



Canada's Future Is Socialism!

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Chapter 1

OUR AIM IS SOCIALISM

Down through the ages, working people have dreamed of a world of freedom and equality, an end to exploitation and misery. Throughout the twentieth century, millions of people around the world rallied to the cause of socialism. Today, big business and its boosters maintain that socialism is finished, that human development has ended, and that capitalism will endure forever.

In reality, it is the capitalist system, based on private ownership of the means of production, which has no future. Having outlived its usefulness, it is incapable of meeting the needs and aspirations of the world's peoples.

By its very nature, capitalism generates and intensifies mass unemployment and poverty, national chauvinism and exclusivism, racism, gender inequality and oppression, environmental collapse, and war.

Under capitalism, democratic practices and institutions are stripped of most of their real content. Capitalist "democracy" guarantees the right of the capitalist class to dominate the economy and society and to exploit the people.

Capitalist globalization — led by US imperialism with the full support of the imperialist ruling class of Canada — is threatening the remaining threads of Canadian sovereignty and independence. Multilateral investment and trade pacts are undermining the democratic right of the Canadian people to establish policies and determine our own course of development.

Capitalism in Canada and the world today is a crisis-ridden and decaying system. But, it is pregnant with its opposite — socialism.

The first heroic wave of the working class movement against capitalism, the Paris Commune of 1871, was crushed by brute force. The next major wave began with the Russian Revolution of 1917, when the vast majority, the workers and their allies, took and held state power for the first time in human history. The victories of socialism particularly in the USSR, China and Cuba inspired workers and peoples around the world in their struggles for liberation. Much of this wave however was rolled back by the combined economic and military might of imperialism and the socialist countries' own serious defects.

Socialism remains the necessary next step in our country's historical development. Only socialism makes the needs and aspirations of the people its highest priority. Only socialism can put people before profit. And only socialism can use the benefits of the scientific and technological revolution for the well-being of all Canadians, not for the enrichment of a few and for waging war. There is no alternative to socialism, no "third road."

The achievement of socialism, based on working class power in Canada and internationally will mark a real advance towards true democracy — the rule of the people, by the people and for the people.

In a socialist Canada, the principal means of producing and distributing wealth will be the common property of society as a whole. The exploitation of labour will be abolished. Ecological degradation will be stopped, and a planned approach to the relationship of human life with the natural environment will be implemented. Want, poverty, insecurity and discrimination, rooted in capitalist exploitation, will be ended. Socialism will finally realize a new society based on solidarity, equality and emancipation.

As it develops, socialism will provide the real basis for communism, a classless society, in which for the first time in history, the free all-round development of each individual can be the condition for the development of all.

The aim of the Communist Party of Canada is to establish a socialist and, ultimately, a communist society in Canada. The party stands for the victory of socialism throughout the world.

Chapter 2

CAPITALISM IN CANADA

What is Capitalism?

The economic system in which we live is capitalism. Under this system the means of production are predominantly privately owned; the capitalists operate their factories, banks and offices, mines, forest operations, transport and service industries in order to extract profits. The source of profit and accumulation of capital is the exploitation of the working class — all those who work by hand and brain. Human labour, in combination with nature, is the source of all material wealth and cultural values.

Under capitalism, the workers own no means of production. Having no principal source of income other than their capacity to work, they must sell their labour power for a wage to the capitalists in order to live. The working class is the vast majority of the population of capitalist countries such as Canada. It includes workers employed in all sectors of the economy, both organized and unorganized, as well as the unemployed and under-employed, and their families.

Workers today are encouraged to invest in stocks and bonds, and workers' pension funds have become an important pool of capital for investment and speculation on the stock and money markets. This increases the capitalists' access to additional funds for investment, while creating the illusion that workers have some "say" in economic decisions and corporate policy. In reality however, "people's capitalism" is a ruse; the capitalist class retains exclusive control.

The basic conflict between capital and labour is inherent to the capitalist system. The capitalists, who control the main means of production, employ wage-workers only so long as their labour produces profits for them. They hold down wages to the lowest possible level so as to squeeze greater profits out of the exploitation of the workers. The workers fight to maintain and increase their wages, improve their living and working conditions, and extend their economic, social and political rights. This is the heart of the class struggle under capitalism which affects the whole of society, and which at a certain stage impels the working class to revolutionary struggle aimed at changing the social system itself.

Under capitalism, the labour process is carried on by the joint effort of large numbers of workers in factories, plants and offices. But while labour and the production process is social, its fruits are privately appropriated by the owners of the means of production. This basic contradiction — between the social character of production and the private capitalist appropriation of the commodities produced — lies at the root of all the evils of capitalism: unemployment, economic and social insecurity, mass poverty, economic crisis and the drive to war.

At the same time, capitalism also creates its own gravediggers — the working class.

The Development of Capitalism in Canada

Capitalist relations in Canada date back to the earliest days of European colonization and the subjugation of the Aboriginal peoples. Colonial structures developed on the basis of early mercantile capitalism, based on trade — primarily fish, fur and timber — between the colonies and France and Britain. As the settlements expanded, and as capital accumulated, the first small capitalist enterprises began to appear. Gradually, larger-scale operations, especially in forestry and shipbuilding, were started.

By the time of Confederation in 1867, industrial expansion was well under way, aided by the development of shipping and railways, and by the introduction of steam-power and other technological advances.

As a dependent colony, Canada was under the domination of British capital. Early in the 20th century however, trade and debt dependence on Britain was gradually replaced with an even more debilitating dependence on U.S. capital and technology. U.S.-based capital gained control of the key sectors of the Canadian economy, particularly manufacturing and natural resources. This process resulted in Canada becoming more integrated into and more dependent on the U.S. economy than any other developed capitalist country. This in turn has deepened distortions in the structure of the Canadian economy. The growing presence of U.S. and other transnationals increased pressures for the exploitation of Canadian natural resources. It has also led to a massive and growing outflow of profits, interest, fees, and other transfers, stifling new development, jobs, and research, and easing the political and cultural penetration of U.S. imperialism.

Capitalism in Canada Today

Capitalism concentrates wealth and the ownership of the means of production into fewer and fewer hands. In Canada, as elsewhere, small producers, traders and farmers are pushed to the wall by bigger capitalist firms. Out of and alongside the cut-throat competition of early capitalism, monopolies began to emerge. A few huge concerns, in which banking and industrial capital are merged and which are manipulated by a handful of finance-capitalist tycoons, came to dominate the entire economy. This is the stage of monopoly capitalism, the economic basis of imperialism: the highest and final stage of capitalist development.

Finance capital, the fusion of bank and industrial capital, has become the dominant form of capital in Canada. Finance capital — both Canadian and foreign-based — controls giant transnational companies and banks which operate around the world increasingly in disregard of national interests

The most significant feature of present-day monopoly capitalism is the dominant place of transnational corporations (TNCs). Rapidly expanding flows of international finance capital for investment and speculation are destabilizing

national and regional markets, and the global capitalist system as a whole. The struggle for global supremacy among a small number of giant TNCs — many wielding greater economic power than national governments and economies — is rapidly accelerating both the concentration of wealth (through corporate mergers, acquisitions and partnerships) and the growth of impoverishment on a world scale. Uneven development, an inherent feature of all stages of capitalism, is reaching unprecedented dimensions under the impact of capitalist globalization.

Despite its current economic and ideological power, monopoly capitalism is gripped by a profound, systemic crisis from which ultimately it cannot extricate itself — an all-pervading economic, political, and cultural crisis, which it seeks to solve through intensified exploitation, aggression and war.

State-Monopoly Capitalism

Finance capital subordinates the Canadian State more and more directly to its interests and control. State-monopoly capitalism — the integration or merging of the interests of finance capital with the state — is a new stage in the extension of corporate control to all sectors of economic and political life. The government, while seemingly independent of specific corporate interests, has become predominantly the political instrument of a small group comprising the top monopoly capitalists for exercising control over the rest of society. Finance capital uses the state to provide orders, capital and subsidies, and to secure foreign markets and investments. Monopoly capital supports the expansion of the state sector — both services and enterprises — when that serves its interests, and at other times it uses the state to cut back and privatize. The state is also used to redistribute income and wealth in favour of monopoly interests through the tax system, and through legislation to drive down wages and weaken the trade union movement.

State-monopoly capitalism undermines the basis of traditional bourgeois democracy. The subordination of the state to the interests of finance capital erodes the already limited role of elected government bodies, federal, provincial and local. Big business openly intervenes in the electoral process on its own behalf, and also indirectly through a network of pro-corporate institutes and think tanks. It uses its control of mass media to influence the ideas and attitudes of the people, and to blatantly influence election results. It corrupts the democratic process through the buying of politicians and officials. It tramples on the political right of the Canadian people to exercise any meaningful choice, thereby promoting widespread public alienation and cynicism about the electoral process.

In the current conditions of capitalist globalization, international finance capital also requires institutions of regulation ratified and supported by the imperialist states to protect and advance their interests. It has amplified the role of existing international capitalist institutions — the World Trade Organization (WTO), the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and World Bank — to enforce its global hegemony, and is also creating and strengthening regional treaty blocs (the

North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], the Free Trade Area of the Americas [FTAA], the European Union [EU], and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC]) to protect the interests of the respective imperialist centres. These powerful international structures undermine national and state sovereignty, thus giving rise to new conflicts and contradictions in the system of monopoly capitalist regulation.

Regardless of its forms, the principal aims of the modern monopoly capitalist state are the preservation of the capitalist system and especially the enrichment of the monopolies. This demands the suppression of the working-class movement and its revolutionary vanguard, and the crushing of the remaining socialist countries and national liberation struggles around the world.

Canadian Capital and the TNCs

Canada is an imperialist country — a highly developed monopoly capitalist state. Canada has the highest level of foreign ownership amongst the imperialist countries, but it is neither a colony nor a semi-colony. Canadian-based transnationals participate in the exploitation of working people in other countries, and Canada is subject to the intrinsic contradictions of global capitalism.

Canadian finance capital is today largely interlocked with U.S. transnationals, and international finance capital in general. The imposition of neoliberal policies — especially so-called free trade agreements — has intensified this process of capitalist integration under U.S. domination. Canadian monopoly groupings control many sectors of the economy and control the Canadian state, but international finance capital — primarily U.S.-based TNCs — control substantial parts of the resource, manufacturing and service industries. These high levels of foreign ownership have deepened the structural distortion and regional inequality of the Canadian economy. U.S. domination undermines the ability of Canada and the other countries of the Americas to control their respective national economies. Important decisions on investment policy, technological change, plant closures and layoffs are made outside our borders. No sector of Canada's economy is free from U.S. and other transnational influence.

At the same time, there has been a rapid centralization of wealth in the Canadian-owned sector of the economy into the hands of an extremely small group of conglomerates and TNCs. As a result, the Canadian economy is highly monopolized, even in comparison with other imperialist countries. Canadian capital is now being exported at a growing rate. Canadian monopoly is more than a junior partner of U.S. imperialism; it is an integral part of the world imperialist system. Canadian monopoly interests are interwoven with those of U.S. capital and increasingly with capital from the EU and Japan.

The collaboration between the most reactionary sections of U.S. and Canadian monopoly is clearly revealed in foreign policy. The deliberate subordination of Canada to U.S. imperialism commits Canada to the U.S. war policy through NATO and a network of other “defence” agreements. The line of

economic and military integration pursued by the dominant section of finance capital has made Canada into a military launching pad for the U.S. military-industrial complex.

Canadian monopoly has its own independent interests to protect and advance. However the dominant trend within Canadian monopoly circles today is toward economic integration and political collaboration with U.S. imperialism, and with international finance capital in general. In pursuit of maximizing profit, Canadian monopoly is prepared to sacrifice the country's economic and political sovereignty, so long as it can maintain a reasonable share of the plunder of Canada's natural resources and domestic market, while expanding access to larger U.S., hemispheric and global markets.

Canada's dependent relation to U.S. imperialism has exacted a high price in terms of our country's development. It has accelerated the depletion of Canada's natural resources; it has weakened our self-sufficiency in the production of food and other basic commodities; it has worsened the problem of Canada's uneven development; it has sharply curtailed research and development; and it has eliminated jobs in virtually every sector of the economy.

Canada's further integration with U.S. imperialism comes into sharp conflict with the expressed desire of the vast majority of Canadians to defend the country's sovereignty and independence. The struggle against U.S. domination and for genuine Canadian independence and an independent foreign policy is part of the worldwide struggle against capitalist globalization, imperialist aggression and war.

The fight for democracy and sovereignty is a necessary and integral component of the Canadian revolutionary process. This requires a concerted struggle against the main enemy of the Canadian people — finance capital, both Canadian and international. To carry through this struggle, the working class will have to play the leading role.

Finance Capital and the Canadian People

The ever-increasing concentration, centralization and internationalization of capital has created a staggering divide between monopoly and the mass of the Canadian people.

The idea that the capitalist world is an affluent consumer society, that it has outlived economic crisis and can provide full employment and continuously rising living standards, is false. The idea that economic growth and job creation can be achieved by increasing productivity and international competitiveness is equally false. Under all conditions capitalism works against the interests of the working class. Because the system is based on the exploitation of labour by capital for profit, there can be no real security for the working people. The insatiable drive of capital for profit and its ever-increasing exploitation and speed-up tend to undermine whatever wage gains are won through struggle. At the same time, monopoly capital extracts huge profits from wage-earners, and working people in

general, by its manipulation of the money and credit system, and by government taxation policy which redistributes the national income in favour of the wealthy.

Canadian capitalism confirms Karl Marx's general law of accumulation — that capitalism everywhere creates more private wealth, but also drives more people into wage labour (proletarianization), into unemployment and poverty.

State-monopoly capitalism also benefits from dividing the working class through the systematic oppression of women, youth, Aboriginal peoples and people of colour, the disabled and the disadvantaged. It is a system that strips people of human dignity.

Monopoly and the transnationals perpetuate the super-exploitation of women as workers, and the sexist oppression of women and girls in society. The offensive of finance capital against living standards and social rights hits women hardest. Women are denied equal pay for work of equal value, and their wages and incomes continue to lag behind those of men. Canadian women, especially women of colour and Aboriginal women, face higher unemployment rates. Many women remain caught in low-wage ghettos in the service industry, or in industrial home-based jobs nearly impossible to organize into unions.

Monopoly capital places obstacles to women's professional advancement, the establishment of childcare facilities, fully paid parental leave, the right to reproductive choice and women's full participation in political life. Women are also hit hardest by cutbacks to social services, and by the attacks on the poor.

Violence against women remains widespread. Public funding is being cut back for women's shelters, rape crisis centres, and other crucial facilities, despite the widespread physical and psychological abuse and dehumanization of women.

As well as forming almost half the paid workforce in Canada, women still do the bulk of unpaid domestic labour in our society and around the world. While such unpaid labour is not directly part of the cycle of capitalist exploitation, it plays a key role in the process of raising each new generation of workers. This double burden is one of the most important forms of oppression of women under capitalism.

Monopoly capitalism denies Canadian youth a life with a future. More and more young men and women are faced with unemployment and underemployment. Cuts to public education are creating a two-tier system, opening the door to the wholesale privatization of education. College and university students face higher tuition and crushing debts as post-secondary education becomes increasingly inaccessible to youth from working class and middle strata backgrounds.

Monopoly breeds systematic racism which it uses to generate super-profits and to create scapegoats to deflect the struggle for jobs, public health and education and higher living standards. Canadian capital has a long history of racism. Racist theories of white supremacy were used to justify the brutal plunder and looting of the Aboriginal peoples. Racism, xenophobia, regionalism, sexism and anti-semitism, and other forms of discrimination — including discrimination

against gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people; against immigrant, cultural and minority religious groups and atheists; against older workers, pensioners and the disabled — have been used to divide the working class and undermine the unity of the people's struggles.

Capitalism Generates Crises

Despite its capacity to generate immense wealth, the modern capitalist system in Canada suffers from a deepening, all-sided crisis. There are many component parts to this systemic crisis: cyclical economic recession, structural mass unemployment, and agricultural, environmental and social crises, among others. Finance capital uses its abundant resources, including the Canadian state, to attempt to manage this crisis and protect its class rule. But it is unable to solve the fundamental, inherent contradictions from which capitalism's systemic crisis springs.

The capitalist economy operates in cycles of boom, crisis, depression and recovery. Periodically, expansion is followed by a glut of goods on the market. Plants close down, workers are thrown on the street — not because people have no need for what industry can produce, but because goods do not sell in quantities and at prices that would ensure a level of profit satisfactory to the capitalists. Productive capacity comes into conflict with the restricted purchasing power of the masses of the people. A slow recovery takes place and once more the cycle commences, again to lead to its crisis phase. Such periodic crises of relative over-production are a built-in feature of capitalism. The capitalists try to thrust the burden of such crises on the backs of working people, who are compelled to fight back.

State regulation of the economy is itself in crisis. Keynesianism — a bourgeois reformist policy utilizing limited state intervention — was widely implemented during the prolonged post-W.W.II economic boom to stabilize capitalist economies, weaken and deflect the militancy and internationalism of working class movements and weaken the powerful attraction of the socialist alternative. Keynesian prescriptions helped capitalist governments to temporarily ease the worst effects of cyclical crises but ultimately failed to prevent them. They harmed the profit interests of finance capital by enlarging the state sector and extending limited wage and income protections for working people — the so-called “welfare state” — thus hampering the accumulation and centralization of capital. The interests of the transnational corporations, in particular, came into sharper conflict with Keynesian state-regulation policies, which tended to inhibit international capital flows and TNC activity in general. Keynesian policies also submerged the capitalist state in staggering public debt, the servicing costs of which were borne primarily by working people.

By the mid-1970s, the deepening crisis compelled finance capital to turn away from Keynesian economic policies towards neoliberalism. Under the slogan of a “return to the free market,” capitalist governments in Canada and elsewhere

began to impose a vicious, pro-corporate and anti-people agenda of liberalized or “free” trade, deregulation and privatization.

Neoliberalism, the prevailing policy of finance capital today, constitutes a ruthless attack on working people. But there is no salvation for the working class in a return to the failed policy of Keynesianism. Whether in the form of the velvet glove of “welfare state” reformism or the mailed fist of neoliberal reaction, the policies of finance capital and its state have merely created new contradictions.

Neither set of bourgeois policies can rid the capitalist economy of its organic disproportions and economic crises; neither can assure rapid and non-inflationary economic advance and full and effective employment of labour power and capital. Economic growth inevitably results in overheating the economy, producing excessive tensions and unevenness of development, and monetary and financial crisis. All these show that state-monopoly capitalism cannot eliminate economic insecurity, cyclical crises and chronic mass unemployment.

For all its state and international regulation, monopoly capitalism basically remains an anarchic market economy. Indeed, state regulation and planned development of the economy are fundamentally incompatible with capitalist relations of private ownership and the spontaneous forces of the capitalist market.

Only a democratic, anti-corporate alternative which puts the interests of people before profit can advance the interests of the working people of Canada, and open the path to genuine people’s power, to socialism.

Productivity, Unemployment and the Working Class

The accelerating pace of scientific and technological advance, and its rapid application in all spheres of life has qualitatively transformed the productive forces — the tools, the raw materials and most importantly, labour itself. The character and substance of workers’ labour in the process of production is changing, and this is affecting both the composition of the working class and its relation to other classes. Finance capital, in the constant drive to increase profit, uses technology to lower production costs by replacing human labour with machines and other labour-saving processes. Scientific and technological progress has become the source of increased exploitation and alienation of the working class.

The introduction of new technology has not changed the essence of capitalism, and will not emancipate the working class. Capital benefits most through the introduction of high tech and new production techniques, such as “just-in-time” production. The more technological progress there is, the higher the productivity rate, the higher the rate of exploitation, and the higher the intensity of labour, deepening the gulf between finance capital and working people. The longer hours and increased physical and mental stress demanded of the individual worker has a negative effect on the health and safety of all workers.

The revolution in science and technology has intensified the anarchy of production and the unevenness of capitalist development. The fierce competition between rival transnationals and financial groups drives each corporation to introduce cost-saving technology. But technological innovation is extremely expensive, and its application in the workplace intensifies the tendency for the rate of profit to fall. Finance capital, in turn, tries to offset this tendency of declining rate of profit by: (1) driving down its labour costs through wage cuts, speed-ups, lengthening the work day, contract work, redundancies, plant shutdowns, and other forms of corporate restructuring; (2) absorbing or merging with its competitors; (3) redistributing income from the working people to the capitalist class through taxation policies; (4) privatizing parts of the public sector and turning them into new sources of profit; and (5) forcing open access to new markets through trade and investment agreements and, where necessary, through military aggression.

Technological innovation under monopoly capitalist conditions is responsible for major structural changes, unevenness between different spheres of production and overall distortion of the economy both within each country and on a world scale. International finance capital uses its technological monopoly to plunder the developing countries.

Advances in information technology are a key factor in the globalization and standardization of many areas of production. Within a general context of increasing mobility for capital, there is an enhanced transportability of production in particular. In expanding numbers and types of industries, capital can respond to strikes or workers' demands by quickly - and almost seamlessly - relocating entire production processes on a permanent or temporary basis. As with all previous technological revolutions, these changes in production require the working class to develop new tactics and new forms of struggle to meet the challenge, including increasing international cooperation and joint action by the international working class movement.

Although at times monopoly capital will retard scientific and technical progress in its own interests, the predominant trend is to introduce new technology to increase productivity and lower production costs to secure more profits from a smaller work force. The domination of advanced technology by U.S. transnationals is used to further undermine Canadian independence and sovereignty, inhibiting research and development and reducing the availability of skilled and high tech jobs to Canadian workers.

The extremely high cost of modernizing the economy with the latest technology is being financed by exorbitant profits sweated out of the working class of the developed capitalist countries, capital bled from the developing countries through the TNCs, and vast government handouts to commerce and industry paid for by the taxes of the working people.

The state enacts the economic, organizational and administrative measures necessary to break resistance to the introduction of new technology. Thus there are increasing attacks on the very existence of trade unions and their ability to

resist the anti-worker character of restructuring. This corporate assault is being carried out by weakening and undermining labour standards and such labour laws as the right to organize, to bargain collectively and to strike, as well as attacks on real wages and social programs.

The most acute social problem arising from the introduction of new science and technology is the growth of unemployment. While job creation during the scientific and technological revolution has tended to favour white-collar jobs over blue, the rate of job formation has dipped below the rate of growth of the population as a whole. Higher levels of permanent unemployment and underemployment have become a mass phenomenon, independent of cyclical recovery and boom. Canada faces the tragic consequences of having a generation of young people, many of whom may never work full-time or never work at all. Older unemployed workers are being denied re-entry into the labour force because of inadequate skills and the unprofitability of retraining them for a relatively brief remaining work life.

This trend will continue and will sharpen social conflicts.

In conditions of high unemployment and a highly flexible production process, there has been a notable growth of part-time, temporary and contract work, particularly for women and young workers. Regressive labour legislation often denies these workers minimum wage guarantees, job protection, social security benefits or the right to organize. This separates many part-time workers from the work force as a whole and particularly from the trade union movement, a trend reinforced by the nature and conditions of part-time work itself.

The combination of unemployment and underemployment has produced a qualitatively new level of poverty reaching into new strata of the population. Unless combatted by the working class and democratic-minded people, reaction and neo-fascism will prey on the fears and insecurity of the permanently unemployed and marginalized people, impoverished farmers and ruined small business operators.

Structural unemployment is deepening divisions between the people who work, the unemployed and those permanently displaced from the labour market. The reserve army of the unemployed can be used not only to drive down wages but also to pit sections of working people against each other. This tendency to stratification is used by state monopoly capitalism as a means to attack all working people. The working population, constantly forced to pay more direct and indirect taxes, is pitted against the poor and unemployed, who also pay direct and indirect taxes but whose plight becomes more desperate as social programs for their relief are consistently cut back.

Despite chronic unemployment, the working class continues to expand both relatively and absolutely. The historic movement from rural to urban is no longer the main source of growth of the working class. Its ranks now grow mainly from the tendency to collectivize and proletarianize professions, semi-professions, clerical, commercial and administrative sectors and from the increased participation of women and new immigrants in the paid workforce.

Immigration in particular is changing the face of Canada's working class, with many more peoples of colour added to its ranks, creating a multi-national workforce, especially in the main urban centres. New immigrants often bring not only ethnic and cultural diversity into the working class, but also their experience, militancy and class consciousness developed through class struggles in their originating countries.

Significant changes have taken place in the sectoral composition of the working class. Historically, the working class was composed mostly of manual workers, particularly workers in factories, mines, and other large-scale enterprises whose labour was collective, disciplined and directly subordinate to the demands of capitalist accumulation. Important new sections of the working class are growing, notably in the public sector and service industries, where workers are mainly women. The current scientific, technological, and informatics revolution is also creating new industries and occupations while transforming older ones. Increasingly, workers in new mass technological industries, public institutions and large-scale service industries are playing a full and active role in the organized labour movement, alongside workers in traditional industries.

Some of the new sections of the workforce comprise younger workers who bring renewed militancy and dynamism into the labour movement. While many of these workers lack experience, their energy and determination to struggle have an overall positive impact on the development of the organized labour movement.

Despite these changes the working class remains a class composed of wage workers who do not own the means of production, distribution or exchange, who are forced to sell their labour power in order to live and who are directly or indirectly exploited by the capitalists. The irreconcilable conflict between labour and capital remains the main axis of social and political life.

Since the 1970s, there has been a growth in the number and proportion of self-employed persons in Canada. The capitalist media misrepresents this development to claim there has been a resurgence of capitalist enthusiasm and values in society. In reality, many of these new "entrepreneurs" are the result of subcontracting, layoffs, and poverty, with little independence, lower standards of living, and more in common with workers than with capitalists.

Crisis in Rural Canada

State-monopoly capitalism is responsible for the crisis of Canadian agriculture. The historic decline of Canada's farming population is mainly a result of capitalism's tendency to concentrate wealth in fewer and fewer hands, in this case by squeezing out small farmers who cannot afford the higher costs of more productive machinery and other inputs. The pro-monopoly policies of governments have only reinforced this trend. The financial and industrial monopolies dominate agriculture, and farmers are compelled to pay high monopoly prices for seed, equipment and other inputs, while the prices they get

for their produce are set by the powerful packing, milling, grain-handling and railway monopolies. Monopoly capital fleeces the farmers through control of markets, prices and credits. It is extending its domination over agriculture through agribusiness and the forced introduction of bio-technologies such as genetically-modified crops, the use of which is strictly controlled by the agri-monopolies.

Increasing monopoly control and ownership of land and capital resources imposes crushing debts on the family farm, accelerating bankruptcies and driving the farm population off the land in record numbers. The ruination of the family farmers or their transformation into agricultural labourers — their increasing proletarianization — is a direct consequence of finance capital control of agriculture and the food processing and agricultural machinery industries.

A similar plight afflicts other primary producers, such as fishers and wood-lot owners, who rely on the maintenance of the renewable resources of the land and sea. Big business domination of these industries, and the introduction of high tech harvesting and processing equipment, is rapidly depleting the resource base, in some cases leading to environmental disaster. The small primary producers are also at the mercy of these big corporations, to which they must sell their harvest. Squeezed between increasing monopolization, higher operating costs and debt, lower wholesale prices, and dwindling resources, the incomes of these primary producers and their families are shrinking; thousands have been forced to abandon their livelihoods completely.

Technological restructuring and the depletion of Canada's forestry and mineral resources are also impacting heavily on industrial workers, especially miners and woodworkers, who live and work in rural and isolated communities. Many thousands of well-paid, unionized jobs have been eliminated as a result of automation and/or resource exhaustion.

The crisis affecting family farmers and primary producers, miners and woodworkers is destroying the economic basis of many rural communities and small towns across Canada, ruining small-scale independent businesses, and increasing unemployment in the countryside.

Environmental Crisis

Under capitalism both labour and the natural environment are exploited for the capitalists' overriding objective — private profit. As a system, capitalism can exist only by continually increasing the extent and intensity of its exploitation and impoverishment of labour and plunder of the environment.

The imperialist system is the fundamental cause of environmental degradation and resource-use inequality. Capitalism, as a mode of production and consumption, has raised the degradation of nature to historically unprecedented levels. Some examples in Canada include: the collapse of many East Coast and Pacific fish stocks, the threatened disappearance of Canada's rainforest and old-growth forests due to clear-cutting practices, the worsening

pollution of the Great Lake watershed, and the further deterioration of the urban environment in many cities.

The extent of capitalist expansion over the earth's territory, the magnitude of resource and energy consumption and waste, and the proliferation of new forms and concentrations of toxic products and production has caused an unparalleled destruction and extinction of ecological systems and species. The scale of environmental calamities has escalated to a world level, with such critical problems as global warming and loss of biological diversity. Whole regions have been blanketed in air pollution, lake and river systems made toxic, ocean waters and shores despoiled, and soils degraded. The earth's last major forests are under serious threat. Urban sprawl, traffic, and garbage problems proliferate, nuclear wastes accumulate, water tables are falling, and animal habitat loss continues. The transnational corporations have shifted some of the most severe elements of environmental degradation on to the peoples of dependent and less developed countries, but no country is immune.

Past socialist societies, competing economically and militarily with the imperialist countries, made serious mistakes resulting in severe environmental damage. An important factor exacerbating this problem was the suppression of discussion and debate by a number of ruling communist parties which blocked the possibilities of preventing or promptly correcting these errors, so that socialism could be built on an environmentally sustainable basis. Such abuses of the environment are not however inherent to socialism because it is not a system governed by the drive for private profits.

Canada has some of the largest resource bases and remaining environmental reserves in the world. Yet corporate environmental abuse, and government inaction to halt and reverse such devastation, threatens our lands, rivers and coastlines, the air we breathe, our flora and fauna, and the health of the Canadian people. Capitalism by its nature is incapable of dealing with this crisis. Even the smallest reforms such as specific, limited moratoria on resource extraction are being met with stubborn resistance. The hunt for ever-increasing profits is being disguised as a concern for jobs.

Labour's struggle for safety, health, and job security in the work environment is indivisible with the struggle to protect and restore the whole environment, and for a fundamental shift in thinking and economic relations with the environment. The greater scale of capitalist exploitation and crises means that environmental concerns are now inescapably linked to working-class living conditions, including in Canada. Parts of organized labour, particularly some resource-based unions, have bought into the corporate agenda that pits environmental protection against employment. It is of vital importance for labour and environmental organizations to recognize that the protection of the environment is in the long-term interests of sustainable employment, and for communities to unite against their common enemy, monopoly capitalism.

Environmental reforms alone cannot stop the general trend of environmental degradation, and many of the protections achieved are being weakened or

destroyed by neoliberal deregulation and cutbacks. Capital has never fully accepted infringements on its private ownership and “right” to exploit. Neither the transnational corporations, nor capitalists as a whole are capable of solving the environmental crisis. The magnitude of accumulating environmental problems is so large, the urgency of implementing known solutions so great, and the growing crisis so rooted in the nature of capitalism, that a revolutionary democratic change against capitalism itself is necessary. Such a fundamental change can only be carried out by the organized political action of the working class together with its class allies.

Only socialism can put the environment ahead of profit. Only with socialism will humanity begin scientifically to address the far-reaching social and environmental effects of our impact on nature, and do away with capitalism’s unplanned, anarchic destruction of the natural environment. Humanity’s knowledge and energy must be used to safeguard the earth for future generations.

The Crisis in Social Conditions

The domination of finance capital, and the adoption of neoliberal policies by its governments, has aggravated social contradictions and societal problems of every sort.

Human and social rights — the right to meaningful employment, the rights to education and health care, the rights to adequate housing, and social security for the elderly, the right of women to full social and economic equality, the rights of immigrants and other minorities, workers’ rights, and the right to political dissent — are continually eroded and attacked, or denied altogether.

Poverty, homelessness and social despair are becoming chronic for millions of Canadians. Health care, education, unemployment insurance, the pension and workers’ compensation systems and other public programs and services are being cut back and privatized. Affordable housing, especially public and co-op housing, is disappearing. The “social safety net,” which working people fought for decades to achieve, lies in tatters.

The social and cultural life of the country tends to deteriorate. Alienation gives rise to criminality, neo-fascism, drug dependency, abuse and violence against women and children, and other forms of exploitative and anti-social behaviour. Avarice and selfishness, consumerism, apathy and indifference, and rampant individualism are encouraged. However, positive social values such as cooperation, solidarity and community concern are also present and developing, representing the people’s fightback.

Finance capital, through its control of the economy, the state apparatus, the sciences, the media and mass communications, and culture and entertainment, exerts steady psychological and ideological pressure on every aspect of people’s lives. It commodifies, distorts and stifles the development of arts and sciences and cultural life in general. It turns more and more scientists, artists and

professionals into servants of the big corporations. It subjects the health of the working people to constant and increasing strain.

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The capitalist system has long since become parasitic, unable and unwilling to satisfy the growing needs of the people. Consequently labour's struggles for its own economic needs, and for democracy and independence, are actually struggles against finance capital — both Canadian and international.

Chapter 3

CANADA IN A CHANGING WORLD

Over the past century, the scientific and technological revolution has created immense opportunities to improve the quality of life. Never has humanity had such possibilities to develop both productivity and creativity and at the same time reduce physical labour and working time. The capacity exists today to overcome hunger, disease and misery worldwide, to make possible a dignified life for all peoples, and simultaneously to pass the earth on, with all its varied ecosystems, healthy and viable to future generations.

And yet the reality appears otherwise. The vast growth of the productive forces and social wealth has occurred under the predominance of capitalist relations of production. Identifying the current features and characteristics of the capitalist world system is therefore of utmost importance in determining the tasks which face communists and the revolutionary and progressive forces today.

Significant changes have taken place in capitalist society during the past century. Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism, was shaped. Monopolies were created, and came to play a decisive role in economic, social and political life. Banking and industrial capital merged to create finance capital, along with a financial oligarchy. The export of capital took on greater significance in relation to the export of commodities. International monopoly associations of capitalists were formed, leading to a new stage in the internationalization of capital and production. State monopoly capitalism — the fusion of the most powerful monopolies, financial capital and the bourgeois state machinery — came into being.

The development of imperialism, and the struggle between the main capitalist powers to re-divide the world, also led to worldwide inter-imperialist wars, to the rise of fascism, and to colonial and neo-colonial plunder and imperialist aggression against peoples in many countries.

The past century was also marked by important scientific, political and social advances. The most significant political event of the century was the October 1917 socialist revolution in Russia, which brought the working class to political power, led to the formation of the first socialist state, and ushered in a new era in the development of human social relations. This epoch-making revolution, the decisive role played by the USSR in the defeat of fascism, and the consequent emergence of other socialist states together comprising one third of the world's population, had a profound impact on world developments.

The revolutionary trend within the working class movement grew and matured, and other socialist revolutions occurred. National liberation struggles succeeded in breaking the chains of colonial bondage throughout the "Third World." Tremendous class and democratic struggles in Canada, the U.S. and other capitalist countries succeeded in winning many key social and economic

gains for working people, and extended human rights for workers, women, and youth in many countries.

By the 1970s however, world capitalism entered a new phase. Capitalist accumulation in the imperialist countries faced intensified international competition, a technical revolution in communication and transportation, unbridled arms expenditures, and energy crises. Driven by a decline in the rate of profit, finance capital embarked on a neoliberal course characterized by sharply intensified exploitation of labour and the environment and accelerated capitalist globalization. A “new world order” began to take shape, based on increased capital exports and international capital mobility, the plunder of external sources of labour and natural resources, and the internationalization of production and markets dominated by imperialist monopolies.

Gradually, then more openly, state policies shifted toward privatization, deregulation, subcontracting, attacks on labour and environmental standards, and the dismantling of social programs. This was not simply a shift of “policy” but a key part of the new conditions of international capitalist accumulation. All capitalist parties — conservative, liberal, social democratic — moved in the same general direction, at varying speeds.

This worldwide shift meant more impoverishment, both absolute and relative. Standards of health and education have declined. The ruin or stagnation of agriculture in the under-developed countries has led to massive migration of peasants into the cities, overwhelming the under-funded urban infrastructures, generating environmental crises. Around the world there has been an enormous increase in the reserve army of unemployed workers.

The new, neoliberal phase of capitalism has revealed more clearly the predatory, parasitic, and moribund character of imperialism. Capitalism as a system and its ruling class maintain their positions only at the expense of the vast mass of working people and the world environment. The anti-labour and anti-people policies of capitalist governments have led, not to social progress, but to social regression, worsening the immense problems facing humanity.

As human society enters the 21st century, international developments are marked by imperialism’s barbaric and inhuman policies. Humanity is living through grim times due to the aggressive imperialist drive to dominate and subjugate, displayed more openly since the demise of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries of Europe.

The dramatic reversals suffered by socialism in the last decade of the 20th century have shifted the balance of world social and class forces in favour of imperialism, forcing the world’s working class, progressive and anti-imperialist movements onto a defensive footing.

Imperialism is taking full advantage of the new situation arising from this historic, though temporary, setback. The imperialist powers, and U.S. imperialism in particular, are intensifying efforts to extend their economic, political and military domination to every corner of the world. U.S. imperialism has embarked on a

global strategy to extend its sphere of influence, and to capture all possible markets and sources of raw material.

Far from disappearing, all major contradictions that have shaped the world for the last century continue to deepen today. This creates objective conditions for a renewed struggle of workers and peoples, a struggle which is indispensable to open up prospects for a progressive alternative.

These contradictions include that between labour and capital internationally, as well as within each respective capitalist country; the contradiction between imperialism and the forces of world socialism; the contradiction between imperialism and peoples of the developing world; and the contradiction between the leading imperialist countries themselves. There is also a major contradiction maturing between the capitalist mode of production and the global environment.

In a world dominated by capitalist production relations, the most important and basic contradiction remains that between labour and capital. Actions by international capitalist organizations and transnationals are causing the contradiction between the social nature of production and the capitalist appropriation of its output to become sharper. At any given time, any of these main contradictions could intensify so as to come to the forefront.

The enormous potential for developing the productive forces opened up by the scientific and technological revolution is being distorted and limited by the logic of capitalist production relations and the drive for maximum profits. Whole sections of the main productive force — working people — are being devalued, cast aside and even destroyed. Unemployment, underemployment and lack of education represent an enormous waste of economic potential as well as a human tragedy. At the same time, the tendency to privatization and cut-backs in social spending means that research which does not seem to offer major profits to corporations is stifled, no matter how profoundly it might improve human or environmental conditions.

Capital itself is being accumulated and centralized at an astounding pace. Corporate acquisitions and mergers, stimulated by fierce competition to control the global market, and involving even the largest transnationals, are concentrating economic and political power in the hands of an ever dwindling super-elite of capitalists. Radical restructuring of industry and commerce, and the massive rationalizations and “downsizing” that result, are having a devastating impact on workers, peasants and farmers, professionals and other members of the middle strata, and even on small, non-monopoly firms.

Profound changes in workplace organization and rates of exploitation, combined with corporate-inspired neoliberal government policies, are dramatically changing the distribution of wealth and income in all capitalist countries.

Another very alarming trend is the increase of parasitic capital. Vast resources are no longer employed in productive enterprises, but are diverted to speculation in currency, “futures” and the stock market, where huge profits are

siphoned off without ever generating increased production. This speculation worsens the anarchy inherent in capitalist production, giving rise to deeper cyclical and structural crises within countries, regionally and globally.

Structural adjustment policies and the neoliberal economic model in general are having a particularly devastating effect on women throughout the world. With the rise of class society, patriarchy began to emerge as a complex process that placed women in a position of economic, social, cultural and political inferiority. For centuries, patriarchy developed together with capitalism and has now become an institutionalized feature of capitalist development, forcing women to bear a double burden of exploitation and oppression. Increasing unemployment, environmental crises and the impact of regional conflicts all accelerate the process of further impoverishment and inequality for women around the world. Moreover, the agents of neoliberalism seek to identify and strengthen the institutions of patriarchy in all countries, in an effort to preserve profound social inequality and exploit it for the purpose of expanding imperialism.

The gap is widening between the levels of development of the advanced capitalist countries and the underdeveloped countries. Unfair trade relations, the usurious terms of debt repayment imposed by international banks and financial institutions, and the imperialist monopoly of high technology combine to extract trillions of dollars of wealth from the less developed countries to the imperialist centres, causing the disparity in the international division of labour and development to deepen. This increasingly uneven pattern of development is giving rise to growing instability in local and regional economies, leading to more violent and protracted outbreaks of crisis which imperialism is increasingly unable to contain.

Under the banner of “globalization,” imperialism is striving to re-structure all international relations in a profoundly anti-democratic direction. Multilateral bodies such as the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank, work hand-in-hand with transnational corporations, the big international banks, and the imperialist states. Countries which resist imperialist dictates are punished severely through disinvestment and capital flight, speculative attacks on domestic currencies, the withdrawal of foreign aid, the halting of technological transfers, trade penalties, and economic embargoes and blockades. The impact of such measures is especially hard on the peoples of the developing world.

Where such measures prove insufficient, imperialism does not hesitate to resort to crude military force to achieve its ends. Unilateral aggression by the U.S. alone, or with the support of other imperialist states, is occurring with alarming frequency. The ability of the imperialist powers to resort to military threats and overt aggression has greatly increased since the demise of the Soviet Union and the socialist community of states which had previously acted as a substantial counter-weight to U.S. imperialism.

One of the principal objectives of this all-sided offensive of imperialism is to extinguish the last remaining socialist and socialist-oriented countries. Utilizing economic blackmail, military pressure, and ideological penetration, and taking

advantage of internal difficulties and contradictions, imperialism seeks to weaken and to ultimately dismantle socialism and to restore capitalist relations in these countries. The period of the “cold war” may be officially over, but the fight between the forces of imperialism and the forces of socialism is still very much alive. A major component of the imperialist offensive is an ideological campaign aimed at discrediting socialism, and discouraging working people from rejoining the fight for a new wave of socialist transformations.

Imperialism is also seeking to consolidate capitalist restoration in the former socialist countries, to loot the social wealth of these countries, and to maintain them in a subordinate, dependent position.

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

Imperialism, above all U.S. imperialism, exacerbates ethnic, religious and border conflicts, cultivates nationalism and chauvinism, instigates regional conflicts and wars of extermination, breeds extremely reactionary and obscurantist forces, and supports repressive and even fascist regimes.

The most dangerous reflections of this shift to political reaction are the militarization of international relations, the continuing arms race, and the imperialist campaign to weaken the role and authority of the United Nations in favour of “unilateralism” by U.S. imperialism and its NATO allies

Imperialism is the main source of the continuing arms build-up, the fomenting of regional conflicts, and the danger of more generalized, and even global war. As long as imperialism exists, there will be the danger of imperialist war. It constitutes the principal danger hanging over the world today, threatening the future of humanity and all life on the planet.

Finally, our planet is also reaping the harvest of centuries of subordinating nature to the blind play of capitalist market forces. Under capitalism both labour and the natural environment are subordinated to and exploited for the capitalists’ overriding objective — surplus value (or private profit). As a mode of production and consumption, capitalism has raised the degradation of nature to historically unprecedented levels. Only liberation from capitalism will open up new possibilities for a fundamental change in humanity’s relationship with nature. As Frederick Engels said: “At every step we are reminded that we by no means rule over nature like a conqueror over foreign people, like someone standing outside of nature - but that we, with flesh, blood, and brain, belong to nature, and exist in its midst.”

All of these features represent the true face of the globalization process. Its main content is the intensified drive to concentrate and centralize the world's natural and productive wealth under the control of a tiny elite of global finance capitalists, causing widespread impoverishment and unemployment for the working and oppressed peoples of the entire world.

The maturing of these contradictions deepens the systemic crisis of capitalism on a world scale, and inevitably evokes greater resistance and struggle by the working class and oppressed in all countries. Depending on the balance of class forces in each country, this takes many forms, including electoral battles, massive protests and strikes, and, in some situations, armed struggle. To control this rising opposition, imperialism is tilting more and more to political reaction, including constraints on individual and collective rights and overt oppression by the secret services and the machinery of the imperialist state.

Contemporary social reality shows the need for the working class to struggle for a revolutionary response to capitalism: to sharpen resistance to international finance capital and the governments which carry out its class interests, and to bourgeois ideology which justifies its policies and actions. Only such a conscious class, anti-imperialist struggle can weaken the dominant position of monopoly finance capital in Canada and internationally, and create the conditions to overthrow its power, and to build socialism.

While the international expansion of capital is transforming the role of national governments and restricting their economic regulatory function in favour of institutions such as the WTO, IMF and World Bank, the coercive function of the state remains a vital instrument to protect the interests of monopoly capital and to repress opposition. Therefore, the struggle for deep-going democratic and anti-monopoly reforms, and ultimately for working class political power must still be conducted primarily at the level of the national state in each country.

But given the global character of contemporary capitalism, class and democratic resistance at the state level, in and of itself, is no longer sufficient. Struggles waged in each country must be combined to an ever greater extent with coordinated regional and global forms of struggle. An international democratic and anti-imperialist front is urgently required, to bring together the democratic, working class and progressive forces around the world to confront the unfettered power of international finance capital. Such a front or alliance can be forged around a program for genuine internationalization, based on the principles of peace, non-aggression, and global disarmament; respect for the sovereignty of all states, for the equality and rights of all nations, large and small, the peaceful coexistence of different social systems, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; fair and balanced trade and economic cooperation; respect and promotion of cultural diversity; and protection of the global environment.

The international communist movement can and must play a central role in constructing such a broad front of international anti-imperialist struggle. Efforts to

build greater cooperation, political cohesion, and unity of action among Communist and workers' parties is therefore of decisive importance.

The recent reversals suffered by socialism have not changed the historical direction of this epoch. The present phase, in which the international working class and revolutionary movement is in retreat, is temporary. Anti-imperialist consciousness and militancy is growing, and a new, resurgent phase is already maturing. The 21st century will be one in which the revolutionary forces regroup to repulse the offensive by international capital, and mount a decisive counter-attack in defence of humanity, world peace and our global environment. There is no alternative.

Chapter 4

THE CANADIAN STATE, THE NATIONS AND PEOPLES OF CANADA, AND THE CRISIS OF DEMOCRACY

The central fact of political life in Canada is that state power is in the hands of Canadian finance capital. In capitalist society, the owners of the large-scale means of production, trade and finance control the state machinery: the armed forces, police, judiciary, and civil service. The capitalist state is thus an instrument of class rule. A small minority — the exploiting class — rules in fact over the great majority of the people who create all the wealth and provide all the services.

The Canadian people in the past waged a revolutionary struggle for democracy: for representative institutions, universal suffrage, and popular liberties. In 1837, popular anti-colonial uprisings led by the democratic forces of French and English Canada revolted against colonial officialdom and the reactionary and privileged strata (the Family Compact in Upper Canada and the Chateau Clique in Lower Canada). The revolutionary uprising of the Métis and Aboriginal peoples followed in the West. But these struggles took place before and during the period of the birth of industrial capitalism in Canada; they opened the way to the development of industry and the political rule of the Canadian capitalist class.

The Canadian state bears the imprint of its colonial origin: the retention of a monarch of another country as the head of state, and still in possession of the ill-defined “royal prerogative.” The Senate is still appointed from the privileged class.

At Confederation, the British government confirmed the claim of the Canadian capitalists to legislative sovereignty within Canada, while they in return undertook to keep the Dominion within the Empire. The result was commitment to British foreign policy and wars, and acceptance of the role of Canada as a raw materials supplier.

With the growth of capitalist monopoly, Canadian bourgeois nationalism asserted itself. The Statute of Westminster (1931) declared the “equality of status” of members of the Commonwealth. But this was also the period of the rise of the United States to world dominance; and the Canadian bourgeoisie, ever more closely linked with U.S. monopoly interests, proceeded to make this country dependent on U.S. imperialism. Since the Second World War, this process has led to far-reaching measures of economic, political and military integration with the U.S.

By offering a “free choice” between the political parties representing capitalist interests, and by its control of the agencies that mold public opinion, the capitalist

class has been able to maintain its class rule. This includes the state financing of election expenses for the biggest political parties, parties which are increasingly similar on the main questions of concern to the people. At the same time, the smaller, progressive and revolutionary parties are being squeezed onto the electoral margins, or off the electoral platform altogether. More and more, important policy and state affairs are removed from the parliamentary arena, and instead decided by Cabinet or its non-elected officials in the state apparatus, by appointed judges and courts, or in conformity with the terms of bilateral and multilateral agreements imposed on the Canadian people. A similar anti-democratic trend exists at the provincial and municipal levels of government. The already-restricted democratic decision-making afforded by bourgeois “parliamentary democracy” is eroding quickly. A growing alienation from bourgeois politics is developing among working people for all of these reasons.

As economic crisis deepens, finance capital increasingly wields the coercive arm of the state to thwart the legitimate struggles of the people, stripping away the mask of state neutrality. The state and its institutions do not stand above social conflict — the state is a partisan, active, and increasingly authoritarian force on the side of finance capital.

More and more the state intervenes directly to attack and undermine free collective bargaining, and the right to strike, picket, and organize. There is a steady increase in the use of the police and the courts, of strikebreaking and scab herding, against picket lines and demonstrations. Vital democratic reforms to protect and extend the rights of labour, women and immigrants, and to combat racism and discrimination, are systematically blocked and dismantled. Deregulation, privatization, and the dismantling of decades-old labour laws and benefits, are a central part of the assault.

Part of the attack on democracy is seen in the increasing monopolization of the mass media, and in the decreasing state support for a democratic Canadian culture. This is combined with a massive infusion, mainly from the U.S., of mass, corporate culture that is also often violent. The mainstream press and media act as the voice of finance capital and the right-wing forces. The corporate media are becoming an ever-more sophisticated and powerful instrument to manipulate public opinion, by parroting pro-monopoly propaganda, filtering out conflicting news and analysis, and silencing expressions of anti-capitalist dissent. The development of new information technologies such as the Internet, creates the conditions for an unprecedented flow of information. A free flow of information is a threat to state monopoly capitalism however, and as a result useful information is often hidden in a glut of commercial advertising. Finance capital is attempting to strengthen its domination and effective control of the Internet.

The spokespersons of the bourgeoisie praise ‘the rule of law’. They maintain that Canada is an exemplary democracy, in which all citizens are equal before the law, protected by the Charter of Rights and Liberties. Capitalist “equality” does not guarantee even minimal economic rights let alone a more equal division of society’s production.

However, they do not mention that this so-called “democratic” bourgeoisie rules the vast majority of the population through an economic dictatorship. The Canadian bourgeoisie claims with pride that the judicial branch of government is independent of the legislative and executive branches. Yet, the judiciary is appointed by the executive and reflects its class character.

Unionists are arrested and imprisoned for putting the collective rights of their members above the rights of the boss. Less and less tolerance is seen from the police at peaceful demonstrations. Exceptional measures are becoming less and less exceptional, and more and more repressive.

There is a class approach to crime and punishment – a two-tier justice system. Laws and penalties are very severe for criminals who commit petty offenses, but powerful offenders get off with light penalties, if any. Large companies and the rich who pollute the environment or violate worker health and safety regulations are treated as having committed minor offenses and are rarely jailed or deprived of their property.

Corruption, bribery, and organized crime are part of capitalist development. Many of the great wealthy families acquired their wealth through illegal activities in earlier generations; they and their descendents have later morphed into honourable ladies and gentlemen. Theft by the rich becomes legalized and exploitation valued.

The Canadian Security Intelligence Service is a particularly dangerous part of the state apparatus. Working in tandem with the CIA and other imperialist security agencies, CSIS constitutes an attack on the democratic and civil rights of Canadians. This agency, which operates outside the law and beyond the reach of Parliament, exists to suppress political dissent, and has the potential to serve as a vehicle to transform Canada into a police state.

The Canadian Armed Forces are an instrument of imperialist aggression under U.S./NATO command. The Armed Forces also exist to intervene to suppress the democratic, class and national struggles of the Canadian people.

Racist and neo-fascist organizations are permitted to operate with relative freedom by the state, and in fact receive support from the most reactionary elements within the ruling class. Preying on the fear, insecurity, economic conditions and low level of class consciousness among certain sections of the Canadian people, especially the youth and the petty bourgeoisie, these groups promote prejudice, race hatred, and fascist ideology in order to divide the working class.

In short, the repressive role of the Canadian state as an instrument of class rule is becoming steadily more exposed, as the most powerful corporate interests expand at the expense of the labour and democratic rights of the people. The already limited avenues for democratic expression and participation are being continuously and deeply eroded. The struggle to unite the labour and people’s forces in defence of democracy has thus become an urgent and central task.

Canada: A Multi-National Country

Canada includes small and large nations, each of which is an historically-constituted community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and national consciousness manifested in a common culture. Nations come into existence and pass out of existence, by forcible and peaceful historical processes, or a combination of both. It is a dynamic process in which, in each case, the path of development into nationhood is specific and different. As a result, the struggle for a democratic solution to the national question requires an understanding and respect for these objective differences.

Amongst the smaller nations in Canada are groups of Aboriginal peoples who are exercising their right to sovereignty with the demand for autonomy and self-government. Amongst these are the Northern Cree in Quebec, and the newly created territory of Nunavut, the Nisga'a on the west coast, and others. The Acadians in the Maritimes also constitute a smaller nation in Canada. The two largest nations are English-speaking Canada and Quebec.

At the heart of the crisis of confederation is the refusal to recognize the right of every nation to self-determination up to and including the right to separation; that is, the right to choose the form of sovereignty which the majority of the people of that nation desire.

Sovereignty may be expressed in a free national choice of one of three following forms: a separate state, a confederation of equal nation or states, or autonomy.

For many years, the Communist Party has put forward the proposal for a new constitution based on the equal and voluntary partnership of Quebec and English-speaking Canada. Such a new constitutional arrangement must also guarantee the full participation of Aboriginal peoples and protect and extend their inherent national rights, including the right to genuine self-government, the right to consent over any change in their Constitutional status, and the right to accelerated economic, social and national development.

The Communist Party proposes a confederal republic with a government consisting of two chambers; one, such as the House of Commons today, would be based on representation by population, elected through a new system of proportional representation. The other chamber — a House of Nationalities — which would replace the present Senate, would be composed of an equal number of elected representatives from Quebec and from English-speaking Canada, with guaranteed and significant representation from the Aboriginal peoples, Acadians and the Métis. Each chamber should have the right to initiate legislation, but both would have to adopt the legislation for it to become law. Furthermore the Aboriginal peoples must have the right to veto, on all matters pertaining to their national development. This structure will protect both fundamental democratic principles: equality of the rights of nations whatever their size, and majority rule. Structural changes reflecting this confederal arrangement would need to be made throughout the legal system and state apparatus.

A genuinely democratic constitution should correct the historic injustices suffered by the Aboriginal peoples by recognizing their full economic, social, national and political equality, and the just settlement of their land claims based on treaty rights, Aboriginal claims and scrip. This includes the rights and demands of Aboriginal women. The right of nations to self-determination must be entrenched in the Canadian constitution.

This fight for constitutional change is crucial to the overall struggle for democracy, social advance and for socialism. Uniting the working class across the country will not be possible without combating national oppression and fighting to achieve a new, equal and voluntary partnership of Canada's nations.

The sharpest expression of the constitutional crisis relates to Quebec's national status and the failure of the Canadian state to recognize Quebec's right to national self-determination, up to and including secession. This non-recognition of Quebec's rights is itself an expression of the historic national oppression of Quebec — its political, economic and social oppression — since the British conquest of New France in 1763. This national oppression has in turn aroused national indignation among the Quebec people, and spawned bourgeois and petty-bourgeois-led nationalist and separatist movements there.

The fight to defend Quebec's national rights and sovereignty is a pivotal social and democratic struggle. However, the separatist solution as expressed by the petty-bourgeois nationalist parties would not solve the crisis in the interests of working people. Quebec has reached the advanced stage of monopoly capitalism; its economic relations with English-speaking Canada are no longer those of a colonial character. The separatist solution would bring severe additional economic hardship to the working people of both nations and would weaken their political unity against the common enemy — finance capital, both domestic and international — and weaken the common struggle for fundamental change.

Recent changes to Canada's constitution have perpetuated the structural flaws and built-in inequalities of the original British North America Act (BNA Act) of 1867. The adoption of a new Canadian constitution and Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, while formally a step forward from a colonial Act of another country, nevertheless failed to address the underlying source of the crisis of Confederation. The current constitution perpetuates the injustices and inequities of the old BNA Act. "Provincial rights" were substituted for genuine national rights, thus accentuating the trend to decentralization, while doing nothing to uphold Canadian independence or to recognize the national rights of Quebec and the Aboriginal peoples.

The Acadians, who today live mostly in the Maritimes, are also a nation. Originally 16th century settlers from France, the Acadians were driven out of Nova Scotia by the British who seized their lands after the defeat of the French in 1755. While significant numbers of the Acadian people remain geographically dispersed, substantial numbers constitute a stable community within the

Maritimes, and maintain their unique language, culture, history, and collective national consciousness.

The rights of the Acadians to protect and maintain their national identity with full state support, including the right to self-government, must be guaranteed.

The Métis nation emerged in the period of merchant capitalism in the 18th century based on the fur trade and was mainly situated along the rivers flowing into Hudson Bay. The assertion of national rights by the Métis in the rebellions of 1869-70 and 1885 was brutally crushed by the dominant English-speaking ruling class, who were backed by the expansionary industrial capitalism of Ontario and Quebec. Nevertheless, the resistance of the Métis led to the establishment of the province of Manitoba and helped keep alive the spirit of resistance against all national privileges in Canada today.

The Aboriginal peoples had been in Canada for thousands of years when the first white settlers arrived. Prior to European settlement, the social organization of many Aboriginal communities was progressing — depending on the development of the productive capacities of each community — from smaller, dispersed and relatively isolated tribes into more complex, organized and technologically advanced societies. But European colonization and subjugation of the Aboriginal peoples interrupted and arrested this nation-building process.

Colonization and capitalist industrialization in Canada developed at the expense of its original inhabitants. The resistance of the Aboriginal peoples to colonial encroachment was brutally crushed. A policy of genocide was adopted by the state, which continues today in economic, social and cultural forms. There was the extermination of the Beothuk in Newfoundland, the scalp bounty on the Mi'kmaq in the Maritimes, the enslavement of some and the deliberate starvation and infection of others with deadly diseases, their forced relocation onto remote and impoverished reserves, the abduction of their children and consignment to residential schools where many were sexually assaulted, and brutalized for speaking their own language, and the organized suppression of their culture, including the banning of the communal Potlatch. Such is the record of Canadian history.

Presently, Aboriginal peoples have the highest rates of suicide, infant mortality, impoverishment, and incarceration in Canada, with a life expectancy of less than 50 years. Deprived of their human rights, their equality rights, and their inherent rights to land and self-government, Aboriginal peoples continue to be victims of state sponsored policies of genocide.

Even today, the state, acting on behalf of finance capital, refuses to recognize the status and national rights of Aboriginal peoples. This has produced acute poverty and oppression on the reserves and other areas inhabited by the Aboriginal peoples. Denied an adequate land base, acceptable living standards, the ability to live in their traditional manner, or the opportunity to mount successful cooperative commercial operations where they live, Aboriginal people for many years have migrated to urban areas where they face high unemployment, discrimination and the further destruction of their cultural identity.

The Communist Party struggles for immediate redress of historic injustices to Aboriginal peoples. This must include preferential treatment in the provision of housing, health care, education, and job creation, as a priority. Furthermore, immediate achievement of national rights, just and early settlement of land claims and self-government will help to improve the prospect for the fuller development of several Aboriginal peoples as nations, a process that the Communist Party fully supports.

The CPC also supports the struggle of those nations such as the Cree in Northern Quebec who are seeking full recognition of their right of self-determination.

Today, there is a renewed spirit of insurgency among the Aboriginal peoples. There is increasing unity between various Aboriginal peoples in their individual and particular struggles against the capitalist state. The Communist Party supports the increasing unity of the Aboriginal peoples in their just struggle.

Within each nation, there are national minorities whose national homeland is within the borders of another nation within Canada. Francophone minorities living in English-speaking Canada, Anglophone minorities living in Quebec, and Aboriginal peoples and Acadians living away from their national homes are all national minorities with the right to educate their children and receive state supported services in their own languages, wherever numbers warrant.

With the exception of the Aboriginal peoples, Canada is a country of immigrants, old and new. Comprised of hundreds of diverse ethnic groups, who will eventually merge with French-speaking Quebec or English-speaking Canada, these ethnic groups have the right to preserve their language and heritage and to pass it on to succeeding generations through state-supported language and cultural programs, and through state-supported cultural and community activities. The Communist Party recognizes that this two-sided process of merging and preserving language, culture and heritage, is of long duration, influencing and enriching Canadian culture as a whole.

Immigrant workers from many lands have played a vital part in building Canada's industries, railways and agriculture. New immigrants form a considerable portion of Canada's labour force. Immigrant workers continue to suffer from acute discrimination, arising in the main from capitalist exploitation and attitudes of national chauvinism. From its foundation the Communist Party has struggled to end discrimination against immigrant workers, working to expose how capitalism generates racism and national chauvinism, profits from low wage areas, and divides the working class to hold back the overall struggle.

Most immigration to Canada has been structured to support colonialist expansion and capitalist exploitation. In the colonial period, the English and French ruling classes not only directed white settlement that oppressed and displaced Aboriginal peoples; they also exploited most immigrants as a source of cheap labour and primary production. Later patterns of immigration under the Canadian state continued racist, chauvinist, and anti-labour policies in expanding settlement and building capitalist industry. The notorious treatment of Chinese

labour in the building of the CPR and of immigrant labour in the textile industry and agriculture are characteristic of how Canadian capitalists have tended to segregate and super-exploit groups of immigrant workers.

Canadian state immigration policy is also class-oriented. Working class immigration is used as a reserve of ready labour to undercut average wages and conditions. Capitalist investors are privileged while victims of imperialist aggression, labour activists and political progressives are turned away.

There is a massive uprooting of millions of people as a result of the growing impoverishment of less developed countries, destabilizing imperialist-inspired wars and environmental disasters, and the growth of criminal trafficking in immigrants. To reduce these international movements of dispossessed people and political refugees requires progressive policies for world economic development and peace — not more repression of immigrants or elimination of their democratic rights. The communists demand priority in immigration to refugees, elimination of privileged entry to capitalist investors, phasing out of guest-worker provisions except for genuine educational, scientific or cultural exchange, and the full protection of immigrants through an immigrant bill of rights.

The Charter of Rights and Freedoms is also seriously flawed. While formally recognizing certain fundamental rights — freedom of association, assembly, religion, and of the press, and the rights to liberty and security, and equality without discrimination based on race, gender, religion or national origin, etc.— it also permits the federal and provincial legislatures to simply use the “notwithstanding” clause to deny these basic human rights in practice. A Bill of Rights for Labour was denied the working people of Canada, leaving the trade union movement with no constitutionally guaranteed rights.

Municipalities continue to be denied status in the repatriated Constitution. Though the majority of Canadians live within urban municipalities, these bodies can be created and dissolved at will by provincial governments.

A new constitution would prohibit the violation of the civil liberties of immigrants. It would outlaw racism and discrimination. It would assure the democratic, cultural and language rights of the non-French, non-English ethnic groups in Canada. A new constitution must embody a Bill of Rights, and a Bill of Rights for Labour, to provide guarantees of trade union and democratic rights which apply to the people of all nations within the Canadian state. These guarantees must ensure economic, social, cultural and linguistic equality, the right of assembly, the right to organize and strike, the *habeas corpus* right not to be arbitrarily deprived of one’s liberty, the right to a job, to freedom of movement, to health, to education, to housing. The rights of women, youth and children must be guaranteed.

A genuinely democratic constitution must be accompanied by basic structural reform. To overcome regional inequality, these reforms must be based on the necessity for all-sided economic development in all parts of Canada, combined with nationalization of all natural resources, above all energy. Through publicly-

owned corporations, benefits from the development of natural and energy resources must serve the people of Canada as a whole as well as industrial and social development in the provinces where the resources are found.

The erosion of local democracy has its roots in the absence of constitutional status, jurisdiction and rights for municipalities. A democratic constitution would recognize municipalities, guarantee local municipal autonomy, and create the most favourable conditions for local democratic control.

A new constitution should unify social legislation to provide equal opportunity and high standards in all of Canada while respecting the sovereignty of Quebec, and the right to self-government of the Aboriginal peoples. It must ensure that the corporations will not be able to escape responsibility for the contribution they owe to public education, living standards, and the health and social welfare of all Canadians.

Most important, a new constitution will help to remove the causes of the long-standing disunity, friction and resentment between English-speaking Canada and Quebec, and the Aboriginal peoples' inequality and national oppression.

The Communist Party sees the struggle for a democratic solution of the constitutional crisis as an integral part of the struggle against capitalist rule. The Communist Party stands for the unity of the working class in the struggle against this common enemy — domestic and international finance capital. Victory in the struggle for democracy and against political reaction, for Canadian independence and for socialism requires a powerful alliance of the working class of English-speaking Canada and Quebec, together with the progressive forces in Aboriginal and Metis communities and among national and ethnic minorities.

The historic direction of these struggles is toward the achievement of a higher form of democracy through the establishment of a socialist state and the rule of the vast majority of the Canadian people.

Chapter 5

THE WORKING CLASS AND PEOPLE'S STRUGGLE

The struggle of the Canadian people for democracy, sovereignty, peace and social advance is essentially a political struggle against big business and its control of the Canadian State. The interests of the vast majority of Canadians are in conflict with the anti-democratic, neoliberal policies of the transnationals and the banks.

The working class, due to its size and strategic place in the production of goods and services, is the natural leader of all democratic and progressive forces. It is organized as a consequence of modern production itself into a cohesive, continuously growing force that is compelled to fight back. It possesses no means of production. Its class interests are diametrically opposed to those of finance capital by virtue of its position in the economy.

But the working class needs allies to take on and defeat the immense, coordinated power of finance capital. Therefore the trade union movement — its organized contingent — must build unity with other sectors and movements of the Canadian people adversely affected by the domination of finance capital, and which have an objective interest in winning a new democratic course for Canada. To be effective and successful, the struggle against finance capital must have the working class as its core, its driving force and leader.

The Communist Party works for the development of a democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance, uniting all the labour and other democratic movements and led by the working class. Such an alliance can win broad support for alternative policies to curb monopoly power: public ownership and democratic control over key industries and natural resources, job creation, improved living standards and social benefits, environmental protection, and defence of democratic liberties.

The Unity of the Working Class

The leading role of the working class is the indispensable factor for effective united action of the people against monopoly capital; and the unity of the working class is essential to its ability to carry out that leading role.

The working class movement cannot advance on the basis of economic struggle alone. It must challenge and eventually defeat the political power of the ruling capitalist class. To accomplish this aim, the working class needs its own political party. The Communist Party strives to be that leading political party of the working class.

A strong and united trade union movement is vital to the defence and advance of the working class as a whole. Canadian workers have built their own

trade unions and mass organizations, to protect and advance their economic interests as wage-workers. The unions are their basic organizations of class struggle. The gains made by the trade union movement serve the interests of all working people, the organized and the unorganized. Economic and social gains achieved by the unions help to raise living standards and social conditions for the working class and working people in general. This is why the ruling class systematically wages an ideological campaign to turn working people against the trade union movement.

The struggle between the working class and capital has sharpened. The capitalist class and its state have launched an all-sided attack to weaken and destroy the trade union movement. This is a decisive part of the corporate drive to lower real wages and living standards. Using mass unemployment and the direct intervention of the state, monopoly capital seeks to reduce labour's bargaining strength, to extract concessions wherever possible. The struggle against concessions and to enlarge the scope of collective bargaining is an integral part of the struggle against finance capital.

The most pressing task facing the organized trade union movement is to unite its ranks around class struggle policies and militant actions to confront the corporate offensive, to bring about democratic and anti-monopoly transformation, and to shift the balance of class forces in favour of the working class and its allies.

For a Sovereign, United and Independent Trade Union Movement

To combat the power of big business and the transnationals, the trade union movement must become sovereign, united and independent, with the highest level of coordinated strategy and action. It must be governed by the principle "an injury to one is an injury to all," at all times placing the interests of the movement as a whole above the sectional interests of individual affiliates. It must oppose raiding, and resolve jurisdictional disputes in the interests of affected workers and the movement as a whole.

In the face of capitalist restructuring, workers and their unions must demand greater control over the introduction of technological change, the moving or closing of factories, the duration of work time, corporate investment policies, worker retraining, health and safety and pay equity. To win a greater share of the benefits of the new technology, workers and unions must fight for a shorter work week with no loss in take home pay. They must also oppose privatization and fight for the expansion of the public sector. These demands strike at corporate power in the workplace.

The trade union movement must defend the interests of all workers, both organized and unorganized, and pay particular attention to those most exploited and underpaid.

With the organization of the public sector, the majority of organized workers are now in Canadian unions. However, many Canadian workers are still

represented by international unions headquartered in the U.S. Therefore the struggle for Canadian autonomy and the independence of Canadian sections of international unions will continue, always based on the vital need to maintain unity of the trade union movement, while ensuring that Canadian workers have the right to make all decisions within their respective unions and the trade union movement as a whole.

The trade union movement must resolutely combat all forms of discrimination and intolerance that divides the working class, both within its own ranks and within society as a whole. It must struggle against racism, sexism, homophobia, and against discrimination of youth, older workers, or the disabled.

The trade union movement must champion the social and workplace rights of women, and promote their fullest participation within union structures at all levels of responsibility and leadership.

It must also cement the class unity between the workers in Quebec and workers in the rest of Canada, and between Aboriginal and non-aboriginal workers; oppose manifestations of national chauvinism; and respect the national and cultural diversity within the working class as a whole.

The trade union movement also needs to strengthen its international solidarity with workers and their struggles internationally as a condition for securing its own advances.

It must also seek out and build stable and enduring alliances with other democratic and social movements to defend and promote democratic rights, sovereignty, and the socio-economic welfare of working people in general, to oppose neoliberalism, capitalist globalization, imperialism and war.

No less urgent is the task of organizing the unorganized majority of the working class, of helping them to lift their living standards and become involved in political action and struggle against finance capital. This includes organizing the growing body of technical, scientific and professional workers, and workers in service industries employing large numbers of women, youth and immigrants. This also involves special efforts to organize part-time, temporary and contract workers, and the organization of the unemployed. It includes active struggle for equality and against workplace discrimination.

The rights of unemployed workers must also be defended, and every effort extended to assist them in organizing their ranks and fighting for full unemployment benefits and for decent jobs.

The trade union movement must protect the internal union rights of all its members, especially rank-and-file members, and encourage their involvement in all labour activities. It must uphold the principle of inner-union democracy, and oppose bureaucratic and other undemocratic practices that undermine membership participation and control.

To advance the overall struggle of the working class, the trade union movement must commit itself to a comprehensive program of independent labour political action, one which mobilizes organized workers into democratic and

political struggle, in addition to workplace economic struggles against their employers.

To win the trade union movement for such a fighting program, right-wing policies of class collaboration and betrayal of labour's interests must be challenged and replaced with policies of consistent class struggle. Communists in the trade union movement work to uphold the best, militant trade union principles and maximum democratic involvement in decision-making.

Working Class Policy and Outlook

The winning of working class and people's unity and ultimately political power requires an independent working class ideology. This involves a long battle for a genuine working class policy, forged in the process of combatting capitalist ideology in the labour movement, and the carriers of that ideology.

Historically, the economic base for reformism and opportunism inside the labor movement has been the imperialist exploitation of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples, enabling the imperialists of the exploiting countries to pass on a small share of their super-profits to a section of the workers in the form of higher wages. This formed a basis for cooperation with the capitalist class — class collaboration — and for the strengthening of capitalist ideas. Inasmuch as the Canadian monopolists shared in colonial super-profits, this process has had its effects on the Canadian labour movement.

In the post-World War II period, the considerable growth of the productive forces of capitalism, the rising productivity of labour and its intensified exploitation, and the increasing rate of capital accumulation, enabled finance capital to pursue a policy of concessions to working class demands. This encouraged reformist thinking amongst workers, particularly (as in the past) amongst those sections of privileged workers given special material advantages. Reformist thinking was also encouraged, as always, by ruling class ideological propaganda and by the relatively privileged pay and life-style of a significant section of the trade union leadership.

The capitalist class and the right wing in the labour movement used this extended period of relatively buoyant capitalist development to cultivate the false idea that capitalism has a capacity for continuous social advance, meeting the ever-expanding requirements of the entire people. The wide influence of this propaganda tended to make capitalism acceptable to important strata of workers.

However, the economic base for reformism and class collaboration is steadily eroding. As the systemic crisis of monopoly capitalism deepens, big business is placing increasing demands on the working class, and extracting more and more concessions. This in turn compels the workers to stiffen their resistance. As a consequence, the possibilities of achieving any overall accommodation — or “social contract” — between labour and capital become ever more difficult.

But this objective shift by monopoly to a more open attack on working people does not mechanically and immediately raise people's consciousness. Bourgeois

and social reformism is still the dominant characteristic of the labour movement. There is increased militancy, but militancy alone is not yet class and political consciousness.

The actual conditions of life for workers under capitalism create the conditions to challenge and overcome illusions about the ever expanding ability of capitalism to deliver the goods. The exploitation of the workers becomes more intense; they wage broader, more militant and united struggles for their needs. The illusions fostered by social reformism come increasingly into conflict with the realities of the class struggle.

Thus the battle for working class policy and for working class unity incorporates an ideological struggle against capitalist illusions in the labour movement.

The Communist Party conducts a constant struggle against reformist ideology — opportunist ideas that identify the interests of the working class with capitalism. Reformists view the capitalist state as an impartial authority, standing above classes. Reformism in the working class leads to class collaboration — or class partnership — between workers and capitalists. Reformist ideas limit people's movements to narrow parliamentary aims and partial reforms. Some reformists define the aim of socialism as a 'just society' or 'welfare state,' seeing socialism as the outcome of endless improvements or stages of capitalism. In this way, they politically disarm the working class and adapt the labour movement to the preservation of capitalism.

Communists hold that the general laws of capitalism leave workers no alternative but to fight back against the consequences of its systemic crisis, to confront and break the power of finance capital, and ultimately to overthrow the capitalist system and replace it with socialism.

While opposing reformism, the Communist Party supports the fight for reforms to protect working people from the effects of capitalist exploitation. The struggle for reforms helps the working class to gain confidence and experience, to strengthen their unity and organization, to deepen their class consciousness, and to shift the balance of class forces in society in their favour. The Communist Party links the struggle for reforms with the revolutionary transformation of society.

Social Democracy

The main political expression of reformist ideology and class collaboration within the labour movement in Canada is social democracy.

Social democracy however, is not the only conduit channeling bourgeois ideology into the trade union, labour and people's movements. Bourgeois parties attempt to operate within and influence the trade union and other mass democratic movements. The state apparatus and its infrastructure, including educational and cultural institutions, the capitalist-owned mass media, and other

institutions of the ruling class conduct a daily ideological assault against working people.

Nonetheless, the main obstacle to the unity of the workers' movement, to the uniting of the progressive forces and to the establishment of anti-monopoly unity is right-wing social democracy and anti-communism.

The Communist Party has continually worked to unite the reformist and revolutionary wings of the working class movement in the struggle for peace, democracy, and Canadian independence, and against corporate rule.

However, capitalism's deepening crisis and the resulting intensified struggle between capital and labour is evoking a deep-going ideological and political clash within the ranks of social democracy. The right-wing leadership of the social democratic movement in Canada and internationally has abandoned the goal of "socialism" entirely, embraced globalized capitalism, and reoriented social democratic parties in favour of the illusion of managing capitalism "with a human face."

Social democracy's reorientation — a reflection of its changing class base, from the working class toward the petty bourgeoisie, professionals and other sections of the middle strata — has had far-reaching effects. It has provoked deep divisions within the New Democratic Party (the main expression of social democracy in English-speaking Canada) between its right-wing leadership, and an increasingly marginalized section of the membership who retain socialist convictions or even traditional social democratic views. This sharp debate has carried over into the labour movement itself, calling into question the continued political and organizational relationship between the NDP and the Canadian Labour Congress (and its affiliates). The Communist Party believes the trade union movement is not well served by having automatic affiliation or permanent organizational ties to the NDP or any other political party, but rather by taking independent political action in mass extra-parliamentary struggle as well as giving support to particular electoral candidates, parties, coalition programs, or policies.

These developments attest to the widening gap between the interests of the working class and those of right-wing social democracy.

In the day-to-day struggle, Communists work closely with left-wing social democrats and other activists in the labour and progressive movements, and strive to develop united action and cooperation. The Communist Party continues to work for cooperation with the NDP around common issues and reforms, despite the widening gulf between the principles and class allegiance of the two parties.

The more effectively the Communist Party works for left and democratic unity and strengthens its independent political activity, putting forward its Marxist-Leninist program and policies, the more the left forces, both within and outside the NDP, can be brought into united struggle for genuine progressive policies.

Building Alliances among the People's Forces

As monopoly capital attacks the living standards and interests of the working class and other strata, a broad cross-section of the Canadian people are compelled by their own economic and political interests to fight back against the power of finance capital and the state. This is the expanding feature of our time.

People's movements are involving growing numbers of Canadians in extra-parliamentary political activity. Uniting these forces, together with the working class itself, into broad coalitions to resist the offensive of finance capital will lay the foundation for democratic and social advance, and for the emergence of a fully-developed democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance.

These forces include other classes and social strata whose contradictory circumstances more often, and to varying degrees, bring them into conflict with the interests of big business. Farmers and other primary producers, professionals, intellectuals, and small business and independent, non-monopoly capitalists have common interests in opposing the reactionary policies of finance capital and its governments.

These forces also include progressive currents within the national movement in Quebec. While primarily bourgeois and petty-bourgeois forces lead this movement, democratic and progressive-minded people are also drawn to its ranks.

Similarly, the growing struggles of Aboriginal peoples for social justice and for their inherent rights, including the right to self-government, make them an important force in the struggle for democracy and against monopoly domination.

Especially important are the vast array of people's movements, multi-class in character, that are united around democratic and social struggles across Canada. These include the movement for women's equality; for protection of the environment; the peace and solidarity movements; the youth and student movement; social justice movements; movements against racism, discrimination, and fascism; the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered rights community; progressive forces in the religious communities; and growing struggles in the cultural community, by senior citizens, and for community and urban reform.

The women's movement has grown into an increasingly effective and significant force in the movement of the people against reaction and neoliberalism. The battle for equal pay for work of equal value, affirmative action, fully paid maternity and paternity leave, for reproductive choice, and for universally accessible publicly funded, quality child care has won broad support from the labour and other people's movements.

To unite women and men in common struggle against the common enemy, it is necessary to combat sexist practices and ideas which are reinforced by monopoly-controlled media and culture. It is also necessary to combat the growing ideological, organized campaign by neoliberal and other right wing forces seeking to promote backward ideas.

The crisis of capitalism affects youth directly, giving rise to increasing militancy and resistance. As the aspirations of youth for a life with a future are undermined by capitalism, young workers, students, and youth of the middle strata increasingly desire change. The struggles of young people are centered around employment and education. Many young people are also opposed to capitalist globalization and imperialist aggression.

Neoliberal attacks on post-secondary education are more and more making education into a privilege for the rich. The student movement combats these attacks, demanding accessible, quality, adequately funded education programs, and an end to tuition and student debt. Young people are protesting an educational system geared to serve the needs of finance capital.

Young workers face higher than average unemployment, unsafe working conditions, and a lack of training. Families headed by young people form a large proportion of those living in poverty. To combat these conditions, it is necessary for the trade union movement to organize the unorganized, who are disproportionately young workers.

Although alienation generated by monopoly capitalism is widespread, demoralizing many young people, they are struggling to end it. This struggle, along with the struggles around education and employment, is in fact a struggle for fundamental social change.

There is also a growing struggle against U.S. domination of our economic, political and cultural life, made possible by the betrayal by the Canadian ruling class. Today the struggle for Canadian sovereignty and independence is a struggle for the future of Canada — an essential condition and step for the advance to socialism.

Increasing numbers of Canadians are coming together to advance democratic, anti-corporate and progressive demands on a myriad of class and social issues. Such movements include, among others, those which seek:

- to defend Medicare, public education, pensions and other social programs; to oppose deregulation and to prevent the privatization and dismantling of the public sector at the hands of neoliberal governments;
- to oppose capitalist globalization and TNC plunder of Third World peoples, and to defend Canadian sovereignty and prevent the alienation of our country's wealth and natural resources;
- to protect and preserve the environment from wanton corporate devastation;
- to oppose war, imperialist aggression, the continuing arms race and Canada's participation in NATO; to demand the elimination of all weapons of mass destruction, and an independent Canadian foreign policy of peace and friendship with all nations and peoples;
- to combat racism, discrimination and intolerance, and to oppose any resurgence of fascism in Canada;

- to defend the rights of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered people, and guarantee their full equality;
- to defend and expand the rights of the disabled;
- to oppose reactionary U.S. mass culture, and ensure the development of a democratic Canadian culture; and
- to defend human rights and the individual, social and democratic rights of the Canadian people, and to prevent their erosion by corporations and governments.

In striving to realize their aims and objectives, these movements unavoidably come into conflict with monopoly capitalism. To a greater or lesser degree, their efforts to change government policy and win even mild progressive reforms challenge vested interests and meet the combined resistance of reactionary finance capital and its state. In this sense, these movements are objectively anti-monopoly in character, and are therefore important forces in the struggle for fundamental democratic and social change, in alliance with the working class.

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To win the majority of Canadians away from capitalist influence will require a persistent and complex struggle and flexible political tactics.

Independent political action of the trade union, people's and democratic movements can be the means of winning masses of the people away from the capitalist parties, and setting them on the path of political independence and fundamental change. The Communist Party will strive to convince all those involved in independent political activity to fight for consistently progressive, anti-monopoly measures.

The Communist Party sees the struggles of the people around their economic, social and political aspirations as the decisive factor determining the course of social development.

The Communist Party combines public mass work, support for and participation in the mass movements, with the continuing struggle to win a people's majority in Parliament as an integral part of the path to socialism. No meaningful parliamentary advance can be achieved without the people's mass action.

In line with our continuing struggle for working class and democratic unity, the Communist Party determines its own electoral tactic according to the circumstances and the relationship of forces in each particular election. The Communist Party nominates candidates around the Party's platform as a component part of the overall struggle for the unity of the democratic, left and anti-monopoly forces.

Local governments are more accessible and closer to communities and the people. Local governments' powers and role are being undermined by legislation

at higher levels. At the municipal level, the Party works for broadly based progressive civic alliances to address the growing difficulties of our cities, towns and rural areas, which negatively affect the lives of working people, homeowners and tenants alike.

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In all of its mass political work, the Communist Party strives to help build a democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance. Such a new alliance will include the Communist Party and other parties and political organizations, democratic people's organizations in Quebec and English-speaking Canada, the trade unions, farm organizations, youth and student organizations, associations of intellectuals and professionals, women's organizations, senior citizens organizations, and cooperatives.

The Communist Party works to unite all these people's forces as the basis for a democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist people's government, led by the working class, in which the Communist Party aspires to play a key role.

Chapter 6

FOR A PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT

A democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance will have as its objective the democratic restructuring of Canadian society so that the interests of the majority of Canadians come first, and the stranglehold of finance capital on every aspect of life is broken. It will seek to advance the working people's interests through all available avenues of struggle, based on massive and united extra-parliamentary action.

The alliance will strive to score electoral advances, and the winning of power by a people's government dedicated to carrying out sweeping measures to democratize society and transform economic relations in the interests of the working class and the Canadian people as a whole.

Such a breakthrough will be difficult to accomplish given the sophisticated means at the disposal of the ruling class to manipulate public opinion, discourage political activism and otherwise influence the outcome of bourgeois elections. A crucial task for the alliance will be to defend and expand democracy and to fight against corporate and governmental attacks on the electoral process.

A democratic, anti-monopoly government, based on a parliamentary majority, and acting in concert with the united and militant extra-parliamentary movements of the people, would signal a qualitative shift in the balance of class forces in Canadian society, and open the door to the revolutionary transformation to socialism. It would involve the people in a truly meaningful way.

The people's government would be committed to a program of action geared to serve people before profit. That program would arise in the course of the social, economic and political struggles of the working class and its democratic allies, and be subject to the widest discussion and approval among all of the forces of the alliance.

Communists will struggle to win support for the most advanced program of political, economic and social transformation possible in line with the changing conditions. The program must aim: (1) to confront and restrict the power of finance capital (both foreign and domestic), and to extend public ownership of key sectors of the economy; (2) to redistribute wealth and raise the living standards and conditions of life for the vast majority of the people; and (3) to introduce sweeping democratic reforms to enhance popular control and administration of the Canadian state at all levels of government.

For working people to secure democratic, sovereign control of the Canadian economy, the domination of international finance capital must first be challenged and broken. Communists propose a people's program that would aim to curb monopoly power through sweeping tax reforms which significantly increase taxes on corporate profits and individual wealth, through the establishment of controls over investment, exchange, and speculative activities, and through expanding

workers' rights in deciding workplace, managerial and investment practices. The people's program would also involve reversing privatization, and moving to nationalize and put under democratic popular control the existing monopolies in vital sectors of the economy, especially in the financial sector (banks and financial institutions), in the energy and natural resources sector (extraction, production, etc.), and in transportation and communication. Measures would also be necessary to gain public democratic control over foreign trade, and to extricate Canada from NAFTA, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the WTO and other unfair, pro-corporate investment agreements and trading blocs.

The struggle for economic, political and cultural sovereignty will be a critically important part of the people's program. Sovereign control is vital to ensure that the working class and its allies can successfully carry out the rest of the program of social transformation, and advance to a socialist Canada.

Measures to redistribute wealth and raise living standards and conditions of life for the vast majority of the people would include (among other reforms) the following:

- (1) a substantial reduction in the working day and working week, with no reductions in pay, or loss of service to the public;
- (2) significant increases in minimum rates of pay, pensions, and other employment-related benefits for all full- and part-time workers;
- (3) a massive jobs program to put millions of unemployed and under-employed Canadians back to work, to ensure that unemployment is substantially reduced, and that all workers enjoy unemployment benefits for the full duration of joblessness;
- (4) the enforcement of laws guaranteeing complete pay equity for women workers, the guarantee of full reproductive rights, and the provision of universal, free childcare and other vital services to ensure that women can play a full and equal role in all aspects of economic, political and social life;
- (5) the provision of complete, free, and universally-accessible services to all Canadians, including health care, primary, secondary and post-secondary education, liveable pensions, housing and other basic services; and
- (6) the extension and protection of workers' rights to unionization, free collective bargaining, and the right to strike.

The people's government, with the active support and mobilization of the working class and its allies, would also introduce sweeping reforms to enhance popular control and administration of the Canadian state and of governments at all levels. The democratization of political and social life would ensure that the working class and the masses of the Canadian people exercise greater political power and participate fully in the implementation of the people's program.

The people's government would also forge a new independent foreign policy based on peace and disarmament, and develop economic, cultural and diplomatic relations with all countries on the basis of full equality and mutual

respect. It would withdraw Canada from NATO and NORAD, oppose all aggressive military pacts and acts of aggression, and work for peaceful political solutions to regional and international conflicts. Canada would work for equitable, non-exploitative economic relations between all states, for the advancement of developing countries, and for international solidarity with the peoples of the world struggling for independence, peace and social progress. Canada would work toward the elimination of imperialist control of the U.N. Security Council.

The Canadian State and especially its repressive apparatus — the army, police forces, and the courts and prison system — would be placed under genuine democratic control and supervision, and the reactionary, anti-democratic Canadian Security Intelligence Service dismantled. Such fundamental re-organization would help prevent hostile class forces from using this part of the state apparatus to disrupt and subvert the interests of the working people and the people's government.

Measures would also be taken to democratize electoral laws and structures to ensure fair and free elections by the introduction of proportional representation, the right of recall of elected representatives, and steps to end the corporate monopoly of the mass media.

The people's program should also include the call for the re-drafting of the Canadian constitution by a constituent assembly. The redrafted constitution should be subject to the approval of the national components of Canada. It should enshrine democratic and social and individual human rights in the fundamental law of the country. A new constitution must also guarantee the full and equal rights and declare the voluntary union of all nations in Canada. Measures to reduce national inequalities will be a decisive factor forging the unity of the working class and its allies across the country.

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Although such measures would not constitute socialism, the victory of a people's government devoted to carrying out such a broad program would mark a significant step in the struggle for fundamental change and socialist transformation.

To succeed, a people's government would require the full and conscious mobilization of the working class and its allies outside Parliament. With each meaningful reform enacted, with each democratic measure secured, with each encroachment on the power and privilege of capital, the ruling class and its imperialist international partners would stiffen their resistance by all means at their disposal. But, at the same time, such measures can help to galvanize the masses, and promote working class actions in support of the people's government.

This would be a period of intensified class struggle on all fronts — political, economic and ideological.

The successful implementation of the people's program, and the pace with which it is carried out will depend on the unity and militancy of the working class

and its revolutionary vanguard, and on the enduring unity of the entire democratic, anti-monopoly, anti-imperialist alliance. Prevailing regional and international conditions will also affect the pace of social transformations.

Throughout this process there will be social and political mobilization of the working class and people's forces to support and implement the program of the people's government — through electoral and workplace struggles, street demonstrations and other actions. At the same time, the threatened ruling class will attempt to shake the confidence and unity of the people's forces and to frustrate their ability to carry out the people's program.

To preserve its class privileges and reestablish its supremacy, the capitalist class will be inclined to resort to economic blackmail and sabotage, subversion from within those sections of the state apparatus it still influences and controls, political violence and terrorism, and even open rebellion and foreign intervention. The people's government, with the full support of the working class, will be fully within its rights to counter any such anti-democratic and illegal assaults on people's power.

Together with its allies, the working class, working both indirectly through its elected government and directly at the point of production in the factories and offices and in the communities, will progressively extend and deepen the content of the people's program. More sweeping reforms will be implemented, curbing the power of capital through progressive nationalizations, investment and currency controls, and other measures.

As the working class and its political forces become more experienced and confident, as social and economic changes increasingly shift the balance of class forces in society, revolutionary conditions will develop. The socialist option advanced by the Communist Party will win wide support.

The revolutionary transformation to socialism will mark the absolute transfer of power from the capitalist class to the working class together with its allies. This process will be influenced by both domestic and external conditions and developments. The pace and character of this transformation will be determined by the unity and resolve of the working class and its closest allies at decisive junctures, and the capacity of the progressive and revolutionary forces to frustrate and curtail counter-revolutionary activity which violates democracy and the rule of law.

Chapter 7

BUILDING SOCIALISM

For Canadians to exercise genuine people's rule over the collective life of the country, they must control Canada's economy. Democracy therefore requires socialism: the social ownership of the machinery, raw materials and other means of production used to sustain and enhance human life.

Socialism in our country will develop along lines democratically decided by the working class and its allies. It will exhibit unique features, reflecting Canada's history and current level of development, and its rich and diverse cultures and social traditions. Socialism will develop at its own pace, and with its own content, based on the planned, balanced and proportionate development of the economy through public ownership of the means of production. . There is no universal model of socialism, nor any pre-determined timetable or schedule its development must follow.

But socialism will not be re-invented from scratch. Careful account will need to be taken of the important positive and negative lessons on the building of socialism from the experiences in many countries over the past century. Where appropriate, these experiences and lessons will have to be creatively applied to the building of socialism in Canada.

Despite setbacks in the revolutionary process, this is the historical epoch of the transition from capitalism to socialism on a world scale, a process in which the working class plays a central and growing role in advancing democratic, progressive and revolutionary transformations.

The Soviet Experience

It is particularly important to assess the experiences and draw certain lessons from the development of socialism in the first workers' state — the Soviet Union — and to understand why socialism was overturned, and capitalism restored, after more than seventy years. The question demands the most searching thought and discussion, for two reasons. On the one hand, understanding both the great achievements of the Soviet people and the external and internal causes responsible for their grave setback can help Canadians in building socialism while avoiding the repetition of what went wrong there. Secondly, the defeat of socialism in the USSR is a powerful ideological weapon in the hands of monopoly capitalism, which it uses in order to convince workers and progressive-minded people that socialism does not work. By negating socialism as the revolutionary alternative to capitalism, big business seeks to discourage the workers and weaken their class struggle, and instead lead them to find an accommodation with the prevailing capitalist order.

We reject the bourgeois contention that socialism is a failure, that it is an inherently inferior and unworkable alternative to capitalism. Socialism was

weakened and ultimately crushed in the USSR (and in other former socialist countries) as a result of a complex combination of interrelated internal and external circumstances and contradictions which culminated in its defeat and the temporary victory of counterrevolution.

The October 1917 Socialist Revolution in Russia marked a genuine new dawn in human social development. For the first time in history, workers set out to build a new society free from exploitation and oppression. The Soviet Union scored many great social achievements, overcoming unemployment, illiteracy, starvation, homelessness, and deep alienation. Socialism in the Soviet Union transformed an economically and culturally “backward” country to one of the world’s leading powers, and made great advances in culture and science.

These achievements were all the more remarkable, considering the relentless imperialist pressures against the USSR throughout its history. In its unflagging efforts to crush socialism, imperialist powers twice undertook direct military invasions (in the first of which Canada participated). They applied harsh economic sanctions, and precipitated an immensely expensive and dangerous nuclear arms race to bleed the USSR white, while sustaining a prolonged ideological and propaganda war, and resorting to outright subversion and sabotage.

Internationally, the Soviet Union played the decisive role in the defeat of European fascism in World War II, championed the cause of decolonization, supported liberation movements throughout the Third World, and provided vital assistance to the newly emergent states. Its peace policy also restricted — though it could not entirely suppress — imperialism’s tendency to military aggression.

Socialism also benefited the working class in the advanced capitalist countries, greatly strengthening the pressure on the ruling classes to grant substantial concessions to working people in the form of labour rights, the forty-hour work week, unemployment insurance, women’s rights, health care, public education, and pensions.

The internal causes of the crisis and defeat of socialism in the Soviet Union were not rooted in the intrinsic nature of socialism, but rather involved distortions and outright departures from socialist theory and practice. They arose, in part, from the extremely difficult conditions under which socialism was built.

Pre-revolutionary Russia was a sprawling, but economically under-developed country. It had a massive peasant population, but a relatively small working class. Poverty and illiteracy were rampant. The First World War, and Civil War that followed, worsened the conditions which confronted the young Soviet republic. However, owing to the unslacking hostility of imperialism — not least, from Nazi Germany, which invaded in 1941 — it was necessary to bring about modern industrialization at a stupendous pace.

In large measure, the adverse objective conditions forced the Soviet government to accelerate the socialist transformation of economic and social life,

rapidly jumping over many transition stages in building socialism which would have made for a much more balanced process of development. One of the serious errors was the failure to retain the independent character of Soviet trade unions as the self-defence organizations of Soviet workers.

In these conditions, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union had to assume the task of comprehensively representing the leading role of the working class. The Soviet working class itself was battered and massively decimated by the two brutally destructive wars fought on Soviet soil, with the places of the fallen and the administratively promoted being taken by inexperienced new workers recruited from the countryside. This partly explains, but does not justify, the way that the operations of the Party increasingly merged with the functions of the state, in particular with the administrative-bureaucratic apparatus which necessarily arose to centralize and tightly control the country's scarce and depleted resources. Nor do these difficult conditions justify the serious violations of socialist legality, purges, and serious crimes against innocent people.

Important economic successes were achieved with central economic planning for several decades. It was not planning as such, but rather stifling rigidities and a myriad of other distortions in the principles of socialist construction, combined with external imperialist pressures, that undermined the ability of socialist societies to master the scientific and technological revolution. As a result, the USSR and other socialist countries fell dangerously behind the developed capitalist countries in labour productivity and the material standard of living. This had destabilizing consequences.

The Party itself became ever more integrated into the administration of the state. The functions of the elected Soviets (people's governing councils) became increasingly formal in character. Genuine popular governance with open criticism gave way to bureaucracy and commandism. Over time, the political connection between the Party and the working class and people as a whole suffered. Inner-party democracy was also eroded, too often replaced by careerism and opportunism inside the Party.

Great strides were made in advancing the conditions of Soviet women, especially on the job. But sexist limits to the emancipation of women were allowed to pass unchallenged.

All these negative developments reflected a degeneration of the central role of socialist democracy in the construction of a workers' state, and stunted the development of the political role of the working class and its allies in leading this transformation and the building of a new socialist society. Indeed, the violation of socialist democracy and legality was a major factor in eroding the people's participation in the government and in the state, and led to widespread cynicism and social alienation.

There was also a dogmatic ossification of theory which increasingly sapped the Party's dynamism and prevented a real analysis of concrete conditions and problems in the building of socialism. Serious theoretical errors resulted — in estimating the world situation, in underestimating the resilience of capitalism, in

proclaiming the irreversibility of socialist advances and relying on a military balance of forces between socialism and capitalism, as well as errors and insensitivity. For instance, the national question was proclaimed to have been fully “solved,” and socialism was all but declared to have eliminated the need for any ecological concern. The shutdown of public and inner-party debate on such questions adversely affected the foreign and domestic policies that flowed from these mistakes. The most costly result of the stagnation of Marxist-Leninist theory was the weakening of the Party itself, including its ability to identify and combat the rise of bourgeois, reformist and openly counter-revolutionary ideology within and beyond its own ranks.

In the presence of these internal and external factors, opportunist and counter-revolutionary forces gained the upper hand within the leadership of the Party, and finally brought about the collapse of the Soviet system and with it the other socialist states of Europe. Since the collapse of socialism, working people in these former socialist countries face massive privatization and the theft of social property, mass unemployment and poverty, the drastic erosion of education, health care and other social rights, the rise of organized crime and corruption, and the rise of ethnic and racial hatred.

The Construction of Socialism and the Socialist State in Canada

In contrast to the conditions that existed in the early years of the former Soviet Union or in other countries, socialism in Canada will be built on a highly developed economic and technical base, with a highly trained and educated working class, a developed infrastructure, valuable natural resources and a diverse set of secondary and tertiary industries. These conditions, combined with the lessons — both positive and negative — which can be derived from earlier socialist experiences, have the potential to provide a sound foundation for the construction of a socialist Canada.

Building socialism requires the establishment of a new, socialist state, led by the working class and its allies. A socialist state is essential to plan and organize production and distribution, to break the power of the capitalist class, to extend democracy so that the creative power of the working people is turned to the building of a new, socialist society and to prevent the counter-revolutionary restoration of capitalism.

Ample historical evidence testifies to the fact that reactionary capitalist forces will not give up their power and privilege voluntarily. They will try to halt the democratic process. The danger will inevitably arise of capitalist violence against the socialist state and the expressed will of the majority of the people. This cannot be overlooked except at severe cost. The working class and its allies, when they achieve socialist power, will be justified in using the power and authority of the state to protect the democratic will of the majority against the minority, who will strive to restore their lost positions. The nature of the laws and measures enacted to protect working class power will depend on the amount of resistance that the reactionary capitalist elements offer to socialist law and order.

The peaceful transition to socialism, which is desirable, depends not only on the wishes of the people but on the relationship of forces at the time. The maximum unity and single-minded purpose of the people, the united participation of the widest masses of the working class in political struggle and the forging of unity with the small producers (farmers, fishers and artisans) and with the middle strata of the population will be crucial to withstand and paralyze capitalist violence and political reaction. The working class must be ready to use all forms of struggle to combat capital's inevitable resistance to social progress.

For the first time in Canada's history, however, the majority of the people will rule the country and establish a genuine democracy. The dictatorship of capital over labour — the rule of the minority over the majority — will be abolished and replaced by a socialist democracy in which political power will reside with the working class and its allies. For the first time, the interests of the Canadian people will be the prime determinant of our economic, political and cultural life.

Irrespective of the form it will take, the socialist state, from the point of view of its class essence, will represent working class rule. Marx referred to this as "the dictatorship of the proletariat." In practical terms, state power will be exercised by the great majority of the Canadian population — over the former capitalist minority.

The Socialist Transformation

The political life of the socialist state will be more profoundly democratic than anything achievable under capitalism. Millions of working people will participate in the administration of the country's affairs.

In order to establish the widest possible unity for the building of a socialist Canada, our party advocates agreement on a common program of all political parties and people's organizations that recognize the necessity of a revolutionary social transformation and the leading role which the working class must play.

While it is impossible to know for certain the exact form that a socialist Canada would take, our party's conception of that socialist state includes the following:

Our party advocates the formation of a multi-party government of those political forces that agree on the achievement and building of a socialist society. In such a multi-party government, all parties willing to participate in building socialism would make their contribution, and opposition parties too could make a positive contribution providing they abide by the laws and the socialist constitution.

Although capitalism prepares the material prerequisites, socialism does not develop spontaneously, but must be built in a prolonged struggle against the old and for the new. Immediately on its establishment, the workers' state will undertake the task of organizing and leading, step by step, the transition of Canada to socialism.

It cannot be said today through just what stages this historical process will have to pass, or that it will involve only advances and no retreats. The pace at which socialist construction can proceed will depend on the democratic will and class struggle of the Canadian workers and people generally, and on the strength of the resistance put up by the capitalist exploiters, as well as on the international context.

The socialist government will have to replace the old capitalist state by a new socialist state. In order to reorganize the Canadian economy and society generally for the benefit of working people, it will have the duty to enforce the constitution and code of laws of the Canadian socialist republic, to maintain popular rule, and to protect socialist property and the rights and personal property of the individual.

The rights of the people will be proclaimed and the means provided by which everyone can exercise those rights. New technologies will make it possible to cut red tape and official arrogance in governmental operation and the workplace.

Freedom of speech, press, association and assembly will be guaranteed in the constitution. Working people and their organizations will have the media of mass communication at their disposal. Church and state, and church and school, will be separated. People will have the right to hold, practice and advocate religious or non-religious views. Fundamental civil rights, including the prohibition of arbitrary arrest and police action, the access of all citizens to the courts, habeas corpus and trial by jury will be embodied in the laws and constitution. The judiciary will uphold the constitution and laws of the socialist state and protect the rights of the individual, including the right to personal privacy.

The socialist government will enact the social ownership of the economy's financial and industrial sectors, lands and resources and transportation and communications.

The functioning of the economy will require that small and medium non-monopoly businesses continue to operate for some time as part of the overall economic plan, under a variety of forms of property and of production, under conditions established by the socialist government. In addition to state enterprises and private enterprise, there will be producers' and consumers' cooperatives and, where conditions warrant, joint state-and-private enterprises.

The individual ownership by working people of personal possessions, homes and cottages, pensions, savings and insurance policies will be guaranteed. The Canadian people themselves will decide, in the light of circumstances, on any compensation for the expropriated property of big capitalists.

Socialist planning of the economy, employing the latest scientific and technological advances and relying on the creative abilities of the working people, will make it possible to provide full employment and to end regional disparities across Canada. Social programs will be progressively expanded to take the place more and more of items of private consumption previously obtainable only for a price. Accordingly, the role of the market in Canadian

society will be progressively diminished and replaced with production for use. The benefits of new technologies and higher productivity will be used to reduce working hours and heavy physical labour and provide working people with more time for meaningful leisure and culture.

Production will be planned to meet the changing material and cultural needs of the people, while at the same time halting and reversing environmental degradation and destruction caused under capitalism. The needs of the Canadian and the global environment will be respected, and development strategies will be selected in such a way as to minimize the exhaustion of resources. Production can be planned to meet the needs of our people without the profit-driven promotion of over-consumption that accompanies mass poverty in the world today. A socialist economy will create the conditions necessary to fully implement the prudent and efficient use of natural resources and a planned management of the environment, but vigilance and scrutiny must be ongoing.

By removing the heavy toll exacted by the capitalist class in the form of profit, rent and interest, and parasitic speculation, and by eliminating the tremendous waste caused by military production and wars, economic crises, overproduction, planned obsolescence of consumer goods, unemployment, cut-throat rivalry, and competitive advertising, the socialist state will place at the disposal of society huge amounts of previously wasted resources.

Under socialism, the creation of social wealth has only one objective — to further the interests of the people, by raising living standards, improving and extending social services and unleashing the cultural forces now stifled by corporate domination.

Security, Freedom and Human Progress

Once socialism is established, it will guarantee the right to a job to every Canadian by law. Wages will be paid according to the quantity and quality of work and level of skill performed.

Since industry will be owned by the working people, the bourgeoisie will disappear as a class; consequently, the conditions will be created for ending the conflict between labour and capital. New social relations, socialist in character, will come into being in which the interests of the workers, engineers, scientists and managers will be harmonized.

Side by side with the operation of a revolutionary people's state, Canadian democracy will increasingly rest on non-governmental institutions of the people. Under socialism trade unions will not only have the rights which they need to function in a capitalist economy — to organize freely, to negotiate, and to strike — but they will participate in the processes of government, and take an active part in the management of the production process and planning bodies at the workplace, regional, provincial and Canada-wide levels. Labour rights will be constitutionally guaranteed. Trade unions will conclude collective agreements with socialist industry, progressively raising wages, shortening hours and

improving working conditions. They will have the power, backed up by the courts, to enforce health and safety laws, to administer social and health insurance and to supervise measures for the mental and physical health of workers.

Farmers will be guaranteed security of tenure on the land they cultivate by law and will be relieved of the burden of debt imposed by the finance and industrial monopolies. Farmers' marketing co-operatives will be a medium of trade between town and country. Where economies of scale can be achieved by combining smaller farms into production co-operatives, the socialist state, through affordable loans and other means, will facilitate this process for interested farmers.

The socialist state will promote the development of science and technology, of accessible and inclusive programs for amateur sports and physical exercise, and a democratic people's culture. State support will stimulate the creative process and build the conditions for a flourishing of the arts. Freedom of artistic expression will be constitutionally guaranteed.

The material conditions for totally overcoming the oppression of women will be provided under socialism. It will be important for socialist society to value fully all women's social and economic contributions, to ensure gender equality in both paid and unpaid work, and to make gender equality pervade all aspects of life. Socialist society will eradicate poverty. The care of children, the sick and the elderly must no longer fall to women but to all adults, with high-quality childcare available to all workers. Gender equality also means zero tolerance for abusive violence against women in any form. A strong commitment to solidarity between men and women is involved in bringing about and maintaining a socialist Canada. Eradicating gender inequality will be crucial for putting capitalism altogether behind us and advancing to a higher stage of history.

A socialist society will protect the rights of children and young people. Educational opportunities will be available to all in a fully democratized and free public educational system, at all levels. Tuition and learning materials will be free, and students at post-secondary institutions will be given living allowances. Employment training for youth will be provided.

The great burden of insecurity will be lifted from the people. Full social services will be provided. Access to adequate health care will be guaranteed. Adequate assistance for child rearing will be provided. Senior citizens will have access to a full range of social services. No one will go hungry or homeless in a socialist Canada. Family law will remove the patriarchal concept of privilege for the heterosexual nuclear family, and instead fully recognize the variety of family forms and sexual orientations.

Socialism creates the conditions for the fundamental and fully democratic solution of the national question. The constitution of a socialist Canada, firmly based on the principle of the right of nations to self-determination, will guarantee the voluntary union of free and equal nations. The essential rights of national minorities and ethnic groups will be constitutionally guaranteed.

A socialist Canada will have to correct the historic injustices which the Aboriginal peoples have experienced, while providing all-round assistance to the furtherance of their national aspirations. Aboriginal people will achieve full and complete equality in all aspects of life, as all vestiges of racism and discrimination are rooted out. Co-operative and public ownership can make it possible for Aboriginal communities to do away with class exploitation. Economic and other forms of assistance will be necessary so that Aboriginal peoples can protect and develop their languages, cultures and values. Aboriginal rights will be spelled out expressly in the socialist constitution.

In general, collective rights will be protected and advanced in such a way as to secure also the essential individual rights of Canadians. Above all, the right of democratic decision-making and the right of dissent must be protected.

The Constitution will declare that all power derives from the people and is exercised at all levels of government through their elected representatives. The right of recall of representatives by their electors, the right of access to information, and the right of petition and criticism of government or any branch of it must prevail. Through the elected organs of government and through trade union, factory committee, farm, community and professional organizations, the masses of the people will take part in the administration of Canada in a new and more democratic way than at any time in the past. A people's army and a popular militia will need to be formed to preserve socialist law and order and to assure the defence of Canada.

Canada's relations with all other countries will be governed by principles of equality, peace, friendship, open diplomacy, cultural and scientific exchange and trade on mutually advantageous terms.

It will be illegal to practice or advocate mistreatment or discrimination on the basis of national, ethnic or Aboriginal origin, gender, colour, disability, sexual orientation, or religion.

Socialism will create new social and economic relations of equality. The exploitation of one class of people by another will be abolished — the essential condition for building a new society in which human rights are ensured.

Socialism will not only alter the basic institutions of society in a radical way. Building upon the human capacity for practical intelligence and caring solidarity, which people have always shown themselves able to display in some measure, even under the most adverse conditions, socialism will in time change the whole tone of people's day-to-day relations with one another. People will start to take increasingly direct charge over their affairs collectively. Labour itself will become, in Marx's words, "not only a means of life, but life's prime want." People will tend to become less socially passive and competitive, and more critical-minded and co-operative.

A new people will emerge in time, free from bigotry and prejudice, reared in a humane and friendly atmosphere. Creative labour for the good of society and the individual will be characteristic of the citizens of a Canadian socialist

commonwealth. They will bring into being the communist society humanity has dreamed of for centuries — a classless society founded on an abundance of material and spiritual wealth in which the state will wither away and people will each contribute according to their abilities and receive according to their needs.

Chapter 8

THE COMMUNIST PARTY

The historic mission of the working class and the Communist Party is to lead Canada from capitalism to socialism and ultimately communism. In order to achieve that lofty goal, the working class and the Party must also struggle to prevent the outbreak of world war, and to protect the natural environment from devastation.

The Communist Party strives to be the leading political party of the working class, of all who labour by hand and brain. It arises out of the working class and is an organized political detachment of that class. The Party has no interests separate and apart from those of the working class as a whole.

The world outlook of the Communist Party is based on Marxism-Leninism, which embodies the theory of scientific socialism first developed by Karl Marx, Frederick Engels and V.I. Lenin. Marxism-Leninism is not a dogma; it is a living, developing theory, tool of analysis and guide to action. It incorporates the concentrated experience of all the struggles of the working class, both in Canada and around the world. Over the more than 150 years since the Communist Manifesto was written, Marxism-Leninism has emerged as the theory and practice of socialism.

Workers wage a daily economic struggle in the workplace for better wages and working conditions. However, socialist theory and practice do not arise spontaneously out of the workplace. The Communist Party, through its work, fuses scientific socialism with the class struggle and by so doing spreads political and socialist consciousness among the workers — an awareness of their historic mission as a class.

The Communist Party works actively to make the world outlook of Marxism-Leninism the property of the working class and defends Marxist-Leninist principles against attempts to negate or distort them. The science of Marxism-Leninism, and the party which embodies it, are essential for the achievement of working class political power, its consolidation and the building of socialism.

Communists strive to play an active and initiating role in the daily struggles of the people in defence of their living standards and their material, social and cultural needs.

The Party seeks to win leadership of the majority of the working class by advancing its policies in the daily struggles for the immediate needs of the working people and by pointing out the lessons to be learned from these struggles. It engages in public work on all issues of the day, and fights for the unity of the working class.

The Communist Party seeks constantly to widen its public influence and to win to its ranks the most advanced and devoted among the working class,

farmers, intellectuals, students, women, and youth. The Communist Party engages in both electoral and extra-parliamentary arenas of struggle.

The Party conducts a struggle for working class ideology and against capitalist ideology and its defense by social reformism. It combats opportunism from both the right and the left, as well as dogmatism, sectarianism, chauvinism, bourgeois nationalism, anarchism, and adventurism. It cooperates with the organizations of the working class in common struggle for the people's needs. In democratic discussions it strives to convince those who follow social-reformist leaders of the truth of scientific socialism.

The Communist Party seeks to unite within a single party all who fight for socialism on a Marxist-Leninist basis.

The Communist Party takes a stand on all matters affecting the people of Canada. It defends the people of Canada, and the rights of all nations within Canada. It defends the basic interests of the working class and the working people as a whole, which are those of the vast majority of Canadians. It defends the sovereignty of Canada. It defends the rights of women and fights for full gender equality.

The Party strives to build relations within its ranks based on our communist principles and ethics. It fights against any manifestation of sexism, racism or forms of discrimination and intolerance which may arise within the Party. It defends and promotes inner-party democracy at all times, and protects the constitutional rights of all its members.

The Communist Party is dedicated to democratic advance and defends the democratic and legal rights of the people against reactionary attacks, and seeks to extend these rights. The Communist Party is not a party of coups, putsches or conspiracies. It opposes acts of individual terrorism and those who would replace persistent and constant work for the revolutionary education and organization of the masses with empty pseudo-revolutionary phrases and irresponsible calls for action without regard to the actual situation.

The Communist Party carries forward and builds upon the traditions of those who have fought for democratic liberties and Canadian independence. It embodies the dreams and aspirations of the heroes of countless Canadian labour struggles.

The Communist Party works for the political advancement of the Canadian workers, fishers and farmers and the middle sections of the population. In the course of a consistent struggle for democracy, the majority of the Canadian people, by their own united actions and political will and led by the working class, are capable of achieving major advances. The Communist Party works for cooperation with all labour and democratic forces to bring about a new majority to fight for fundamental change and social advance through the achievement of a people's government, opening up prospects for further revolutionary transformation and the victory of socialism.

Communists strive to strengthen the unity in action of all of the labour, progressive and democratic forces. The Communist Party seeks cooperation with other organizations in the labour and democratic movements and promotes the development of broad coalitions, alliances and united front formations that defend and advance the interests of the working class and the social, economic and democratic rights of the Canadian people. Building alliances increases the material strength of the working people and illustrates that the particular oppression a group of workers feel is part of a broader pattern of capitalist oppression that affects all working people. It illustrates the relationship of those classes and groups to one another and to the state. It helps working people to respond to other cases of capitalist oppression. It teaches working people to learn how to work with other classes and groups. In other words, it helps to create the basis for working class leadership of society as a whole.

At the same time, the CPC maintains its ideological, political and organizational independence. It explains its program openly among the people, putting forward the necessity and timeliness of socialist transformation.

The Communist Party opposes “big nation” chauvinism as well as narrow nationalism in politics, economics, and cultural and social thought. It fights for the firm unity of peoples in Canada on the basis of full equality and respect for national rights. It works for the closest friendship and cooperation among Canadians of all national origins and fights for their right to nurture their national traditions.

In common with Canada’s early radical-democrats and pioneers of labour, Communists are internationalists, and hold that the fundamental interests of working people throughout the world are one. The struggle to advance the interests of the working class and people of Canada, and to defend its sovereignty, is inseparable from working class internationalism — the solidarity of the working class of all countries in cooperation against imperialist rule and for a world at peace.

Respect for the equality of all peoples and the sovereignty of all nations, great and small, is a guiding principle of working class internationalism.

Canadian workers have the duty of fighting against Canadian imperialist exploitation of the peoples of Latin America, Asia and Africa. In the Americas there is a special need for solidarity among the working people of Canada, the U.S.A., socialist Cuba and all of Latin America and the Caribbean, in the joint struggle against U.S. imperialism and for national and social liberation.

Canadian Communists stand for the emancipation of all humanity from capitalist exploitation, colonial plunder, imperialist war, poverty and ignorance. The Communist Party works to convince the Canadian working class of the necessity for solidarity with the working people of all countries who are attempting to break free from the domination of imperialism and are striving to build socialism.

In line with its Marxist-Leninist world outlook, the Communist Party studies and learns from the experiences of the working class movements of other lands while taking into account the specific conditions and traditions of Canada and its people. It develops close relations with other Communist and Workers' parties and national liberation movements on the basis of solidarity, independence, full equality, and non-interference. It works for the political and ideological unity of the world Communist movement.

The Party's organizational principle of democratic centralism combines the participation of all its members in democratic discussion and decisions on policy and the election of all leading committees, with central collective leadership in action and with decisions binding on all members. It relies on criticism and self-criticism and the public acknowledgement of error in order to learn from its mistakes and to improve its work.

The course of Canada's development leads on a complicated but inexorable path towards the replacement of capitalism by socialism. In fighting for this fundamental change, the Communists in fact express the ideals of vast numbers of Canadians who aspire to a new, humane social order free from exploitation and oppression.

The Communist Party cherishes and promotes the highest moral quality of the working class — devotion to the liberating socialist cause, the cause of human freedom and happiness. It seeks to cultivate this humanist ethic among the working people.

For all the above reasons, the Communist Party is the most advanced section of the working class, and strives to become its vanguard.

Since the founding of the Communist Party of Canada in 1921, Canadian Communists have held high the banner of peace, internationalism, Canadian independence, democracy and socialism. They have always stood with the struggles of the workers and farmers for a better life, often providing leadership for those struggles.

This is the Communist program for Canada.

The Communist Party welcomes into membership all who agree with this program and are prepared to make it their own and strive for its achievement.

Join the Communist Party!

Workers and oppressed people of all countries, unite!