

May 19, 2018 - No. 19

No Consent, No Pipeline!

Militant March in Vancouver Against Kinder Morgan Pipeline Expansion



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No Consent, No Pipeline!

Militant March in Vancouver Against Kinder Morgan Pipeline Expansion



On May 12 some 1,000 people participated in a militant three-hour march through downtown Vancouver to reaffirm the people's opposition and determination to stop Kinder Morgan's expansion of its Trans Mountain Pipeline from Alberta to its terminal at the head of Burrard Inlet in Burnaby. The action, organized by the environmental umbrella group Climate Convergence attracted people of all ages and from various walks of life.

After listening to an impassioned speech by an Indigenous woman from the BC interior who spoke about the negative impact the project would have on Indigenous communities en route and described the hardships that current flooding in the interior is causing and denounced government indifference, the marchers headed out behind drummers and a huge red banner which read "No Kinder Morgan. No Consent. No Pipeline." There was almost constant shouting of slogans with many raised fists. Passing motorists honked horns, raised fists or gave thumbs up. Some passing pedestrians joined the march while many others took pictures or video. Marchers stopped in front of various banks which have heavily invested in Kinder Morgan and calls were made to divest from



these banks. A stop was also made in front of the building housing the court room where more than 200 people are being tried for criminal contempt after defying an injunction barring protesters from stepping within five metres of Kinder Morgan property.

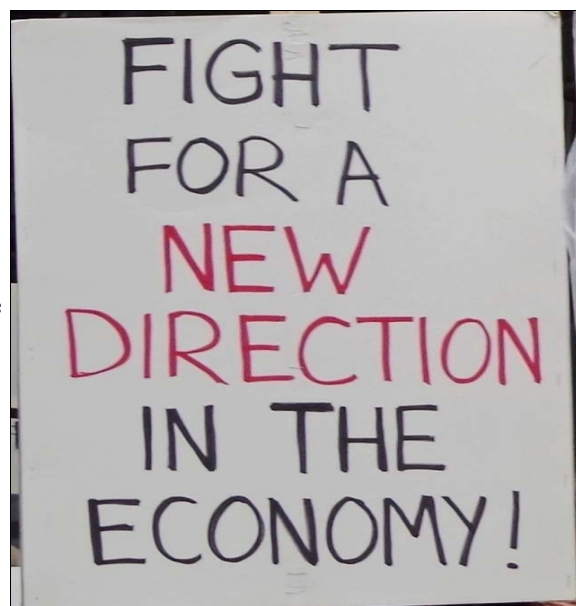
Among the numerous placards carried by marchers were *Defend Indigenous Sovereignty*; *System Change Not Climate Change*; *Raise Wages Not Sea Levels*; *Our Demands Most Modest Are: We Only Want The Earth* (which was greeted enthusiastically with comments such as "That sums it up"); *Who Decides? We Decide!* An article reprinted from *TML Weekly* entitled "Who Benefits from LNG Canada's Natural Gas Extraction, Liquefaction, and Shipping Project" was distributed to participants and onlookers.



Canada Needs a New Direction for the Economy

The workers' movement in Canada has given rise to many slogans expressing the need for a new direction for the economy: *Don't Ship Our Jobs Down the Pipeline!*; *Our Resources, Not Big Oils!*; *Refine It Where We Mine It!*; *No to Rip and Ship!*; *Whose Economy? Our Economy!*; *Manufacturing Yes! Nation-Wrecking No!*; The slogans express the determination of working people to find solutions to the problems facing the socialized economy and change the direction to develop a pro-social nation-building project and vest sovereignty in the people.

The federal liberal government and Alberta NDP government, together with the energy monopolies and big banks are doing everything they can to suppress all discussion of a way forward. They



assert that the Trans Mountain bitumen pipeline (TMX) is in the national interest and no alternatives are possible or should even be discussed. The people are told that consequences of not building the pipeline and shipping out raw bitumen are so dire that they cannot be contemplated. Exaggerated, over the top claims are made about how the pipeline will result in tens of thousands of jobs, billions of dollars in royalty and tax revenues to fund health care, education and other social programs, and economic disaster if not built.

Now the Trudeau and Notley governments are in negotiations with Kinder Morgan to indemnify, or more properly said, bail out or subsidize its private investment. Many have denounced this as outrageous. Why are governments prepared to shell out vast sums of public money to enormously wealthy private interests? How is this in the national interest to hand over who knows how many millions or billions to Richard Kinder, whose personal fortune exceeds the total estimated price of production of the TMX? Why not have discussion as to what is really needed in Alberta and BC to build a diversified self-reliant economy and invest the people's money in public enterprise? The refusal to do so is what is harming the national interest.



Kinder Morgan Pipeline Crisis



Many commentators see the Kinder Morgan pipeline showdown between BC and the federal government as a crisis of federalism. It is in the sense that arrangements which permitted the harmonization of the interests of the different levels of government in the past when contradictions manifested themselves, no longer exist. The crisis is a clash of authorities and more specifically a clash of the arbitrary police powers within each of these authorities.

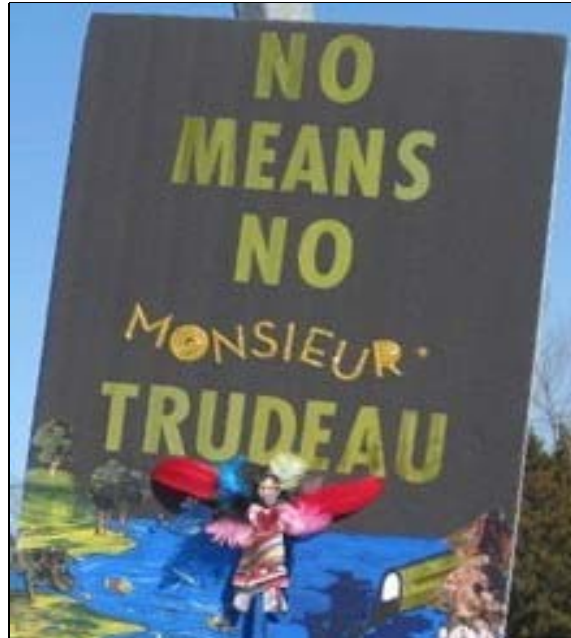
Under neo-liberalism, no role is accorded federal, provincial or municipal jurisdictions or anything that interferes with the most powerful supranational private interests at the very top. When Trudeau speaks of the national interest with regard to any project the imperialists demand, this refers to the need to use the state treasury to guarantee whatever the private interests have planned and to enforce the decision through police powers. Any authority down the line which does not submit to this demand is destroyed.

With Kinder Morgan's pipeline expansion project, which has already received millions of dollars of state funds and a promised \$1.5 billion "Oceans Protection Plan" for infrastructure, Trudeau's new scheme, in true Liberal style, is to indemnify any private money against loss, risk and uncertainty, by throwing the entire financial and police powers of the central state behind the project. This

officially confirms the project as one in conformity with the national interest regardless of evidence to the contrary, and brooks no challenge or even discussion.

Official consent is given through state money while the people's refusal to give their consent is either ignored or damned. The project will be carried out under the protection of the central government's ability to dictate and enforce. These are "police powers" which exist above governments of laws. They are being exercised despite any opposition from the BC government, municipal authorities, Indigenous peoples and others who are not convinced the project is in the public interest.

The process of consultations and National Energy Board hearings have also revealed themselves to be scams of a dubious character and they too are finished with the official decision cast in stone. The uncertainty Kinder Morgan says it refuses to operate under has now "disappeared," all opposition has been circumvented. At least that is how the Trudeau government frames the situation. Like a King Canute, Trudeau declares that the project will now go ahead without direct confrontation with Indigenous peoples, provincial and municipal governments or opposition from the other thousands of concerned members of the polity who have not given informed consent.



For governments in the service of the rich powerful private interests they represent, if certain institutions, collectives and individuals still feel strongly opposed to the project for whatever reason, they stand accused of defying the national interest and the will and electoral mandate of the cartel party in power. Any recalcitrance will pay the price of police powers crashing down on their heads as hundreds have already discovered with injunctions, arrests and court judgements against them. Case closed. This brings shame and disrepute on the Trudeau government and no calm or just resolution for the people who question and strongly oppose this project on many fronts.



Alberta Government Passes Legislation to Restrict Oil Shipments to BC

The Alberta legislature passed Bill 12, *Preserving Canada's Economic Prosperity Act* on May 16. The legislation gives the executive sweeping powers to stop shipments of oil from Alberta to BC, or to dictate how a shipment can be transported, for example increasing the cost by requiring shipment by rail rather than pipeline.

"Albertans, British Columbians and all Canadians should understand that if the path forward for the pipeline through BC is not settled soon, I'm ready and prepared to turn off the taps," Alberta Premier Rachel Notley said.

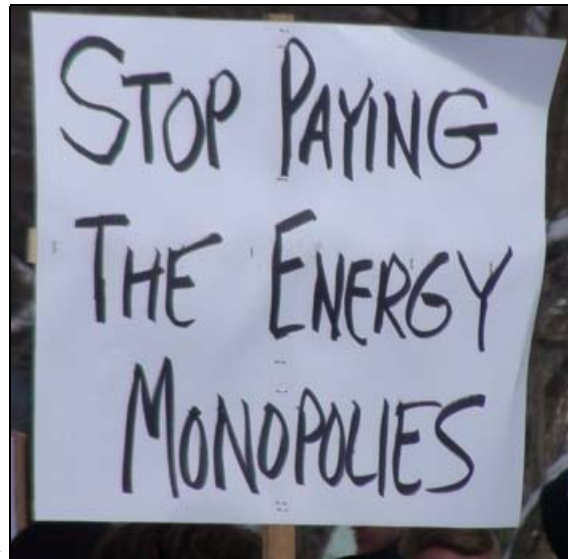
The target of the legislation is shipments of refined oil to BC, or crude oil to BC's only refinery, located in Burnaby. The existing Trans Mountain pipeline regularly batches different products, shipping dilbit (diluted bitumen), and refined products such as gasoline. Only crude and the

condensate required to dilute it to flow through a pipeline are shipped to the U.S. This will continue, while the licence requirement can be used to block shipments to BC's refinery, or shipments of refined fuels such as gasoline, diesel and jet fuel.

Bill 12 gives the Minister of Energy a blank cheque and complete authority to require a person or class of persons to obtain a licence for export of natural gas, crude oil or refined fuels. The Minister can require a licence based on determining whether it is in the "public interest of Alberta" to do so, considering (a) whether adequate pipeline capacity exists to maximize the return on crude oil and diluted bitumen produced in Alberta; (b) whether adequate supplies and reserves of natural gas, crude oil and refined fuels will be available for Alberta's present and future needs, and (c) any other matters considered relevant by the Minister.

A law could not more clearly state that the interests of the most powerful private interests to maximize their profits trump any consideration of what is good or necessary for the Canadian economy, working class and people. The law even explicitly states that "stakeholders" will be consulted before the law is used, making it "legal" that private interests will dictate if and when the police powers authorized by the law will be used.

BC's one small refinery produces 55,000 barrels/day, which supplies just 30 per cent of BC's market. The rest comes either from Edmonton or Washington state refineries, which are in part supplied by oil from Alberta. The BC Parkland refinery (formerly Chevron) has not been able to obtain enough space on the existing Trans Mountain pipeline for the crude oil it needs, and about half of the oil for the refinery from Alberta comes by rail. The National Energy Board refused the refinery's request for priority status on the pipeline. BC is forced to buy refined products from the Washington state refineries, which are considered to be the most profitable in North America. These arrangements all lead to sky-high gasoline prices in BC. They are detrimental to the BC economy and to the people of BC, and siphon off added value produced by the BC working class to the advantage of the global monopolies who own the refineries in Washington state.



Bill 12 is designed to authorize the use of executive power as directed by the most powerful monopolies to circumvent existing laws and agreements such as the New West Partnership Trade Agreement (NWPTA) and the Canadian Free Trade Agreement (CFTA). The Alberta government described NWPTA as "a ground-breaking economic partnership between the Governments of British Columbia, Alberta, and Saskatchewan. Building upon the [Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement between the governments of Alberta and BC], the NWPTA creates Canada's largest interprovincial free trade zone," ensuring "the free flow of goods, services, investment and workers." Article 301 of the Canadian Free Trade Agreement, to which Alberta is a signatory, states that "a province shall not adopt or maintain any measure that restricts or prevents the movement of goods across provincial or territorial boundaries." Both agreements contain dispute resolution mechanisms.

All Canadians should be concerned about the use of police powers to carry out wrecking and to punish the people of BC for their opposition to the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion. Canada is required under the North American Free Trade Agreement not to reduce the proportion of its total oil production which goes to the U.S. The Canadian socialized economy is in this way made subservient to the needs of the U.S. Empire. Legislation is enacted that authorizes depriving

Canadians of essential products, while maintaining the flow of crude oil or bitumen through the existing Trans Mountain pipeline to the U.S. Albertans and Canadians can never accept such a definition of the "public interest" or "national interest."



State Pay-the-Rich Scheme for Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline Project

- K.C. Adams -



Kinder Morgan (KM) said two conditions must be met by May 31 or it would abandon its project to build the Trans Mountain pipeline to transport bitumen from Edmonton to Vancouver: 1) Final clarity on its ability to construct the project through BC; 2) Adequate protection of Kinder Morgan shareholders.

Many commentators denounced Kinder Morgan's bravado as a cover-up of a failed project or at least one that private interests could only profit from with additional state funds, guarantees and public infrastructure. Some said the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion lacked commercial viability from the get-go requiring government handouts at every stage of development and state-funded infrastructure.

Regarding infrastructure, one economist refers specifically to the \$1.5 billion Oceans Protection Plan of the federal government to clean up any spill of bitumen in Vancouver's Burrard Inlet or the Salish Sea. The possibility of the heavy gooey bitumen ending up in coastal waters has many people worried. To allay fears of a disaster or at least to be prepared if one occurs, the Trudeau government is trumpeting the Oceans Protection Plan as insurance that all will be well in the end. But who pays for the insurance, if such a thing can even be called insurance? Like other imperialist investors, Kinder Morgan believes necessary infrastructure is something the state provides for free. It sees necessary infrastructure and a project's required investment as separate. Besides, not providing public infrastructure for free violates Kinder Morgan's dictum for the state to guarantee its profits from the project.

The "final clarity" and "adequate protection" Kinder Morgan seeks are related to the lack of consent for the pipeline project from the BC polity and many in Alberta who see it as yet another "rip and ship" project that fails to diversify the economy making the province more vulnerable to recurring economic crises.

The Trudeau government obediently responded with a promise to "indemnify" Kinder Morgan's private investors against the risk of not making their expected profit from the bitumen pipeline. The federal promise comes with dire threats to any opponents of the pipeline that police powers will be intensified to silence their voice and resistance. With state funds at risk if the pipeline is not built, the Trudeau government has added a sense of urgency and necessity to complete the project declaring it in the national interest.



Pipeline proponents brandish the cry of lost jobs and income if the project does not proceed. This is meant to make opponents appear as anti-development and against workers and their need for work and income. But any economic activity requires jobs and workers to carry out the work. That is a given for any project however puerile or criminal it may be. Should we as sensible, thinking and concerned Canadians acquiesce to any project because it creates jobs and be cowed down when the imperialists hire people to chant *Jobs!, Jobs!, Jobs!?* War and war preparations create jobs. Should we all clamour for war because it creates jobs? The comparison is not that farfetched. Many have pointed out for decades that shipping out raw material is not the way to build a modern economy. Exporting raw logs is an example from BC of failure to diversify the economy and make it resilient and capable of self-reliant extended reproduction.

In any case, people should question why state funds have already been given to a private project; why state-funded infrastructure is being built to support the private project; and now, why the federal government has offered unlimited funds to indemnify the private project. These moves are not going to quell the opposition. In fact, they are going to stimulate more people to investigate and question why the state is providing funds and allowing a private U.S.-sponsored project to rip out bitumen in Alberta and ship it out raw via BC coastal waters.

Pay-the-Rich Schemes for Kinder Morgan

In an April 30 *Vancouver Sun* article, economist Robyn Allan outlined various pay-the-rich handouts Kinder Morgan has already received for the Trans Mountain bitumen pipeline expansion. Her findings have not been disputed. The state money and infrastructure offered to Kinder Morgan underscore that the bitumen pipeline project was on shaky ground right from the beginning without pay-the-rich schemes and public infrastructure to prop it up. Allan writes:



Trans Mountain's expansion was never commercially viable. It has needed unprecedented support from the get-go when in 2011 the National Energy Board (NEB) approved a \$286-million special fee fought by Canadian oil producers [*sic*]. Chevron described it at the time as an "extraordinary precedent ... If they (Kinder Morgan) need financing, then they should go to the market" and get it.

The NEB later approved a more than doubling of tolls on the existing pipeline serving B.C. and Washington state to help fund a new one intended for offshore markets -- a subsidization of over \$350 million a year from a 65-year old line....

Then there is the \$1.5-billion Oceans Protection Plan Prime Minister Trudeau confirmed is

also a subsidy when he threatened to cancel it if the project fails.

Kinder Morgan's search for government funding is not new either. The company has pursued this scheme for the past five years....

While meeting with Alberta for financial support, the company told the NEB that the project would be fully funded by its Texas-based parent, Kinder Morgan Inc. (KMI). By late 2014, KMI was in financial trouble and could no longer deliver.

As an expert intervener, I advised the NEB that project financing was compromised. The NEB ignored the warning. It even reviewed a stale-dated project. The NEB stuck with a \$5.4 billion cost for the project, citing this budget in its May 2016 report, even though Kinder Morgan announced in October 2015 costs had increased to \$6.8 billion.

In March 2017, costs rose again to \$7.4 billion -- 40 per cent from the initial estimate. By this time U.S. private capital markets summarily rejected the expansion. Kinder Morgan was unable to raise debt or equity and no joint-venture partner could be found -- U.S. investors saw the writing on the wall.

Kinder Morgan turned its attention to the Canadian government and capital markets. The company acknowledged that its search included financial support from the Canada Pension Plan and the federal government's Infrastructure Fund.

In May 2017, Kinder Morgan sold 30 per cent of its Canadian assets in a public offering. None of the proceeds were for the expansion. The \$1.7 billion raised was siphoned from the Canadian economy to pay off debt the Texas parent owed.

KMI then announced the Canadian entity would be responsible for raising all required project financing, although the U.S. parent still held 70-per-cent ownership. No update on negotiations with government sources in Ottawa was forthcoming. The foreign parent had effectively washed its hands of all financing responsibility while retaining the majority of any benefits for KMI's U.S. shareholders.

In June [2017], Canadian banks entered into a \$4-billion construction debt facility with \$1 billion more in a contingent facility available if costs exceed \$7.4 billion. Canadian banks are aware the capital estimate for the expansion is very likely much too low.

Kinder Morgan then raised \$550 million in preferred shares through the same Canadian banks. Current project costs and carrying charges mean that at least \$2 billion in unfunded equity remains.

But that's not all -- before construction even more equity will be required. Kinder Morgan isn't upfront with escalating project costs. Instead, its recent ultimatum with the May 31 deadline states, "KML is not updating its cost and schedule estimate at this time."

Why not? If there were any time the Canadian public has a right to know the likely cost of the expansion it's now. Especially since taxpayers are being set up to pay for it.

Given Kinder Morgan's clever cost-obfuscation strategy and the contracts that are yet to be finalized, direct project costs could exceed \$9 billion.

Private talks with politicians whose desperate behaviour suggests they lack the business acumen to ensure they're aware of likely project costs before they commit to them puts all Canadians at serious financial risk. That, or Trudeau's government is intent on hiding project overruns to rationalize a bailout for a project that sunk long ago.



Disinformation about Asian Markets for the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Bitumen Pipeline

- Peggy Morton -

A story has been carefully constructed and endlessly repeated that the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline expansion (TMX) will open up access to Asian markets, and the U.S. will no longer be the only market for Canadian oil. The aim of this disinformation is to divide the polity and attack the resistance to rule of the oligarchs by suggesting that the project will lessen Canada's integration into Fortress North America.

"We are determined to see that pipeline built. It is in the national interest. It doesn't make any sense for us to continue to have a \$15 billion discount on our oil resources because we are trapped with an American market. We need to get our resources to new markets," Trudeau said.

If the goal were access to Asian markets, the Northern Gateway route to the BC port at Kitimat would have the clear advantage. Northern Gateway is a faster route to Asia (16 vs. 17 days to China). Northern Gateway proposed shipping with very large crude carriers (VLCCs), which can hold about 2 million barrels of oil. The largest carrier the Kinder Morgan Westridge terminal in Vancouver's Burrard Inlet can accommodate is the Aframax at about 750,000 barrels of oil.

When the Supreme Court ruled that the Harper government had failed in its duty of consultation and accommodation of Indigenous peoples regarding Northern Gateway, the Trudeau government could have carried out consultation and accommodation sufficient to satisfy the court. But it chose to scrap the project and throw its weight fully behind the TMX.

If the main destination for bitumen shipped on the Trans Mountain is not Asia, but the refineries in Washington state and California, then Vancouver would have the clear advantage. Vancouver is almost within spitting distance of some of the Washington state refineries and a day closer to California. The existing Kinder Morgan (KM) pipeline to Burnaby is already connected via a pipeline to Puget Sound in Washington state, one of the most heavily militarized regions in the world. With TMX, the oil sands would remain a reserve for the U.S. and its goal of secure energy for Fortress North America, especially in preparation for war. That the National Energy Board (NEB) approved the project without even investigating KM's dubious claims about achieving higher prices and greater markets in Asia further underscores the travesty of the approval process.

Concerned about the rapid growth of oil shale extraction in the U.S., the Canadian Council of Chief Executives (CCCE) declared in 2010 that access to Asian markets was crucial as a bargaining tool. Telling the U.S. administration that oil can be marketed elsewhere is meaningless if no means exists to do so, the CCCE said, noting that a pipeline to "tidewater" could be used to ship to the U.S. as well as Asian markets.[1]

California, not Asia was cited by KM as the main target market in its original application to the NEB. KM's consultant Steven Kelly stated, "There is not a pot of gold at the end of this rainbow. It's not as simple as saying 'if I bring my crude to Asia I will get this price'." However, after the Harper government made Kelly a full-time board member of the NEB, KM's new consulting firm Muse Stancil emphasized Asia as a primary market and downplayed the U.S. West Coast. The new consultants said California's carbon intensity regulations would discourage access to its market for Alberta diluted bitumen or heavy oil blends from the oil sands.[2]

In contrast to that assertion, the NEB report titled *Trans Mountain Expansion Project, May 20*,

2016[3] identifies the potential markets for oil shipped on the TMX as Washington state, California and East Asia, as per evidence from shippers and Texas consultants Muse Stancil. Thirteen shippers have signed 15 to 20 year firm contracts for 710,000 barrels/day. This constitutes 80 per cent of available space on the line with the remaining 20 per cent reserved for spot volumes as required by the NEB. No shipper with a firm contract provided evidence regarding potential Asian markets. BP and Tesero (a U.S. refining monopoly with no oil sands presence) wanted guaranteed access to Alberta oil for their U.S. refineries.

Shipper firm contracts with KM obligate them to pay if the pipeline is built, even if they do not ship. No monopoly is going to sign such a contract without certainty about its market. But the NEB asked no questions about the specifics of the firm contracts other than the money involved, which it accorded to KM as credit. Even though the NEB is charged with investigating energy projects, it avoids probing for basic information under the hoax of not prying into "private business decisions."

U.S. West Coast Market

The U.S. West Coast (Petroleum Administration for Defense District V -- PADD5) has no pipeline connections to the U.S. oil fields and refineries on the Gulf Coast or shale oil from North Dakota and refineries in the U.S. mid-west. Northwest Washington state has 5 refineries with a combined capacity of over 630,000 barrels/day supplied by tanker, pipeline and train. About half comes by tanker from Alaska where production is declining year after year. The existing KM pipeline from the BC lower mainland supplies about 28 per cent, some of which is sold back to Canada after refining. The remainder is highly volatile shale oil shipped by rail from North Dakota.

The Washington refineries have all booked extra capacity on the TMX. One of the refiners, Tesero (Andeavor), which operates refineries in Washington and California filed a brief with the NEB in 2011 objecting to the TMX, saying that it would divert oil from U.S. refineries to offshore buyers. Andeavor is now a firm contracted shipper on the TMX, even though it has no production in Alberta.[4]

California's traditional sources of oil, Alaska and in-state production are both in decline. Oil fields within the state now account for only 31 per cent of total oil consumption and Alaska oil fields 12 per cent. The majority of oil consumed is imported, with Saudi Arabia, Ecuador, Colombia and Kuwait the main sources. Canada supplies less than four per cent at this time.

California has the third largest refining capacity in the U.S. California requires all vehicles to use reformulated gasoline, a specific blend of gasoline only produced in California, Washington and the Gulf Coast. Gulf Coast refineries have not produced reformulated gasoline since 2011, so California's entire refined product comes from in-state or Washington.

California's cap and trade system requires refiners to lower the carbon intensity of their crude oil feedstock or buy credits. The increase in light oil from West Asia and Latin America has lowered overall intensity rates. However, this increase in imports goes against the U.S. stated aim to reduce imports of foreign oil. The U.S. does not consider oil from Canada as foreign oil.

In its report to the NEB, KM's consultant Muse Stancil acknowledged the strong demand for heavy crude oil in California, as central California crude and Canadian heavy oil share many characteristics. This means bitumen from the oil sands is a good fit with California refineries. However, he said, the economics are hampered by California Low Carbon Fuel Standards. While the California rating system discourages imports of upgraded oil from Alberta, some bitumen blends have a more favourable rating than oil from Alaska, and carbon intensity ratings far below those of major California oil fields. This is common knowledge that KM and its consultants would also know.[5] The favourable ratings still hold true even though California recently raised the ratings for several blends from the oil sands. [6]

Why all the deception of opening up Asia's market with the TMX? Perhaps declaring Canada's "national interest" is served by diverting investments from building a self-reliant diversified Canadian socialized economy to serve annexation into Fortress North America and the incessant U.S. war preparations and mobilization on the U.S. West Coast would increase opposition to the TMX.

Notes

1. Canadian Council of Chief Executives (now Business Council of Canada), *Clean Growth 2.0*, November 8, 2010.
2. "Trudeau, Notley and Trans Mountain Pipeline: A Tyee Fact Check," Andrew Nikiforuk, *The Tyee*, March 21, 2018.
3. A full copy of the NEB report is available [here](#).
4. "Kinder Morgan's Grand Plan to Pipe Oil Sands Crude," Mitchell Anderson, *The Tyee*, June 2, 2011.
5. The following carbon intensity ratings as set out in California's regime provide a picture of why dilbit or blended bitumen oil from the oil sands could find a market in California. Alaska 12.23, California San Ardo field 27.26, California Midway Sunset 25.05, Imperial Oil's Kearl Lake Alberta oil sands 12.05, Cenovus Christina oil sands Dilbit Blend 13.34.

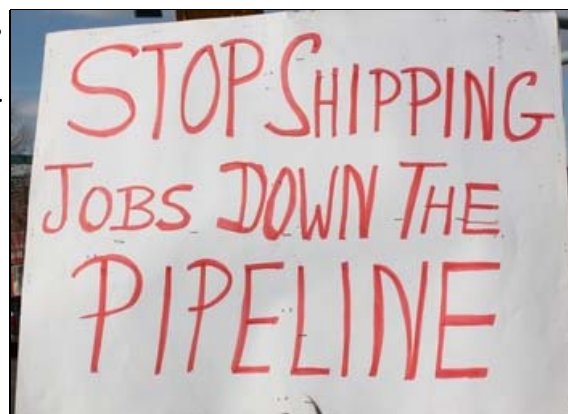
The Alberta government has recently awarded \$90 million to nine monopolies in the oil sands for projects, which it said are aimed at reducing carbon emissions and production costs by reducing heat needed in the in situ extraction process and improving global competitiveness.

6. [See here](#).



The Disputed Claims of Cenovus

The CEO of energy giant Cenovus, Alex Pourbaix, claims the Canadian economy is losing \$15.6 billion a year because of the low price for bitumen. The claim is questionable on many fronts. First, the price he uses is for a blend called Western Canadian Select. This blend was created as a benchmark in 2004 after the Keystone pipeline to the U.S. was shut down following a spill causing inventories in Alberta to rise. Second, for the CEO to come up with this number, every barrel of oil produced in Canada was counted as though it were unprocessed bitumen exported to the United



States, which is not the case. Finally, the price rests on assumptions made about the price of oil exported to Asian markets before the U.S. was swimming in light oil from fracking, before the U.S. government lifted its moratorium on exporting oil and before new energy exporting facilities were completed along the Gulf Coast. As exports of cheaply produced oil from the U.S. are set to increase, a price premium for exports to Asia of Western Canadian Select appears more like a pipedream.

The claim of a loss of \$15.6 billion a year because bitumen is blocked from being exported to Asia

attempts to cover up who is responsible for damage to the Canadian economy, in particular the recent economic crisis in Alberta due to the collapse of oil prices in 2014 and the one-sided nature of the economy.

Cenovus does not upgrade any oil in Canada. Instead it purchased a share in two refineries in the U.S. midwest. It sells bitumen to itself, or rather those two refineries it partially owns, at low prices and sells the refined product at a great profit. However, a problem has arisen of ripping and shipping out more bitumen than it can process in its midwest refineries. This problem is compounded with a shortage of refining capacity generally in the U.S., difficulty in accessing the California market for various reasons, and competition from fracked oil, all of which is affecting the bottom line for Cenovus. The solution according to Cenovus is TMX, not questioning the current direction of the economy.

The clash of interests over TMX is not between those who are "for" and those who are "against" the pipeline. The working class, Indigenous peoples and Canadian working people are deprived of their right to make decisions that affect their lives. A fundamental necessity in making decisions is to be informed with relevant facts and to have a public forum where the issues can be debated, analyzed and a direction and actions decided upon and taken to resolve the problem. This is not the case today where powerful private interests and their political representatives make all decisions in secret and then announce them to the world as inviolable and even in the national interest, such as the TMX.



In 2017, Cenovus reported gross income from sales of \$17.314 billion and gross added-value (includes corporate and interest profit) of \$3.705 billion. It paid no taxes at all, citing "tax recovery" in its financial statement. Cenovus paid \$230 million in oil sands royalties, \$41 million in royalties on conventional oil, and zero royalties on natural gas. Royalties and taxes together amount to 1.56 per cent of gross income and 7.3 per cent of declared private corporate and interest profit. Apart from the \$271 million in royalties, the accounts do not reveal or realize (pay for) the estimated value of the benefits Cenovus receives from state public institutions, including the right to exploit Canada's natural resources, public research and development, constant supply of workers with the skills, education and health the

company needs, and the widespread public infrastructure projects without which no big company can operate.

What of the promise of jobs? Cenovus has increased its oil sands production capacity from 102,510 barrels/day in 2013 to a projected 360,000-380,000 barrels/day, while reducing conventional oil production by about 20,000 barrels/day. While tripling gross production, it has slashed the workforce and continues to do so. When its current layoffs are complete, Cenovus, despite increasing production, will have laid off around 2,500 workers since 2013, mainly its own employees but also contractors.

The rich oligarchs such as the Cenovus CEO put on a loud show that they are the ones who are going to create jobs, provide funds in the form of royalties and taxes, and "get a better deal and higher prices" for Canadian resources. All of this will somehow end up in expanded social programs and public services in spite of the vociferous demands of their political representatives for austerity for the people and pay-the-rich schemes for the monopolies.

None of this holds up to investigation. The key issue is that the aim of the oligarchs is completely self-serving and not in the public interest. Their aim is for maximum profit to fatten their own pockets and empires. Jobs and Canada's natural resources are targets of exploitation for the oligarchs so they can expropriate their pound of flesh from the new value workers produce. Nothing but private profit holds any meaning for those currently in control of Canada's socialized economy and politics including the well-being of the human factor and the health of Mother Earth.

Note

Cenovus is a Calgary-based energy monopoly that recently acquired Conoco-Phillips' stake in several projects and is now the sole owner of three oil sands projects -- Foster Creek, Christina Lake and Narrows Lake. It also produces conventional oil from the Deep Basin, an oil- and gas-rich region straddling the Alberta-BC border, and produces natural gas mainly to fuel its oil sands operations.



U.S. Once Again Creates Tense Situation on Korean Peninsula

The Politics of Provocation



Protest against the U.S.-south Korea Max Thunder war games, outside the U.S. embassy in Seoul, May 16, 2018.

The Panmunjom Declaration of April 27 signed by the leaders of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and the Republic of Korea (ROK) made important headway by taking up measures to find a peaceful solution to the problems of the division of the Korean nation and danger of war on the Korean Peninsula. Since then, the DPRK has made many proactive gestures towards the U.S. in the interest of peace and positive bilateral relations. These include: releasing on May 9 three jailed U.S. citizens of Korean nationality charged and found guilty of crimes against the state; agreeing to the U.S. proposal that the DPRK -U.S. Summit slated for June 12 be held in Singapore instead of the DPRK's proposal of its capital Pyongyang; and, most importantly, by pledging to dismantle its nuclear missile plant at Punggye-ri in front of the whole world, the preparations for which have already begun.

The U.S. has not responded in kind. Far from engaging with the DPRK in response to its overtures

for diplomacy and peace on the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. and the south Korean armed forces which are under its command are carrying out the warmongering 2018 Max Thunder Joint Air Combat Drill which targets the DPRK. These war exercises started on May 11 and continue to May 25. They involve more than 100 aircraft, including a B-52 strategic nuclear bomber and F-22 Raptor stealth fighters.

"[E]ven before the ink on the historic April 27 Declaration was dry, the south Korean authorities and the U.S. started the war exercises against the DPRK, as a response to all the peace-loving efforts and good intentions shown by the DPRK," the Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) wrote on May 16. This is "arousing serious concern and disappointment among all Koreans and the international community, who want the declaration to be implemented," it said.

It specifically decried the involvement of nuclear strategic assets in the drill which underscores that denuclearization is a two-way street, not a one-way street the way the U.S. is suggesting. The threat this poses to the security of the DPRK and peace on the Korean Peninsula is obvious.



These war exercises were then coupled with the U.S. putting pre-conditions on negotiations with the DPRK in the form of demands that it must unilaterally denuclearize.

These provocations are not conducive to solving any problem on the Korean Peninsula. They perpetuate the tensions and danger of war. These provocations are aimed at sabotaging any possibility of peace on the Korean Peninsula and blaming the DPRK for being intransigent.

With these war drills aimed at the DPRK taking place, the DPRK was forced to postpone the inter-Korean talks scheduled for May 16. It also warned that the aggressive war games jeopardize the June 12 summit as well.

"The historic Panmunjom Declaration cannot be implemented by the efforts of a single party, and it can only reach fruition when the two parties create the favourable conditions and climate by pooling their efforts," the KCNA wrote on May 16.

"We cannot but take the step of suspending the north-south high-level talks scheduled for May 16 [...]. The U.S. will have to think twice about the fate of the DPRK-U.S. summit, now high on the agenda, in light of the provocative military exercises against the DPRK in league with the south Korean authorities," the KCNA added.

On many previous occasions, the DPRK has been forced to withdraw from peace or nuclear negotiations when the U.S. and/or south Korean authorities staged similar provocations that made clear that their aims were not for peace and that the DPRK did not have a willing interlocutor in the talks. It remains to be seen if south Korea and the U.S. will reverse course and rise to the occasion.

Politics of provocation are rejected by the peoples of the world who received the Panmunjom Declaration with great joy and want the U.S. to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK to end the Korean War, and stop using the Korean Peninsula in its striving for hegemony over the region so as to embroil China and Russia in its war aims.

The world's people reject politics of provocation pursued by the U.S. on the Korean Peninsula and the warmongering of imperialist media and countries such as Canada and others who were belligerents during the Korean War, and are today following the lead of the U.S. imperialists and

operating under their command.



The peoples of the world want the U.S. to act properly and stop its hooligan undiplomatic and provocateur behaviour which only raises tensions and destroys any attempts to find peaceful solutions. The peoples of the world want the U.S. to show by its deeds before the whole world that it is sincere in wanting peace on the Korean Peninsula. A just peace will be achieved because the entire Korean nation wants national reunification and peace on the Korean Peninsula. The Korean question is central to the cause of world peace. Ending the Korean War with a peace treaty will help spare the Korean people further hardship and the possibility of war, along with the peoples of the countries in the region, and humankind as a whole.

TML Weekly calls on all peace- and justice-loving people in Canada and the world to support the just stand of the DPRK by demanding an immediate end to the U.S.-south Korea 2018 Max

Thunder war games and to step up their vigilance against any move by the U.S. imperialist warmongers and their allies to sabotage the real prospects for peace on the Korean Peninsula.



DPRK Rejects U.S. Provocative Model of Unilateral Denuclearization



Anti-war activists call for bilateral denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula during the visit to Seoul of U.S. Secretary of Defense James Mattis, October 28, 2017.

The U.S. is once again trying to frame the issue of the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula according to its Cold War anti-communist outlook, in which its own nuclear weapons are not considered the main threat to peace and the impetus for the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) seeking recourse in a nuclear deterrent to protect itself. In this way, the U.S. seeks to shirk

its own responsibility to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula and criminalize the DPRK, and is jeopardizing the progress made for Korean reunification and the normalization of DPRK-U.S. relations.

The DPRK's position on U.S. attempts to impose its hegemonic aims on Korea using the issue of denuclearization was elaborated by Kim Kye Gwan, First Vice-Minister of Foreign Affairs in a May 16 statement. Kim pointed out that high-ranking White House officials and U.S. Department of State National Security Adviser John Bolton are seeking to impose the so-called Libya model of "complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization" and the "total decommissioning of nuclear weapons, missiles, biochemical weapons," and that if the DPRK first abandons its nuclear deterrent, the U.S. will compensate it afterwards. This is not dialogue, Kim pointedly remarked, and the DPRK has no intention of meeting the same fate as Libya and Iraq.

Kim affirmed that the DPRK has "already stated our intention for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula and made clear on several occasions that the precondition for denuclearization is to put an end to the anti-DPRK hostile policy and nuclear threats and blackmail of the United States.

"But now, the U.S. is miscalculating the magnanimity and broad-minded initiatives of the DPRK as signs of weakness and trying to embellish and promote [these] as being the product of its sanctions and pressure."

As for the claim that the U.S. would offer economic compensation and benefit to the DPRK as an inducement to give up its nuclear program, rather than engaging in the "double freeze" or step for step process that ensures that the U.S. also does its part to denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, Kim noted that the DPRK "never had any expectation of U.S. support in carrying out our economic construction and will not ... make such a deal in future, either." The tremendous economic growth and development, as well as scientific and technological process seen in the DPRK despite the severe U.S.-led sanctions against it underscore this point.

Kim concluded:

"If President Trump follows in the footsteps of his predecessors, he will leave a more tragic and unsuccessful record than his predecessors, far from his initial ambition for unprecedented success.

"If the Trump administration takes an approach to the DPRK-U.S. summit with sincerity for improved DPRK-U.S. relations, it will receive a deserved response from us. However, if the U.S. is trying to drive us into a corner to force our unilateral nuclear abandonment, we will no longer be interested in such dialogue and cannot but reconsider our proceeding to the DPRK-U.S. summit."

(KCNA)



Finalizing North Korea-U.S. Negotiations Before Summit

- Lee Je-hun -

Bolton Says "the Quicker They Denuclearize," the Quicker North Korea Will Get What It Wants

The approach to north Korea's denuclearization that White House National Security Advisor John Bolton described in an interview with ABC on May 13 essentially involves complete yet rapid

denuclearization and the surrender of nuclear weapons to the U.S. for processing.

Bolton explained that PVID (that is, permanent, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization) means getting rid of all nuclear weapons by disassembling them and shipping their components to Oak Ridge, Tennessee.

While Bolton's proposal for shipping nuclear devices to Oak Ridge is widely regarded in both the domestic and international press as being identical to the Libyan solution that north Korea has rejected, it is actually different. While the nuclear facility at Oak Ridge did process 16kg of highly enriched uranium and centrifuges during the process of downgrading Libya's nuclear capability between 2003 and 2006, it is also the place that disassembled nuclear weapons when Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan dismantled their nuclear programs after the fall of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s.

The problem is not the idea of relocating north Korea's nuclear weapon components to Oak Ridge per se. Pyongyang's responses during the "complete denuclearization" process could vary depending on the timeline and sequence for nuclear weapon relocation and abandonment and corresponding measures from Washington. In an interview, Bolton said, "The quicker they denuclearize, the quicker [what they want] will come," calling the situation a matter of strategic determination by north Korea.

A high-ranking foreign affairs and national security source familiar with the north Korea-U.S. negotiation process explained, "What Bolton is arguing comes across as the U.S. saying that before any inspections or verification of north Korea's nuclear facilities and materials, it wants to first dismantle and abandon the north Korean nuclear warheads and ICBMs that it has viewed as a key security threat."

"Bolton is basically the first one to overtly suggest the kind of 'big deal' or 'big bang' approach the U.S. has been talking about in its behind-the-scenes negotiations with north Korea," the source suggested.

U.S. Argues for Reversal of Normal Denuclearization Process

This would mean he is arguing for something in the reverse order from the typical denuclearization process, which starts from a freeze to reporting, inspections and verification, and final abandonment of nuclear weapons.

It's also a long way from north Korea's traditional approach. In a government spokesperson's statement on July 6, 2016, north Korea said the "denuclearization that we are calling for encompasses denuclearization of the entire Korean Peninsula, the abandonment of south Korean nuclear capabilities and denuclearization around south Korea."

More crucially, it is quite different from the solution described by north Korean leader Kim Jong-un since preparations for the north Korea-U.S. summit entered full swing. In his May 7-8 meeting in Dalian with Chinese President Xi Jinping, Kim declared that north Korea would "have no need to possess nuclear [capabilities] if the hostile policies and security threat against us are eliminated."

He also outlined a methodology that included building mutual trust through north Korea-U.S. dialogue, implementing step-by-step and simultaneous measures, and pursuing a full-scale political resolution process.

In his Panmunjom Declaration with south Korean President Moon Jae-in following their Apr. 27 summit, Kim pledged "complete denuclearization" and a "nuclear-free Korean Peninsula," but listed these as part of a subcategory (item 4) under Article 3 about ending the armistice regime and establishing a robust peace regime on the Korean Peninsula.

Pyongyang Wants Prosperity in Exchange for Denuclearization

The approach is a comprehensive and reciprocal one. In its July 2016 government spokesperson's statement, Pyongyang condenses its demands into a list of five:

- disclosing U.S. nuclear weapons present in south Korea,
- withdrawing and verifying U.S. nuclear weapons and bases in south Korea,
- barring deployment of U.S. strategic nuclear assets on and around the Korean Peninsula,
- pledging not to use nuclear weapons against north Korea, and
- "declaring" the withdrawal of U.S. troops.

These were later adapted and developed into the demands reportedly stated by the north during recent preliminary meetings with the U.S., namely withdrawing U.S. strategic nuclear assets from south Korea, halting the deployment of strategic nuclear assets during south Korea-U.S. joint exercises, guaranteeing no attacks with conventional or nuclear weapons, replacing the armistice agreement with a peace agreement, and establishing diplomatic relations between north Korea and the U.S.

Despite the surface differences, experts said there was no reason to be too pessimistic, given the nearly one month of negotiating time left before the north Korea-U.S. summit.

Korea Institute for National Unification director Kim Yeon-cheol, said, "north Korea and the U.S. have reached something of a consensus on the ultimate goals of 'denuclearization' and '[peace and] prosperity.'"

"The problem is the method of exchange, with each side mixing and matching what they want," Kim added.

A former senior government official concluded, "If it wants fast and complete denuclearization of north Korea, the U.S. is going to have to make some corresponding strategic decision to produce any results."

Along similar lines, former Minister of Unification Lee Jong-seok offered optimistic predictions.

"Kim Jong-un wants to speed things up just like the [U.S. President]. There's a chance he could disclose the number of nuclear weapons or facilities and/or a list of ICBMs during or just after the [north Korea-U.S. summit] in order to make swift progress with denuclearization," Lee suggested.

Lee Je-hun is editor in chief of the Hankyoreh daily newspaper in Seoul, Korea.

(May 15, 2018)



DPRK to Dismantle Nuclear Weapons Test Site at Punggye-ri

In conformity with the decisions of the Panmunjom Declaration signed between Kim Jong Un, Chairman of the State Affairs Commission of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and Moon Jae-in, President of the Republic of Korea (ROK), on April 27, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the DPRK announced on May 12 that the DPRK will be taking "technical measures for dismantling the northern nuclear test ground of the DPRK in order to ensure transparency of discontinuance of the nuclear test."

It stated that the underground nuclear test site at the Punggye-ri will be shut down and that on May 23-25, besides local media, international media from Russia, China, U.S., Great Britain, and south Korea will be invited, flown in, billeted and taken to the site to report on the event.

The DPRK will be flying in reporters from Beijing to Wonsan from where they will be taken by train to the Punggye-ri underground test site.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs statement noted that the dismantling of the nuclear test ground will be done in the following sequence:

1. All underground tunnels will be blown up using explosives
2. All entries will be completely blocked
3. All observation facilities, research institutes and guard unit structures on the surface will be removed
4. Guards and researchers will be withdrawn from the site and surrounding areas
5. The test grounds will be completely closed.

The DPRK Ministry of Foreign Affairs' statement also affirmed that "the DPRK will also in future, promote close contact and dialogue with neighbouring countries and the international community so as to safeguard peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula and all over the globe."

This announcement by the DPRK was positively received around the world.

United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres noted that the DPRK's announcement was an important "confidence-building measure" that will support efforts towards sustainable peace and verifiable denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

"The measures taken by the DPRK demonstrate its goodwill for advancing denuclearization of the peninsula and building mutual trust with related parties," the Chinese Foreign Ministry noted.

U.S. President Donald Trump tweeted: "North Korea has announced that they will dismantle Nuclear Test Site this month, ahead of the big Summit Meeting on June 12. Thank you, a very smart and gracious gesture!"



Max Thunder Air Combat Drill Against the DPRK Increases Tensions on Korean Peninsula

On May 11 the U.S. in conjunction with the south Korean armed forces under its command launched the "Max Thunder Military Air Combat drill" which continues to May 25. Under the hoax that these are annual exercises, the U.S. is covering up that they are aimed at the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) and involve nuclear assets. They pose a threat to the DPRK at a time progress has been made to resolve the problems on the Korean Peninsula on a peaceful basis.

These annual exercises are part of a number of joint-military exercises that are carried out under the provisions of the so-called Mutual Defence Treaty the United States forced its puppet government in the Republic of Korea (ROK) to sign after the Korean War ended in 1953. The treaty itself was in violation of the Korean Armistice Agreement of July 27, 1953 which required the U.S. to sign a peace treaty with the DPRK as soon as possible to formally end the war and remove its troops from the Korean Peninsula.

Underscoring their threatening nature, this year these war exercises, which have been conducted

since 2009, involve 100 aircraft, including eight U.S. F-22 stealth fighters which are taking part in these exercises for the first time, as well as a number of B-52 strategic bombers based on the Pacific island of Guam.

According to the Pentagon, they are "defensive exercises" -- "part of the ROK-U.S. Alliance's routine, annual training program to maintain a foundation of military readiness."

On May 15, the DPRK's Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) noted: "This exercise, targeting us, which is being carried out across south Korea, is a flagrant challenge to the Panmunjom Declaration and an intentional military provocation running counter to the positive political development on the Korean Peninsula."

The Panmunjom Declaration clearly put the issue of the joint denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula by the DPRK and the U.S. high on the agenda of future peace talks, yet the U.S. is using these war games to introduce various nuclear strategic assets onto the Korean Peninsula, including the B-52 strategic nuclear bombers and F-22 Raptor stealth fighters, the KCNA pointed out in another commentary.



As a result of these exercises, besides calling off its meeting with the government of the ROK scheduled for May 16, the DPRK also warned the U.S. to "undertake careful deliberations about the fate" of the planned summit between U.S. President Donald Trump and DPRK leader Kim Jong Un, scheduled for June 12 in Singapore.

These annual military exercises are paid for by the people of the ROK, as is the case with the expenses associated with U.S. military personnel in the ROK and on U.S. bases. The U.S.-south Korea military exercises seek to sabotage the sincere efforts of the DPRK and ROK governments to peacefully resolve the problem of the division of their nation and establish peace on the Korean Peninsula. Canada has not seen fit to condemn the Max Thunder war games which include nuclear assets. It continues to spread U.S. imperialist disinformation to support the U.S. striving for hegemony in the region.

(With files from KCNA, Pentagon, and U.S. and Chinese news agencies)



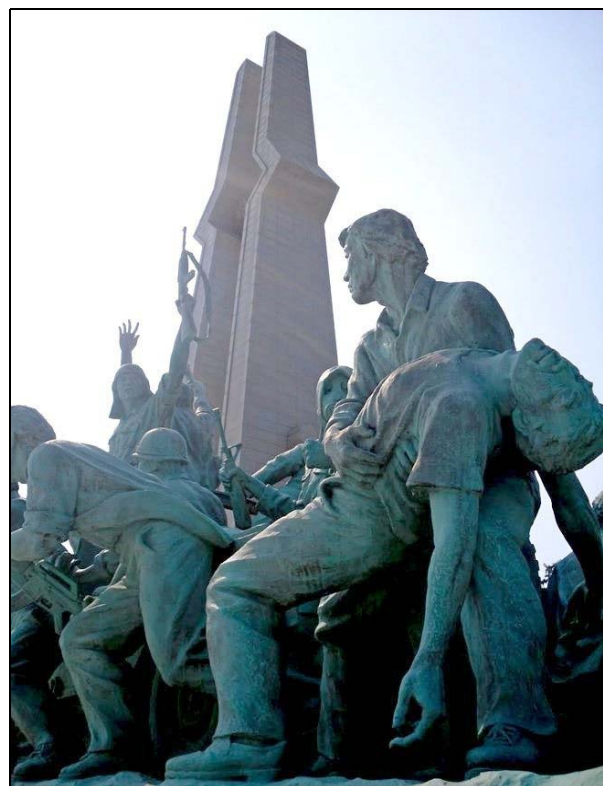
Militant Commemoration of 38th Anniversary of Gwangju People's Uprising

The heroic Gwangju People's Uprising in south Korea took place from May 18-28, 1980. It expressed the people's opposition to the brutal military dictatorship of General Chun Doo-hwan. Chun had come to power through a U.S.-engineered military coup that overthrew the brief civilian government of President Choi Kyu-hah and imposed martial law in south Korea in May 1980.



Protesters against the military dictatorship of General Chun Doo-hwan gather at a fountain in front of the provincial government building of South Jeolla Province in Gwangju, May 18, 1980, the day after he declared martial law. (*May 18 Memorial Foundation*)

The uprising marked the beginning of the end of U.S.-backed military dictatorships in south Korea that began with the Park Chung-hee dictatorship in 1961. All of these regimes were put in place to maintain the U.S.-imposed division of Korea, so as to block the people's striving for independence and keep the people from going to communism because of the great prestige of the communist forces lead by Kim Il Sung and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) in upholding the dignity and sovereignty of the Korean nation.



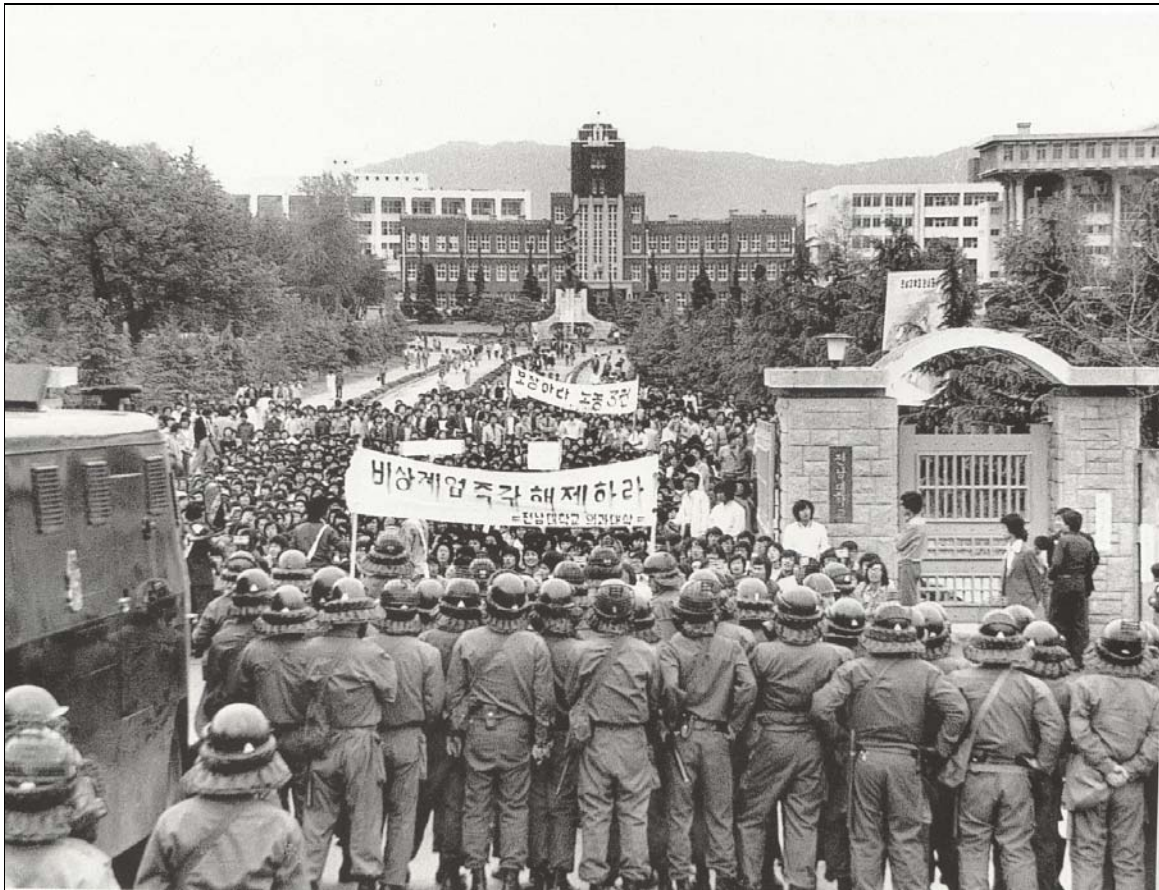
Memorial to those killed in the Gwangju People's Uprising.

The spirit of defiance embodied by the Gwangju People's Uprising lives on in the determination of

the Korean people to rid themselves of U.S. military occupation and economic interference in their affairs, that also finds expression in the latest developments in inter-Korean relations and support for peace talks between the DPRK and the U.S.

The great sacrifices of the Korean people in their striving for democracy and independence and the terrible crimes committed against them at Gwangju and other places are still coming to light. In May 2017, the Moon Jae-in administration, which came to power based on the people's rejection of the Park Guen-hye administration's corruption and subservience to private and U.S. interests, officially began to commemorate the Gwangju Uprising and has pledged to carry out an investigation into the crimes against the people of Gwangju.

About the Gwangju Uprising



Student march at Chonnam University, May 18, 1980.

The Gwangju People's Uprising was triggered by student demonstrations on the morning of May 18, 1980 in defiance of the new military edict closing the universities and stifling any political dissent. The police were unable to check the people's organized resistance, so a Special Forces assault unit was dispatched. This unit first used tear gas, batons and rubber bullets, but still the workers, shopkeepers and parents took to the streets to defend their children. Then they opened fire with live ammunition, killing close to two hundred people and wounding hundreds more.

On May 20 the south Korean military expanded its campaign of violence and terror by deploying 3,000 paratroopers. Special Forces commandos beat people with clubs, stabbed and mutilated them with bayonets, and threw many to their deaths from buildings. The soldiers used tear gas and live ammunition indiscriminately. Twenty female students were shot dead at Gwangju's Central High School. Taxi and ambulance drivers who tried to get the wounded to hospital were shot on sight. One hundred students sheltered in the Catholic Centre were slaughtered. Those captured were often summarily executed.

On May 21, protesters broke into police stations and seized arms and ammunition to defend themselves. Local Gwangju police refused to help the military and some were beaten unconscious by soldiers for attempting to help the people.

Pitched battles took place between the armed citizens and the military and by May 22, the army was forced to pull out entirely.

The next five days were unprecedented in south Korea's history. The people organized themselves into citizens' committees to ensure the well-being and security of everyone. Food, medical and transportation systems were organized and lively political discussions took place where the people gathered to discuss their future and their opposition to the U.S. occupation of south Korea and the military dictatorship.



Participants in the uprising arm themselves against attacks by the military.

On May 24, 15,000 people attended a memorial service in memory of those killed by the military.

On May 25, about 50,000 people rallied and adopted a resolution calling for the abolition of martial law and the release of political prisoner Kim Dae-jung.[1]



Bereaved families grieve over their family members killed in the uprising, May 1980.

Soon after this, the U.S. government of Jimmy Carter intervened because the Gwangju Uprising was seen as a threat to U.S. strategic interests on the Korean Peninsula and East Asia. The U.S. ordered the Chun regime to move troops from the De-Militarized Zone separating north and south Korea to Gwangju. On May 27, at 3:30 am, the south Korean army swarmed Gwangju in Operation Fascinating Vacations.

In the ensuing battle, thousands of civilians were killed and close to 15,000 people were injured. More than 1,500 people were taken into custody and many were tortured. Seven people were later executed and 14 received life-sentences for taking a stand against the U.S.-sponsored military dictatorship.

Note

1. Kim Dae-jung, who passed away in August 2009, was a well-known political prisoner at the time of the uprising. He later became the eighth President of the Republic of Korea and played a significant role in moving forward the north-south dialogue for reunification. Along with the leader of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kim Jong Il, Kim Dae Jung co-signed the historic June 15 North-South Joint Declaration which paved the way for a new period in the struggle for Korean reunification.

(With files from TML Weekly, Hankyoreh)



Calendar of Events



PETITION SIGNINGS AND INFORMATION PICKETS



Mexico's 2018 General Election

Dirty War vs. People's Concerns

- Claude Brunelle -

On July 1, general elections will be held in Mexico in which a total of 3,400 positions are to be filled. These include the president; 128 senators (96 to be chosen through direct vote and 32 from a proportional list); 500 elected representatives (300 to be elected by direct vote and 200 from a proportional list); and nine states will elect a governor. The remaining 2,762 positions represent

mayors and councillors of cities and villages throughout the Mexican Republic.



Presidential candidate for AMLO alliance, Andrés Manuel López Obrador, speaks at rally.

A record 17,000 candidates have put themselves forward for election. The record number of positions to be filled at this particular historical juncture makes this election very significant.

For the Mexican people, this year's general election is taking place within a most difficult political, economic and social context. Over 60 per cent of the Republic's population lives in poverty. Their level of insecurity has never been greater: more than 200,000 deaths have occurred over the past 12 years, thousands have disappeared and even more aggressions have been committed. Based on human rights defence agencies, each minute of the day 11.7 women are the victims of either aggression, violence or assassination attempts, with seven dying each day. The youth have also not been spared, with thousands of disappearances and assassinations in the country's most politicized regional zones. Organized criminal groups and criminal cartels linked to the Mexican state continue to grow.

While Mexico's GDP has increased by 2.1 per cent, salaries have fallen by 3.5 per cent. The level of impunity with regard to all types of crime combined within the country stands at 98 per cent. The level of integration of the economy to that of the U.S. has never been higher. Mexico, the lead producer of corn, has become an importer of corn from the U.S., which is also the case with beans. Energy "reforms" brought in by the current President Peña Nieto have allowed for the privatization of oil, with large monopolies such as British Petroleum now setting up shop within the country. A litre of gas now costs almost as much as it does in Montreal, and Mexico has become an importer of oil and refined gas.

Since the pre-election campaign began, the Mexican presidency has received visits from former U.S. Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and current U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen.

Although each of their meetings with Mexican officials was held behind closed doors, the respective statements of both governments expressed the determination to continue collaboration between the countries with regard to security and immigration. All the U.S. spy agencies have set up shop in the downtown area of Mexico's capital. U.S. clandestine military bases exist in many of the Republic's states. Thousands of Mexicans continue to be deported from the U.S. to Mexico. The trade in arms and drugs on each side of the border is controlled by U.S. agencies which use the pretext of illegal immigration to justify impunity. President Trump recently sent the National Guard to the Mexican border.

Bearing all of this in mind, how can one not imagine the great concern of the U.S. and the

oligopolies they serve over the results of the Mexican election?

In the face of this situation thousands of Mexicans are resisting, fighting and demonstrating each day so that their rights as human beings be respected to live in security and within economic conditions that provide for a dignified life. The concern of the Mexican people in this election is to find a way to elect those who may be able to bring about a break in the system of impunity, corruption, privatization and integration into U.S. imperial interests. In doing so they find themselves victims of the greatest pressure to prevent them from focussing on their real interests.

It is common practice for the various parties of the rich to have at their disposal an entire arsenal of measures to buy the votes of Mexican citizens. This can range from a bag of groceries to construction materials, or from intimidation to assassination. In the face of the growing interest of the Mexican people to elect the AMLO alliance to the presidency of the republic with Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO) for president, the cartel parties in the service of the oligarchs continue to increase their ads, announcements, statements and videos filled with lies, in order to create a psychosis of fear amongst the people and prevent them from voting for AMLO. Each and every day of the electoral campaign the people are subjected to a multitude of contradictory messages from the four candidates vying for the presidency against AMLO and López Obrador. It is a feat for people to think calmly about who is best suited to serve their interests.

The aim is to create a huge impression on the workers and people as to who to vote for on July 1. Based on information from news agencies controlled by the monopoly media, the fight is between the alliances of Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), Partido Acción Nacional (PAN) and the independent candidate, on one hand, and AMLO, on the other. Why such hysteria and concern vis-à-vis the possible election of AMLO to the presidency of the Mexican Republic?

The PRI and PAN alliances, along with the independent candidate, are concentrating all their actions against the possible election of AMLO as president of the Republic. AMLO is presenting a nation-building project centred on the priority of developing the national economy and against the privatization of public services. But this does not amount to a revolutionary project. It is not against the capitalist system or foreign investments. Its thesis is that it can ensure the development of education, health care and the production of goods each year which serve the people. It seems that at this time the general interest of the Mexican people resides with the AMLO alliance's Juntos Haremos Historia (Together We Will Make History). According to recent national and international polls, the presidential candidate López Obrador is leading with 46 per cent of the intended vote, 20 points ahead of his closest rival Ricardo Anaya at 26 per cent, and Jose Antonio Meade is at 20 per cent, and El Bronco at two per cent. Margarita Zavala who has now dropped out was at five per cent. These percentages have been the same since the pre-campaign, and there is just a month-and-a-half to go to the election. This is the third time that AMLO is running for the presidency of the country. In 2006 and in 2012, even though it looked like AMLO would win the election, a process of fraud prevented it from taking the presidency of the country. This led it to constitute its MORENA movement into a political party, and create party constituencies in all of the Republic's cities and villages. It presently has two million active party members.

What is clear from the present campaign is the great concern amongst the Mexican people over the future of their nation and a determination to sort out how to move forward. There is also great anger amongst the workers and the entire people towards the parties and the media because they are not dealing with their concerns. Instead, they continue to fight amongst themselves as to who can tell the biggest lie about the others or who can create the greatest fear by screaming the loudest about an impending apocalypse if the people do not submit to the interests of big capital.

Information

A total of five candidates are running for President of Mexico. Three of them are leaders of

alliances: Andrés Manuel López Obrador (AMLO), for Junto Haremos Historia comprised of MORENA in alliance with Partido del Trabajo (Mexico) and Encuentro Social; Ricardo Anaya of Frente por el Futuro, comprised of Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), in alliance with Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) and the Movimiento Ciudadano; Jose Antonio Meade for Todos por México comprised of the Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI) (the present party in power) in alliance with Partido Verde Ecologista de México (PVEM), and Nueva Alianza PANAL; and one independent candidate, Jaime Rodríguez Calderón, nicknamed El Bronco, representing a dissident section of PRI in the north-eastern part of the country. Margarita Zavala, the wife of former PAN president Felipe Calderon, dropped out.

Of Mexico's 127 million inhabitants, some 90 million will have the right to vote on July 1. Of that number, 30 per cent are between the ages of 18 and 35, making the youth a key factor in the election.



70th Anniversary of the Nakba

Worldwide Protests Against Israeli Crimes and U.S. Inauguration of Illegal Embassy



TML Weekly condemns the violence and killings perpetrated by the Zionist state of Israel against the Palestinian people in the Gaza Strip and the culture of impunity permitted by the U.S. imperialists and their allies including Canada. The Israeli Army's criminal attacks on the Palestinian population in the Gaza Strip on the occasion of *Al Nakba* Day and in protest of the decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem have killed more than 60 defenceless people and injured more than 2,400. U.S. President Donald Trump's decision to relocate the country's embassy to Jerusalem also violates the very premises of the resolution which permitted Israel to become a member of the United Nations in the first place.

A comprehensive, just, and lasting solution to the denial of the right of the Palestinian people to their homeland is the responsibility of the international community which permits Israel to carry on being a UN member despite its criminal acts. The Palestinian people's right of return and to a sovereign state according to pre-1967 borders, with East Jerusalem as its capital, are not negotiable.

May 14, 2018 near Gaza border with Israel



Palestine House Press Release
- May 14, 2018 -

With 58 innocent unarmed civilian Gazans dead and thousands injured protesting an illegal occupation that is marking fifty-one years with no end in sight, on the heels of scores of Palestinians injured and dead over the past few days, it is time to raise the question Why is it that our government is silent?

Our representatives in parliament, the human rights organizations and fellow Canadians are silent and deaf to the slaughter of innocent people whose only crime is resisting peacefully their occupiers those who have imprisoned and encircled their land and water and denied them food, medicine and necessities of life.



The UN has declared Gaza an unlivable place with one of the highest population densities and short of all necessities and rights. Portraying all Gazans as members of Hamas is a cheap trick to dehumanize them and justify their massacres.

We call on all Canadians and particularly the constituency of justice and peace to raise their voices in protest of these humanitarian war crimes, Silence at this juncture is complicity with these crimes. Palestinians lives matter too.

For further information visit Palestine House online [here](#) or e-mail info@palestinehouse.com

Photo Review of Actions Around the World

Canada

Halifax, Nova Scotia



Montreal, Quebec May 13, 2018





May 14, 2018



Toronto, Ontario
May 12, 2018



May 18, 2018



Windsor, Ontario, May 15, 2018



Edmonton, Alberta, May 15, 2018



Vancouver, BC, May 15, 2018



Courtenay, BC, May 15, 2018



Turkey

May 15, 2018





Sanaa, May 15, 2018



Pakistan



Indonesia

Jakarta, May 11, 2018



South Africa

Capetown, May 15, 2018



United States

Washington, DC, May 14, 2018



New York City, May 17, 2018



Milwaukee, May 14, 2018



New Haven, May 14, 2018



England

London, May 15, 2018



Sheffield, May 15, 2018



Cambridge, May 15, 2018



Ireland

Derry, May 14, 2018



Derry, May 15, 2018



Limerick, May 15, 2018



France

Cannes, Film Festival, May 15, 2018



Lyon, May 14, 2018



Norway

Oslo, May 16, 2018



Italy

Rome, May 14, 2018



(Photos: TML, Great Return March, Z. Woodford, Niks, Shehab News, Al Nakba 70, Rida, S. Wilkinson, Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign, Derry IPSC, Gaza Action Ireland, A-K Alkahlout)



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