ideological, political, judiciary and military resources in order to maintain the balance and continue to grab a maximum of the surplus value they can take out, wherever possible and at the same time pursue with the concentration of capital and the enrichment of those who profit of the loan appropriation.

As the Vice-President of the **Royal Bank of Canada** put it in a subtle way, the Canadian bourgeoisie can centralize and merge capital because the country offers a **stable** economy and political regime. For the capitalists, stability means confidence and confidence means enrichment. But this scheme is becoming more and more a broken circle all around the world, because of the resistance of peoples and workers.

Ninth Fire • Over the last 20 years, we saw huge concentrations of poor proletarians appear in most of the capitalist developed countries, including Canada. These groups are growing, and this progression can be veiled and hidden or obvious and radical. But whatever the case, these concentrations of poor proletarians are slowly and surely increasing, absorbing new groups of workers as time goes by. Whether it is through the current living conditions of the working youth or because of the permanent consequences of recessions or by the decline of some industrial cities or areas, these concentrations build and modify the forms of the class struggle.

At this point, most are not politically aware nor are they clearly looking to socialism, while some do. We believe that those concentrations, or cores, are the social base for proletarian movements of the future, for the parties and resistance groups to come. They will be our foundation in the struggle for socialism.

By their own existence, these cores are the most painful thorn in the body of bourgeois society. Not to say that the ruling classes can be moved by workers' poverty—we don't expect that from them! But they are affected by the fact that both struggle and resistance will inevitably happen. It will be impossible for them to prevent the struggle for socialism developing in the same countries where capitalism is the most powerful.

Tenth Fire • The current growth in the anti-imperialist consciousness—particularly in rejecting US imperialism—all around the world has never been as big since the years of the Cultural Revolution in China and the Vietnam War. This is another of the extraordinary situations currently happening in the world, one that the bourgeoisie will not be able to sweep away.

What we see now is the joyous sight of the old metaphysical idea—supported by the bourgeoisie—stating that one thing stays for ever as it is, being spectacularly crushed in front of the peoples' desire to put an end to oppression.

Imperialism can not stay as it was or as it is for eternity. Peoples are struggling to create change. 150 years of colonialism and neo-colonialism made Africa a more devastated continent than any other. Almost 30 years since the Six-Day War and Israel tanks and bombs still rule in Palestine. How can we believe one single moment that these facts—among thousands of others—don't educate the honest part of humanity, day after day, and drive them to struggle for change!

Imperialism at first generates anti-imperialism; terrible economic conditions, humiliations, lack of respect, huge devastation caused by wars of aggression; bridges, highways, schools, infrastructures, factories, hospitals, apartments **in poor countries** being destroyed: all these things must be considered by any honest person as being completely unacceptable. These facts, as well as the suffering in Guantanamo or Abu Ghraib, are caused by imperialism. And US imperialism is responsible more than any other for provoking people's hatred.

These last few years, way ahead of the so-called “anti-globalist” trends, Islamist and Jihadist movements have been mostly responsible for the growth of the anti-imperialist consciousness. They have spread out with strength and rashness; they have disturbed and caused trouble in almost every political alliance within the world's imperialist system. These movements, throughout their successes and failures, will nevertheless reach a ceiling limit, as the religious answers to the current social diseases of the world taught by their ideology are unable to unify in a lasting way a victorious revolutionary front.

But what the current era is showing, and will confirm in the years to come, is not only that we are right to rebel against imperialism as Mao Zedong put it, but also that everywhere the masses have the duty of arming their revolt in order to counter the fire power of both the capitalist classes, the imperialist forces and their reactionary allies.

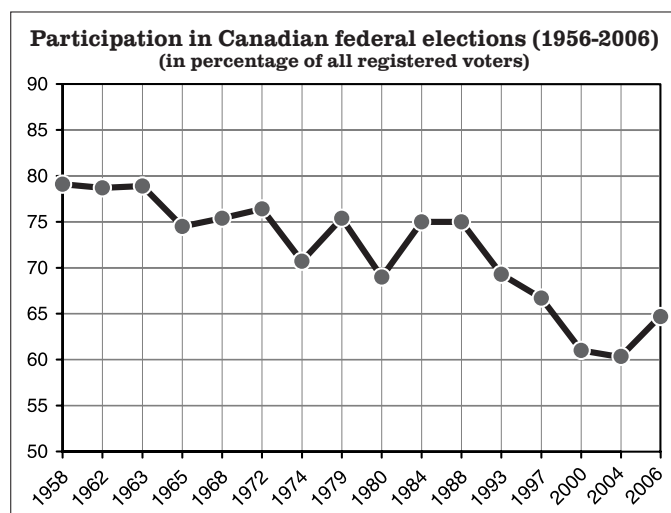
Eleventh Fire • We have now reached a point where the assets of the bourgeois democracy have run out. Its bags of tricks are empty! The consequences of this fact hurt the ruling classes in the developed capitalist countries, because it means they have less capacity to hide the true nature of their State, and the imposed character of some institutions. One cannot ignore now that there is always, in the end, a solid security gate of violent and repressive means (police, RCMP, Courts, etc.) to prevent any overthrow of institutions that are no longer suitable.

When bourgeois democracy is undermined, it leaves it less powerful and with less creative ideological machinery. It loses some ability to generate support or consensus around common projects. Common ground between both the rich and the poor? Common ground between both the workers

and the bankers in Toronto and Montreal? Knowing class division as we know it now, it will be more and more difficult if not impossible to unite those groups. And this is certainly for the best!

Whether in local or national parliaments—and in whatever modes—elections in the current parliamentary system, which the bourgeoisie and its allies monopolize, are clearly challenged by a large part of public opinion. We have never seen such decline in parliamentarism in the past. The workers are voting less and less. And the ruling class is worried about it. Its institutions are weakening. But they still have police and propaganda! Of course we are not there yet, but the trend is there.

So the assets—or a large part of them—of electoralism and bourgeois politics seems to have run out in numerous countries. The bourgeoisie is no longer able to bring back to her the large sections of opponents she used to win for decades, through electoral mediation and party crossovers. This phenomenon can be seen in Canada, with the increasing of abstention in the electoral circus. As a minority class, the bourgeoisie is challenged by the rules of democracy to convince other classes, both ideologically and politically, in order to rule without using violence too openly or in a permanent way (without fascism).



These gains were always huge victories for the bourgeoisie. Think about social democracy: for years, it literally tied big portions of the working class to the capitalist institutions at very crucial moments in history. Revisionist “Communism”—which has now been “social-democratized”—did quite the same. During the 1960s and the 1970s, the so-called “New Left” as well as many other social movements from the middle-class and within the working class itself (think about the radical nationalists in Quebec at that time) eventually did the same, by bringing back several generations of “radicals” and leftists to parliamentarism.

Besides, there are organizations such as most of the Trotskyist groups, which are literally making a business of hanging on new generations of radical activists to the old rotten institutions through a mix of radical words and

reformist practices. In both the 1980s and 1990s, political ecology supplied, although to a lesser extent, such new assets for the traditional bourgeois politics.

To say that such assets are now exhausted is obviously not an absolute statement. We will always see such attempts to reappear, as some of us will feel helpless, confused or looking for easy solutions. But they won’t play as decisive a role as in the past.³¹

In the years to come, we will see more serious and more numerous conflicts, contradictions, fights and social struggles from the bottom of the society. It will be quite hard for the bourgeois democracy under such circumstances to hide its own insufficiencies and deep flaws—particularly with regards to real power over economic forces.

Just like all its warders, the bourgeoisie fears those splits, flaws and openings, which are beginning to appear. Facing a breach in the wall of a jail, the screws always say: “Watch out, here comes danger;” while the prisoners, who were until then desperately dreaming of freedom, would think: “What a great opportunity!”

The Necessity of Unifying a Revolutionary Movement

THESE “BURNING FIRES” ARE SHOWING THE NEED FOR CHANGE, for transformation, for the struggle to bring about the end of an era and begin the transition to a new period. We spoke of “11 fires.” That could just as easily be 12, 20 or 40 fires. That is not the important aspect, considering these fires are themselves composed of multiple components transforming themselves through the continuous development of contradictions. However, these fires are no mere brush fires that burn independently; they are rather one unit, a totality that the bourgeois ideology challenges ferociously.

Politically and ideologically, the bourgeoisie demands, fights and struggles against all of what is exploited and oppressed in society, to keep it fragmented and broken. Its survival and very foundations are at stake.

Facing all of this complexity, the most important thing is to prevent the bourgeoisie from dictating our own consciousness and therefore our own objectives, and prevent them from controlling the way we understand the world. Today, the biggest part of this struggle consists of bringing back, under clear, strong and obvious ways, the principles of unity and totality in the political struggle of the proletariat and the oppressed classes.

That will mean, for some time still, we will have to go against the current, as the ruling tendency—from traditional reformists to neo-anarchists—have totally assimilated the idea that there is no more unity. For them, social facts are like a bag of marbles that fall on the ground in all directions and with no common trajectory, and they want everybody to think of this as being a normal fact.

Communism, rather, seeks to represent the interests, the different episodes and phases of struggles of “...the movement as a whole.” As a party, it expresses a clear understanding of “the lines of march, the conditions, and the ultimate general results of the proletarian movement.”³²

In that sense, communism puts partial, limited and all too often fragmented points of view in relation while completing and confronting them. Therefore it fights subjectivism coming from petty-bourgeois movements: “In this world, things are complicated and are decided by many factors. We should look at problems from different aspects, not from just one.” “Only those who are subjective, one-sided and superficial in their approach to problems will smugly issue orders or directives the moment they arrive on the scene, without considering the circumstances, without viewing things in their totality (their history and their present state as a whole) and without getting to the essence of things (their nature and the internal relations between one thing and another). Such people are bound to trip and fall.”³³

These excerpts from Mao continue the sentences of the *Communist Manifesto* previously quoted, and add to this idea from Lenin: “...in order really to know an object we must embrace, study, all its sides, all connections and ‘mediations’.”³⁴

As a matter of fact, the current situation tells us that many movements “tumble,” like Mao said (or they will stumble in the following period), because they refuse to see things in their entirety. They preserve this concept of a bag of marbles and like to see multiplication of trajectories, solutions, possibilities, alternatives and reform projects. It is a rather accommodating, yet ineffective diversity.

The activists and the Left in Canada are amply solicited in all spheres of the social struggle, by subjectivism and by the attractive power of this immediate and apparent diversity of struggles. This is due in particular to the relatively privileged situation of the intellectuals and of the petty-bourgeoisie.

We find these conceptions in every struggle. The following excerpts, taken from the works of a Canadian anarchist academic, sum them up clearly: “...There is no single enemy against which the newest social movements are fighting. Rather, there is a disparate set of struggles, each of which needs to be addressed in its particularity.” The author tries to explain “...how a non-reformist, non-revolutionary politics can in fact lead to progressive social change that responds to the needs and aspirations of disparate identities without attempting to subsume them under a common project.”³⁵

These conceptions are far from what we actually need.

This path goes nowhere and will literally be punctured by the facts of the decades to come. Will we overcome this division, or will the bourgeoisie completely crush us.

It is obvious that, taken separately, like individual fiery brushes, the Montreal squatters, nor the Native communities or the dropouts of any kind, nor the food co-operatives, or

even the unemployed of any given region, not even the workers of any enterprise, are looking for a “common project.” Spontaneously, they don’t move towards any unity or totality. It is at this level of consciousness that these movements are tumbling.

By only sticking to the appearance and subjectivity born out of any given situation, by remaining blind to the totality of the movement in denying the links and mediations, we give rise to a practice which moves far from the true powers of the struggle. It is a waste; it is as if we refuse the true, immense and superb capabilities of the revolutionary struggle. The petty-bourgeoisie may be able to ignore and go without this potential; but the proletariat cannot.

That is why we say that in the current situation—both political and economical—of the workers and the poor in Canada, nothing is more right, useful and constructive than to struggle for developing a genuine and “common class” project. Therefore, we mean to conceive our tools, our methods and our objectives under the terms and conditions of totality and unity. We have a great need for conceiving this revolutionary struggle. We must carry “...the interests of the movement as a whole.”

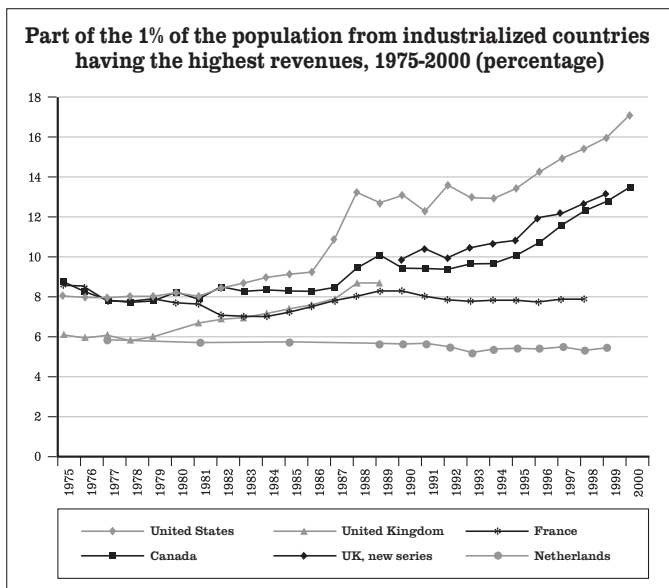
As revolutionaries, we fight day after day to generate, within bourgeois society, and in solidarity with the oppressed masses of the world, three important and advanced forms of unity: 1) The unity of our tools and our means: **a Revolutionary Communist Party**. 2) The unity of our methods and struggles: **protracted people’s war**. 3) The unity of our goals and objectives: **socialism as a transition to communism**.

The Struggle of the Proletariat in Canada

THE CONDITIONS OF THE STRUGGLE THROUGHOUT CANADA are tied to the different burning fires around the world. Here in Canada, the proletariat can take hard blows if it remains immobile and gives up its right to take up the fight and to resist. But here in Canada it can also, by revolutionary actions and in revolutionary ways, turn the current situation to its advantage and progress towards socialism.

The exploited workers in the different industries, in natural resources, agriculture, transportation, public services and retail, constitute a numerous and massive class comprising two-thirds of the population. Nevertheless, generally speaking, the living conditions of these workers is in decline—except for certain (and limited) periods of time in certain sectors, such as in energy, mining and metals, where we see more favourable (but temporary) cycles. This decline has been constant for many years.

A large portion of wealth is sucked up towards the summits, the highest segments of society. Inequality is growing. Canada is, along with the United States, an OECD country where the income of its richest 1% is the highest in the world.³⁶



There are others, besides this 1%, who take advantage of the current situation. The big bourgeoisie fields an entire army of followers, who manage, organize and take control of production and the circulation of capital. In Canada, the growth of finance capital in the last 20 years continued (much more than in Europe for the same period) to concentrate, within large groups and big investors, an enormous mass of small capital and savings form the wealthy layers of society.

Certain capital, which no longer valorized, such as in manufacturing and trade during the recessions of 1981-82 and 1990-92, went towards speculation and financial investment. In Canada, we are talking about an over sizing of finance capital (“...Canada has a clearly overdeveloped financial industry”³⁷). This way of organizing capital allows extreme liquidity (similar to the American situation), concentrating the capital in sectors with high productivity while draining it from less productive sectors. In other words, in Canada, far more than in European countries, capital manages to move and to recycle itself very quickly. But competition is abundant and the whole system stands on the edge of a razor blade.

Liquidity has a counterpart which works against the working class, in various ways: savings—although very small most of the time (it is only a minority of the proletariat who have savings invested in an RRSP)—are absorbed by finance capital (often through pension funds) and in most cases, with negative outputs; the welfare expenses for the unemployed (employment insurance and social welfare) are clearly in regression; and above all, the working class is literally tied to the sudden and frequent changes operated by the capitalists who hold the fate of workers in their hands, through property ownership and the control of the means of production.

For a common economist at the service of the bourgeoisie, this flexibility is capitalism’s most positive aspect. But let’s not forget that it is the exact opposite for proletariat, as he

is not master of the relations of production (which will only happen with socialism once it has conquered and seized political power). Thus he neither determines the moment, the circumstances, the financial, the familial or other consequences of layoffs, reorganizations and other “changes” of employment (contrary to the majority of the petty-bourgeoisie). The shifts in production and the liquidity of capital add up to an extreme flexibility but constitute an immensely heavy burden for workers.

The *Canadian Economic Observer* has positively underlined the fact that within six years, half of all Canadian workers changed jobs: “One of the salient features of our economy in the last decade has been the speed with which resources have been shifted between sectors **as needed** [our emphasis]. Growth in the late 1990s was dominated by sectors such as high-tech and auto manufacturing, and ICT services. All these industries have slowed since 2001... A striking measure of the adaptability of the workforce is that over half of Canadian workers changed jobs between 1997 and 2003.”³⁸

For petty-bourgeois analysts who are comfortably seated in front of their numbers and figures and computers, the fact that seven million workers passed from one job to another in so little time is a remarkable aspect that shows the strength of capital in Canada. But for the workers of **General Motors, Olymel, Imperial Tobacco, Domtar, Cascades, Humpty-Dumpty, Weyerhaeuser, Huntingdon Mills, Cleyn & Tinker**, it is much more. It means two, four or six months of stress; it means the sale of their home; it means having to move, it means the consumption of small savings, it means, more often than ever, “a real living hell.” Nobody dares to write that capitalism is responsible, and above that, no one dares admit that socialism would put an end to it!

It is not only the top 1%, the richest segments of society, who benefit from the current period. It is also a vast parasitic class, maintaining a massive apparatus—tens of thousands of financial advisors, directors, publicists, agents and salesmen—who profit, waste and consume through a life of decadent luxury because of bourgeois industries (extravagant SUVs, houses worth millions of dollars, 120 pairs of shoes, diamond-encrusted designers clothes, four trips to Miami, Paris, Honolulu, Cancun or Las Vegas every year).

Ten percent of the population of Canada owns 53% of all financial assets—the industries and real estate—of the country. The proletariat, which makes up 65% of the population, owns only 11% to 13% (certainly hundreds of thousands of homes in Hamilton, Rosemont, Winnipeg or elsewhere, modest savings, but no more than that). The majority of the proletariat has only one car and a life filled with uncertainty. It is a lie to say that the proletariat is an agent of capitalism! Only 21% of Canadians have direct stocks in companies, and only 37% have stock options through various financial institutions.³⁹ And these must realize: “Despite what you may think, in reality you have nothing. You have simply loaned your money to capitalist companies. Nothing more.” No, it is nothing more... but it can make all the difference of the world.

The Canadian bourgeoisie, with its immense capital and its well organized apparatuses, is resolutely committed to the side of the most reactionary forces that control the world, and in particular, to the side of US imperialism. It is an objective fact of global imperialism. This is not due to the temporary subjectivity of the person or people who rule the country. It is not Stephen Harper or any other single person who pushes towards this. It is the objective needs of the bourgeoisie.

In the crises to come in the next few decades, this capital and its machinery will be shaken and dislodged from all directions by the storms it has created. The bourgeois will face their very own Katrina! Under these circumstances and when faced with this reality, the Canadian bourgeoisie will undoubtedly confirm its commitment to the reactionary side: - both against the toiling classes of the countries where its capital bears fruit (such as in mining, banking or other industry); - and at the same time against the workers in Canada, in particular the industrial proletariat and the reserve working army. The bourgeoisie will seek to manage and exploit this group more than ever.

No serious change is possible without first getting rid of the bourgeoisie as a ruling class if we want to succeed in reorganizing the whole of society here in Canada. Canadian capitalism, along with all other capitalist countries, is the organizer of an unjust world. It belongs to a vast reactionary camp that must be fought, defeated, and replaced.

By proposing the need to relaunch an offensive movement against capitalism in Canada by the bottom of the society, the workers and the poor, the **Canadian Revolutionary Congress** wants to firmly join the proletariat and the broad masses of Canada in the rising wave of world revolution. It is the interest of all workers, all youth and all poor in this country to take up the call of revolutionary action here in Canada.

But, as always, the so-called “socialist movements” in Canada are “absent” at roll call! They have perpetuated their vacations and their abstention for far too long. They are afraid of the struggle. They are moulded like a waffle in the grid of nationalism, created and maintained within the framework of bourgeois society. They view themselves only as “the angry wing of the bourgeoisie.” They don’t hold any independent perspective of their own. They march to the step of others. They see through the eyes of others. And when they think, they adopt the ideas of others, so that when they speak, it is not truly heard. All we hear is another sobbing message of nationalism, as if we were still in the 1950s.

Canadian participation in the First Gulf War in 1990 and with NATO during the bombings in ex-Yugoslavia throughout the 1990s; the Canadian intrusions in Haiti; the military invasion and occupation of Afghanistan; the firm support given to Israel in its aggression against Lebanon; the development of unjust security policies; the legal and technical reinforcement of police and security bodies and agencies (including private security forces); the 17 billion dollars announced for the renewal of military equipment⁴⁰: all these

facts are a clear demonstration of where the Canadian bourgeoisie is heading.

Its institutions clearly understand the fact that, since the end of 1980, the development of finance capital, overproduction and concentration of huge amounts of capital, mainly virtual and volatile, have put the capitalist structure at risk. Capitalism is becoming a system that increasingly reliant upon political and ideological authority. Its leaders must look after, and maintain at all times, confidence in the quality of this increase in capital and value (the law of the “flight to quality”). This capital will circulate and concentrate in the US, in Canada and in other bourgeois countries, so far as confidence reigns, and the bourgeoisie is reassured—by a solid apparatus—of the fact that surplus value will be endlessly generated (profits, revenues, interests, dividends, bonuses, pharaonic wages, etc.).

John Manley, all mighty Liberal minister during the reign of Jean Chrétien, expressed this fact with these words: “...Canada couldn’t expect to sit at the G-8 table and then, when the waiter presents the bill, excuse itself and go to the bathroom.”⁴¹ Here is the confession of a bourgeoisie whose fate is related to the great equilibrium of global imperialism and who does not want to lose—as none of them want to lose—what imperialism has gained throughout the last few decades.

And the Canadian bourgeoisie has gained quite a lot! Owing to the great depression of the 1930s, and World War 2, the United States increased their participation in the ownership of capital in Canada. In the manufacturing sector, their share of ownership had grown from 30% in 1926 to 44% in 1960; in the mining and steel industries it grew from 32% to 53%; and in oil and gas it reached 64% in 1960.⁴¹ Nevertheless, in other sectors such as finance, transport, trade, construction and public services, the Canadian bourgeoisie was still firmly in control.

Through its governmental institutions, the Canadian bourgeoisie found tools to solidify its precedence in the domestic production of surplus value. The Gordon Commission in 1957 and the nationalist trend that it promoted; Gordon’s own controversial measures when he was Minister of Finance in 1963; the modernization and strengthening of the State in the provinces; some crucial nationalizations; transactions in the stock exchange market by the Canadian financial bourgeoisie; the Watkins Committee in 1968; the creation of the FIRA (Foreign Investment Review Agency) in 1974: all these facts clearly turned the situation to the Canadian bourgeoisie’s advantage. “Canadian capitalists regrouped, diversified, and consolidated in the face of pressures from foreign investment and new business opportunities. As in the pre-war period, chartered banks, organized around highly distinct networks, dominated Canadian capital. Significantly, by 1976 foreign firms lost leading positions in those networks.”⁴³ Since the 1980s, Canadian ownership of capital has remained at about 77%.

From 1980 to 1990, finance capital increased in size. Throughout these years, the imperialist character of

Canadian capitalism, the great concentration of capital in the most important and well-established firms, the extent of its presence in the global market, the number of workers and working masses exploited in plants and factories, quantities of raw materials plundered from the land, the brutal destruction of the environment, the wealth accumulated, all contributed to the rising role of the Canadian bourgeoisie as one of the most powerful class of exploiters.

Over the past two decades, Canadian capitalism, while benefiting from two serious recessions which shifted (through the various sectors of industry) and the impoverishment of millions of people, became: a) a large producer and world exporter of goods; b) a “merger” of capital by forming giant companies; c) a “merger” and a purchaser of companies everywhere in the world; d) a large exporter of capital; e) an active participant in the share of global natural resources; f) a first-class actor in international finance capitalism.

The bourgeoisie obviously benefited from this period and quickly grew stronger, well beyond the capacities of its domestic market. In the year 2000, the international cycle of merging and acquisition translated to \$234 billion worth of transactions by foreign companies here in Canada, while Canadian companies made transactions worth three times that amount. Although this number has fluctuated throughout the years, it is still accurate today (for the first half of 2006, “...the Canadian companies announced 267 transactions, nearly three times more than the foreigners here”⁴⁴).

With stock exchange capitalization being relatively low in Canada, huge amounts of capital are exported. For example: the *Caisse de Dépôt et Placement du Québec* paid \$2.4 billion for a 28% ownership in the corporation which governs and maintains British airports.

The Canadian mining companies have thousands of subsidiary companies all over the world. And there is a long list of large Canadian multi-national companies making billion of dollars throughout the world in other sectors: **Barrick Gold, EnCana, Husky Energies, Magna, Alcan, Scotia Bank, Bombardier**, to name a few.

For example, **Scotia Bank** is now one of the main banks in Latin America. Lately, new acquisitions were made in Mexico, El Salvador, Puerto Rico and Peru. In this country, Scotia Bank has risen to rank third largest in the banking sector. We can see the rapacity of Canadian bourgeois when we hear Scotia Bank international vice-president, Robert Pitfield: “The countries of South America are determined to raise the standard of living of their middle class. Important efforts are made so that an increasingly important portion of the population can get a house, a car, and a television... That means also the opening of a banking account, obtaining a credit card, financing for the car, etc.”⁴⁵

The table below shows the profitability of the chartered banks, being large pillars of the Canadian bourgeoisie. On a world-scale, and proportionally to their assets, the Canadian banks appear at the top of profitability.⁴⁶



Obviously, the fine talk of bourgeoisie intellectuals on the economy deliberately ignore the huge contradictions that come with this incredible enrichment of the higher social layers. It also conceals the long-term difficulties that will be faced by these countries down the road.

By any means, the bourgeoisie will compensate this downward trend of its domestic profits by repeatedly attacking workers on the economic front: either by stressing and worsening the methods of their exploitation (lowering wages, increasing productivity), or by eliminating significant amounts of productive forces by throwing out tens and hundreds of thousands of workers, year after year. The bourgeoisie has done so in the past, is doing so now and will do the same tomorrow.

For example: from August 1981 to December 1982, the manufacturing employment index went from 100 to 78 (i.e. 22% of the jobs in this sector disappeared); from July 1989 to March 1992, it fell from 100 to 85; and from August 2002 to the middle of 2006, it went from 100 to 92.⁴⁷

These cycles—of repeated crisis and recession—do not serve to stabilize the employment of the proletariat, but on the contrary, continuously shift it from production to the reserve army and back again, and so on. Obviously, this is happening, in Canada and in other countries, specifically to proletarians’ jobs. By doing so, capitalism has obtained a massive reduction in wage costs over the past 20 years. *The Gazette* newspaper wrote that indeed the median salary of Canadians at the beginning of 2005, once adjusted with the increase in the cost of living was still lower than the peak it had reached in the 1980s.⁴⁸

From an active Canadian proletariat composed of approximately 10,195,000 people (4,880,000 workers in plants and factories, and 5,315,000 employees in task execution), up to 25 to 30% gain less than 2/3 of the median wage—i.e. less than \$12.50 an hour—after all jobs have been taken into account.

In 2005, most of worker’s wage increase in Canada came from Alberta (and to a lesser degree British Colombia), as a result of intense activity in oil and gas extraction. The *Canadian Economic Observer* nevertheless pointed out

that: “Still, nation-wide wage pressures remain muted...” and then commented luminously: “The reasons for this are unclear.”⁴⁹

It would have been better to say that the reasons are hidden by the upholders of capitalism, who conceal the deep struggle between labour and capital and act as if these were two complementary factors in production. Workers of Olymel in Princeville and Saint-Hyacinthe, who suffered wage cuts of about 15% to 30% over the last few years, know, from their own personal experience, like many others throughout Canada, that there is nothing complementary between them. They are two separate entities in one permanent struggle.

The bourgeoisie has most of the working class by the throat. Workers’ income is hardly enough to pay for basic monthly needs. Even in mining and oil extraction, where wages seem quite high, transportation, housing, energy and other basic expenses take most of workers’ earnings. Personal debt has soared like never before. The relation of debt on available income rose from 70% in 1986 to 124.5% in 2005! The banks and other credit institutions are literally drooling over it! Each year they make a massive profit by taking large chunks out the revenues gained by the workers.

According to the Bank of Canada, Canadian households devote an average 7.6% of their annual income solely to pay interests.⁵⁰ Ironically, the Bank of Canada also states that this amount “is little!” If it is far from little, it is huge! And that, year after year after year, like a never ending circle in which the big institutions of financial capitalism—including bourgeois state capitalism—plunder and re-plunder us day after day through surplus value, taxes and interests.

That’s enough! We enjoy working. And we want to enjoy it because we enjoy working for society, not because we enjoy letting the big capitalists exploit us and milk us for every penny they can get, not because we enjoy seeing the rich get richer while we get poorer! Down with the private ownership of the means of production and exchange: It is nothing more than a stale, outdated reactionary idea, which will lead the world to catastrophe!

Why Is It Right to Constitute the Revolutionary Communist Party Now

WE SHOULD EXPECT THAT THE CANADIAN BOURGEOISIE will try to maximize the profit she can take from this increase in worker exploitation (both here and abroad) while continuing to plunder natural resources, first in Canada’s Native territories in the North and then everywhere in the world. And of course all of this will serve to enlarge her financial power.

Speaking of plundering, the company **Barrick Gold**, first-world gold producer, has moved heaven and earth to start gold extraction in Pascua Lama, Chile. Barrick Gold intends to extract, from a huge glacier, 750,000 ounces of

gold annually for the next 20 years at least. For this site, roughly 8,600 hectares, Barrick Gold paid the gigantic amount of... \$20 US! Barrick Gold received the green light for this acquisition from “leftist, socialist” President Michelle Bachelet. The project to extract the gold from this region, however, is being challenged in court.⁵¹

This desire is clearly a desire of stifling. Stifling the working class everywhere; stifling the poor; stifling the proletarian and peasant masses in the countries oppressed by imperialism.

But to succeed in the 21st century capitalist world, this bourgeois desire to acquire more (the most important project in capitalism is to perpetuate its widened reproduction) always needs more violence, and other tough means of constraint and oppression.

This violence, whose founding social relation is based on the private ownership of the means of production and exchange, necessarily translates from its social form (unemployment, layoffs, income lost, poverty, malnutrition, etc.) to its political form (the action of police and courts, repressive rules, establishment of urban apartheid between rich and poor districts, threats, sanctions and wars at the international level). This invisible connection is established as soon as it becomes imperative for the bourgeoisie’ needs.

Karl Marx wrote about crises that they are *violent and temporary solutions*: “...violent eruptions which restore for one moment the broken equilibrium.”⁵² However, these *violent eruptions* and this *restored equilibrium* affect economics and politics equally. The big bourgeois will never find themselves admitting defeat, or saying, “it’s all over, we can’t rule any more” and they will never simply pack their bags and take a permanent vacation in Banff, the Bahamas, or Switzerland. They have fought before and they will fight again. They fight against each other and they fight against us. What will decide the final outcome will be the revolutionary actions of the proletariat.

Although it is right to say that the numerous successions of chaotic and dramatic crises that appear both at economic, social and political levels are the main backdrop of the current era and thus at the core of our struggles, it is illusory and dangerous to think that one global crisis, a general and revolutionary crisis, will spontaneously appear and take shape, providing the opportunity for the revolutionary proletariat to take action. Such a thing just doesn’t exist. It does not exist as a separate moment from this long period of ongoing contradiction. It will not suddenly appear on its own, even if we wait 20, 50 or 100 years for it to happen.

The danger capitalism is in, through all of these crises, will produce both oppression (violence) and revolution, both the black and the red! But capitalism is the most combative mode of production in history for one simple reason: it knows it can not survive in the world of socialist production to come. That is why it fights to survive and strengthen itself. Revolution—the red!—is never given an opportunity. The masses must snatch it from the hands of the enemy. It will be a victory at the end of a long struggle.

Instead of looking deeply into the facts, and discovering what it would take to incite the revolutionary action of the proletariat in order to conquer political power today, much of the routine-minded communists paralyzed their own progress by sticking to the concept of the **revolutionary situation**. This notion does not entertain anything precise or substantial by itself.

Lenin himself, who used this notion many times, didn't put in it any of the supposedly fundamental and strategic determining factors that several Marxists tend to see there. Lenin talked about the three aspects of one revolutionary situation: 1) when it is impossible for the ruling classes to maintain their rule as they did before; 2) when the misery and distress of the oppressed classes are more acute than usual; 3) when the activity of the masses is increasing.⁵³

Lenin also put all of this (these three factors which form one revolutionary situation) in context by introducing, with all of his ingenuity, a fourth determining factor of a far greater importance than the first three: "...*It is not every revolutionary situation that gives rise to a revolution; revolution arises only out of a situation in which the above-mentioned objective changes are accompanied by a subjective change, namely, the ability of the revolutionary class to take revolutionary mass action strong enough to break (or dislocate) the old government, which never, not even in a period of crisis, 'falls', if it is not toppled over.*"⁵⁴

Today, in Canada, for any worker from Montreal, Halifax, Toronto or elsewhere who wants to fight for socialism and wants to do it today and in the conditions which are theirs, it is clear that Lenin did not close the book by saying "...wait until a revolutionary situation emerges." Lenin in 1915 rather asked a fundamental question. He threw a serious problem onto the table. Far from closing it, he opened the book and wrote at the top of the page the following question: **How to accomplish and how to make sure that once a revolutionary situation is upon us, our class will have the capacity to lead mass actions which will bring the government down?**

Clearly the key word is: **capacity**. And one might say **all capacities**. Both scientific and ideological capacities, and the capacities of propaganda. The capacity to mobilize millions of people. The capacity for protecting, defending and organizing the proletarian masses and all of this throughout the long period of maturation and growth of class struggle. The capacity to wage underground and illegal actions that can weaken the bourgeois apparatuses. The capacity of facing the bourgeoisie on the military front, using the appropriate means.

If it is fundamental to be able to have all of these capacities (and so much more) during revolutionary situations, thus it is **necessary** to put these capacities to the test, an initial test, for a substantial period of time. Otherwise, we will simply be crawling our way along in the dark. There is no way we can do it differently, no way to think differently. We must refuse to engage the masses in any revolution if

the party does not reason that the revolution is not done on paper, but is done in real life!

The current task of revolutionaries in Canada is to form and constitute a Revolutionary Communist Party now. This assertion is correct, but vague at the same time. This party, during the period when the fight for socialism will spread across the entire country, will have the obligation to test its own capacities, accumulate forces and positive assets and therefore deserve the confidence and support of the revolutionary proletariat: not on paper but in the real life. Like Lenin wrote so well in *Guerrilla Warfare*: "Every new form of struggle, accompanied as it is by new dangers and new sacrifices, inevitably 'disorganises' organisations which are unprepared for this new form of struggle. [...] But this does not mean that one must not fight. It means that one must learn to fight. That is all."⁵⁵

In an article published in 2002, the Maoist *A World to Win* magazine summarized the main issue of the current period:

"Cataclysmic events are unfolding and the imperialists and reactionaries themselves have placed war, the resolution of contradictions by the forces of arms, squarely at centre stage. All of this can serve to accelerate and facilitate the battles of the proletariat and the oppressed peoples at the beginning of the twenty-first century. In order for this to happen, in order to bring out and concretise the favourable potential of today's world situation, a great deal of work is required to bring forward the flag of proletariat more powerfully into the current swirl of contradictions. [...] Lenin wrote: 'The experience of this war... stuns and breaks some people but enlightens and tempers others' [...] What Lenin's words mean now, in our situation, is that we face both the danger of being crushed, through confrontation with an enemy that is striking out aggressively or through our own passivity or missteps, and the need and possibility of rising to the occasion and leading the struggle on a planetary scale, in a way that was not possible when the world's people did not face such a sharply-defined and rampant enemy. Global resistance and the more forceful assertion of the proletarian alternative are what are called for."⁵⁶

This orientation is inspiring us here in Canada. Because of it, we are convinced that with a Revolutionary Communist Party at the service of the proletariat, of a kind that will not be, like so many in the past, indifferent or careless about the practical questions of revolution, the most combative forces within our class will transform themselves to become more competent and more effective.

And to repeat the words of Lenin, we are convinced that Canadian workers will survive the crises and difficult times, enlightened and forged by the experience of struggle. We understand that these "answers" the article is referring to (*global resistance and the more forceful assertion of the proletarian alternative*) must manifest in Canada by the creation of the Revolutionary Communist Party, and by the deployment of the struggle for socialism to every corner of the country.

This vast and powerful deployment is fundamental. It should wait no more; it has been already delayed for far too long. Our country is huge. The proletariat is numerous but is disseminated across a very broad territory. It is multinational. Its origins, practices and experiences are varied but at the same time indistinguishable. Within its ranks, it can count on the majority of the Natives of Canada who are carrying out a just national resistance and who in addition are suffering with the unrestrained plundering of the natural resources of the North by Canadian and foreign multinational companies.

All around the country, the capitalists have developed cities and industries where the workers and their families are forming important communities. But the future of these cities is in danger. Means of production are being destroyed and disappearing. The bourgeoisie has made a glory of its powerful financial centers: Toronto, Montreal, Calgary. Luxury, prosperity, entertainment, beauty and comfort are installed in big city centers. And in fact they are big, tentacular and dazzling (the bourgeoisie is a powerful and important class by its capacity). This is how it creates the illusion that capitalism today is the *nec plus ultra* when it comes to quality and good living. But the fact is, it has lost the ability to solve current problems. And the real country is suffering because of it.

The deployment of the struggle for socialism throughout all of Canada is a necessary movement to politically unify the proletariat and for it to form itself, through the struggle, into a powerful adversary facing the bourgeoisie and its apparatus. This deployment will take place among the proletarian masses, in their homes, in the factories and on the streets, rather than in the bureaucrats' offices. It will accompany every spark of anger, every movement of resistance, every just and righteous struggle, every spontaneous grievance born from exploitation and sorrow. But it won't be confused, nor will it adopt or let itself be absorbed by the limited practice of bickering and protests, like those of the trade unions, NGOs and established mass organizations. This practice bears neither unity nor the necessary force to change things. On the contrary, it contributes to keeping proletarians unconscious about each other. We are millions of people, all heading off in our own direction like a bag of spilled marbles.

In the deployment of the revolutionary masses, the unity and force of the proletariat will only be able to emerge and build itself through the execution of revolutionary actions—great mass initiatives and the limited actions of propaganda groups—which will form the framework and the backbone of the struggle for socialism. With a basis of knowledge of proletarian reality, just as on concrete analyses, on the sharp and positive content of one programme and one general political line, the practice of revolutionary action will produce the common class project (socialism) and the unity we need.

The propaganda it will generate will cross vast distances, vast areas, and between the sectors of economy, the various layers of workers and linguistic groups, etc. It will challenge

all classes of the society, but obviously in opposite directions and with opposite effects: in a negative way for the dominant classes, and positive way for the proletariat and the mass of the workers.

Only by reaching all classes and all groups in society; by upsetting the old agreements; by awaking the dormant tenders and breaking alliances which have been maintained far too long; only by doing this will class struggle cultivate and spread, and reach its full political potential, to become a fight for overthrowing the bourgeois State.

Much work will be necessary to achieve that goal. But it will, and must, be done. We will do it without pretension and without deceit.

The question is not to falsely pretend that capitalism can be reformed, or that we can dissolve its main institutions like magic. There is no easy "express lane"—kind of a theoretical highway—that we can use to reach our dream without having to travel through class struggle, revolution and socialism. And yet the Left is full of individuals who all claim, in one way or another, that they can find this theoretical highway. You can find such Left in Canada just like everywhere else.

At the moment, much of those who float at the top of the spheres of "anti-globalism" are convinced that they have finally located this highway: "...This reality of social and environmental disintegration led millions of people to gather in a planetary alliance with variable geometry which extends beyond the national borders to forge what could be regarded as the social movement most authentically universal and assembler of the history of humanity. [...] This alliance functions more and more effectively without being headed by a centralized organization, direction or an ideology. Moreover its form adapts to the various contexts where it appears." And to say to us that this vast alliance already produced very many popular initiatives everywhere throughout the world: "... these events and actions reveal that a new system is being born, of the center of the old one." ⁵⁷ Nothing less!

This spectacular example, this overrated vision of an ideal (and dreamed) movement as produced by the International Forum on Globalization, where we find established, "Leftist" Canadians like Maude Barlow and Tony Clarke, is completely out of touch with reality as soon as it comes to concrete things. Along with dozens of examples of mass initiatives which are giving birth to this new system all around the world (although hard to verify), the authors mention similar example in Canada: the regrouping of "...hundreds of organizations to prepare a citizens action plan in order to put an end the control that the large commercial companies exert on the governmental institutions" and "...the survey carried out in 1998 to seek solutions of replacement to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI)." ⁵⁸

Are we talking about the same Canada? Do we seriously talk about changing the world? Are we talking about true mass initiatives or rather bureaucratic projects? As is usually

the case with reformists, the words are swollen, but the balloon always bursts at the end!

Do we still need to be convinced? Coming from a collective of ATTAC-Quebec, one of the authors hammers in another nail: "The ecological and social revolution which is essential will require an anti-capitalist revolution".⁵⁹ Wow! Maybe he is actually up to speed with reality! But what does he propose exactly? "This one [the anti-capitalist revolution] supposes a radical tax and budgetary reform whose pillars would be to make a much greater use of capital, an unprecedented development of public services, drastic reduction of the work time and strong economic interventionism in the key fields of savings and investments." To tell the truth, what he wants is to regulate (and reform) the problems of capitalism... through capitalism itself (through surplus value, income taxes and the bourgeois state).

This pathetic divorce between words and action is an obvious sign that all around the world, poverty of the masses, constraints of social relations, violence from governments, as well as the blatant accumulation of contradiction and the anger of the masses: all of this put together starts to take the shape of a rebellious beast that must be subdued at all costs! They talk about revolution and changing the world, but in an inconsistent way. They are confused about how to achieve it. They look for easy ways, magic ways. As a matter of fact, they fear revolution, they are afraid of it, and finally they offer themselves to serve the bourgeois and subdue the beast and the revolutionary class struggle!

This kind of divorce between words and actions, we just don't want it anymore. Instead, we support the RCP and its efforts to establish a true revolutionary proletarian movement that is willing to act, at the center of which is a new kind of Party—a Maoist party.

What We Have... and What Do We Want!

IN THIS STRUGGLE, THE RCP(OC) FOUGHT to consolidate and learn from a certain number of experiences.

The RCP(OC) is a young organization. It started virtually with the 21st century, to accumulate knowledge and experiences from the poor workers, the youth, employees, families and immigrants in a great number of cities across Canada. Founded in Montreal in November 2000 during a political conference, it took part in several struggles, while inquiring, studying and discussing, until a political programme was passed in a congress at the summer 2003.

From its very beginning, the RCP(OC) upheld the flag of Marxism-Leninism-Maoism. This has been both simple and complex to do. It was complex because it had to go against the tide. The petty-bourgeois leadership of the Canadian Marxist-Leninist movement, with its inability to make some necessary strategic choices in order to develop the movement during the 1979-1983 period, quite simply submitted to the circumstances, giving up the struggle as if it were

incapable of leading it. Hard work had to be done before finding our way again.

But it was simple too. The RCP(OC) was found itself looking to Marxism-Leninism-Maoism because of life itself; because of class struggle; because of the sufferings and heroism of the peoples of the world. Its members and supporters were convinced to put durably their own efforts, resources and enthusiasm in the strategic development of the people's war as being the current and universal form of socialist revolution. This was achieved thanks to the first examples of the 20th century revolutions, followed by the most recent and current examples of people's wars in Peru, the Philippines, Nepal and India. Since then, in the work being done in the proletariat as well as in its propaganda and participation in struggle, the RCP(OC) is developing the principles and the means which will be those of the protracted people's war applied to the concrete conditions which prevail in Canada.

The RCP(OC) considers that in spite of what it continues to claim, the old Communist Party of Canada no longer constitutes "the most advanced detachment of the working class." It is unfortunate, but this detachment is delaying the entire movement. The CPC does not fight for socialism anymore. Its proposals are to constitute "broad coalitions," work "for cooperation with the NDP," build "a popular democratic alliance," and gain "a majority of Left deputies at the Parliament" and to obtain then "a democratic people's government."⁶⁰ These vague formulas are nothing but a ticket to inaction.

As an organization, the RCP(OC) fought against dogmatism and paralysis, which so benefit the bourgeoisie through the maintenance of "dead," or incapable, organizations. In an imperialist country like Canada, where the bourgeoisie is extremely powerful, this dogmatism constantly helps the right wing of the labour movement endure and survive.

In its Programme, which is a precious asset for the current Canadian revolutionary movement, the RCP(OC) has shown, from the first line to the last, that it does not allow itself to dissociate the existence of the Party from the strategic line of conquering power and from socialist revolution. We have nothing to sell to the proletariat. And above all, the proletariat does not have anything to buy from us. If we don't fight by all means—legal and illegal, with print, literature, through education, strikes, demonstrations, occupations, armed actions and others—to bring the proletariat to power, the party does not deserve to exist.

But the party, the Revolutionary Communist Party (RCP), is right and does deserve to exist. Its assets are small and limited, but they are precious. It is up to us to develop them and make them grow.

Let us support the foundation of the RCP! And let us deploy, right now, all across Canada, the largest movement of struggle for socialism that this country has ever seen!

September 2006

Notes:

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2. Marx, *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*.
3. Marx and Engels, *The German Ideology*.
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5. Loïc Wacquant, in the French weekly *Rouge*, July 20, 2006 (our translation).
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7. Marx, *Capital*, Book 1, Chapter 3.
8. International Labour Organization, *Global Employment Trends*, January 2006.
9. Marx, *The Holy Family*.
10. World Bank, *2006 World Development Indicators*.
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12. Michael Yates, in *Monthly Review*, February 2004.
13. *Ibid*.
14. Table from Gérard Duménil and Dominique Lévy, *Économie marxiste du capitalisme*, (Paris: La Découverte, 2005).
15. Claude Pottier, *Les multinationales et la mise en concurrence des salariés*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).
16. Claude Serfati, *Impérialisme et militarisme: actualité du XXI^e siècle*, (Lausanne: Ed. Page deux, 2004).
17. From a report by economist Don Drummond, *The Globe and Mail*, June 26, 2006.
18. Quoted from the *A World to Win* magazine, No. 32, 2006.
19. Pottier, *Ibid*.
20. Serfati, *Ibid*.
21. *La Presse*, April 6, 2006 (our translation).
22. *Canadian Business*, November 7-20 2005.
23. *Ibid*.
24. David Dodge, *La Presse*, June 21, 2006 (our translation).
25. David Wolf, *Canadian Business*, *Ibid*.
26. *Commerce* magazine, June 2006.
27. Tom Thomas, commenting Karl Marx in *La crise chronique ou le stade sénile du capitalisme*, (Bruxelles: Contradictions, 2004) (our translation).
28. *Globe and Mail*, June 30, 2006.
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30. François Chesnais (Dir.), *La finance mondialisée*, (Paris: La Découverte, 2004).
31. We are linking this to the situation of the social classes. This is what a French author notes about the petit-bourgeois intellectuals: "The current difficulty is that in the new objective class structure that is emerging, the social categories that are in a position to control the production of collective representations... are more and more separated from the masses." (Louis Chauvel, *Le retour des classes sociales*, Paul Bouffartigue [Ed.] [Paris: La Dispute, 2004]).
32. Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*.
33. Mao Zedong, *Quotations from Chairman Mao Zedong* (the "Little Red Book").
34. Quoted by Mao, *Ibid*.
35. Richard J.F. Day, *Gramsci is Dead: Anarchist Currents in the Newest Social Movements* (Toronto/London: Between the Lines/Pluto Press, 2005).
36. Source: A.B. Atkinson, *Income Inequality in OECD Countries: Notes and Explanations*, (Oxford, 2003).
37. Jim Stanford (economist from the United Auto Workers) in *Paper Boom*, 1999.
38. Statistics Canada, *Canadian Economic Observer*, April 2006.
39. Stanford, *Ibid*.
40. *La Presse*, August 12, 2006.
41. John Manley, quoted by Maude Barlow, *Too Close for Comfort*, (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 2005).
42. Michael Howlett and others, *The Political Economy of Canada*, (Oxford University Press, 1999).
43. *Ibid*.
44. *La Presse*, August 24, 2006 (our translation).
45. *Commerce* magazine, June 2006 (our translation).
46. *The Globe and Mail*, May 25, 2006.
47. *The Globe and Mail*, April 26, 2006.
48. *The Gazette*, May 24, 2006.
49. *Canadian Economic Observer*, *Ibid*.
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54. *Ibid*.
55. Lénine, *Guerrilla Warfare*.
56. *A World To Win*, No. 28, 2002.
57. John Cavanagh and others, *Alternatives à la globalisation économique*, (Montreal: Écosociété, 2004) (our translation).
58. *Ibid* (our translation).
59. Marc Bonhomme, *Où va notre argent*, (Montreal: Écosociété, 2006) (our translation).
60. *Program of the Communist Party of Canada* (adopted in 2001).

