

## Labour Day 2017

# DISMANTLE NAFTA AND ALL IMPERIALIST FREE TRADE AGREEMENTS!

– Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) –

As the ruling elites from Canada, Mexico and the United States engage in secret renegotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), once again the people are raising their voices that all imperialist free trade agreements must be abolished!

The Canadian economy and working people have suffered enormously under NAFTA. Proposed and pushed under the banner of globalization and prosperity, NAFTA is a scheme to strengthen the domination of the North American monopolies and destroy the three national economies involved.

From the beginning, NAFTA was organized to subordinate the three economies and peoples to international finance capital. It provides every amenity for the big corporations to control the people, economies and politics of North America and use that base to strengthen the U.S. military as a global force to dominate the world.

Canadian working people have consistently opposed all imperialist free trade agreements as being contrary to the interests of Canadians and the world's peoples. They spoke out against the first Free Trade Agreement with the U.S. in 1987, against



NAFTA and against all subsequent ones including the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement between Canada and the European Union (CETA).

To suggest that within this NAFTA scheme a better deal is possible begs the question: a better deal for whom? Certainly not for the Canadian, Mexican and U.S. working people. It can only mean a better deal for certain sections of the ruling imperial-

ist elite. Unless this consideration is the starting point of deliberations on the issue, no warranted conclusion about NAFTA renegotiations can be reached.

But even with this consideration in mind, to find out what is being renegotiated amongst the ruling elites requires clearing away the reams of disinformation issued by the negotiators and mass media. To understand what is being prepared through the renegotiation of NAFTA, the people have to keep in mind the deep integration of the economies, militaries, regulations and decision-making of the three countries that has evolved out of the process since it was first begun in 1987 as a Canada/U.S. Free Trade Agreement and then NAFTA in 1992.

### Withdraw from NAFTA!

The Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) calls on working people from Canada, Quebec and throughout North America to demand and fight for the dismantling of NAFTA and all imperialist economic blocs and free trade agreements erected by the financial oligarchy and their political representatives. Canada must withdraw from NAFTA, not renegotiate it!

Trade union officials are said to be included in the consultations regarding NAFTA renegotiations, as if somehow the mechanisms that have been carefully designed to serve the most economically powerful can be turned into mechanisms to also serve the working class and people. This dangerous illusion and diversion disarms the working people from having their own perspective on what is really going on in terms of the current phase in the integration of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico into Fortress North America. The reality is integrated militaries, and trade, energy, security and communications corridors in the name of U.S. homeland security and its

striving for global hegemony.

Just as the small farmers in the three countries are speaking out in defence of food sovereignty, the workers should be on guard and speak out on their own behalf. They can lead the way forward by inspiring the working people all over the world with their own independent voice. The demand to withdraw Canada from NAFTA and all imperialist economic trade blocs and agreements gives expression to what the working people want throughout the world.

The renegotiations present Canadians with an opportunity to discuss the concrete conditions starting with a rejection of the disinformation and illusion that NAFTA can somehow serve the interests of an independent Canadian economy with its own nation-building project. The U.S.-led global monopolies and financial oligarchy have destroyed any semblance of an independent Canada resulting in integration into what the U.S. imperialists define as their national interest.

## What Happened in 1993?

In 1993, when the Chrétien Liberals won the federal election, defeating Brian Mulroney and the Progressive Conservatives who had brought in NAFTA, they vowed to reopen NAFTA and to replace the GST, neither of which they ever did. A *TML Daily* article at the time, "What Are the Liberals Going to Do?" pointed out:

"[W]hen the North American Free Trade Agreement is reviewed, this is also an opportunity to have discussion. All the nationalists are giving the view that we should do what is beneficial for Canada. But what is beneficial for Canada? For instance, there are some big monopolies in the resource section. Should Canadians stand behind these monopolies and say that they should be given favourable treatment in the North American Free Trade Agreement?

"Either there should be an agreement which favours the peoples of the three countries, Canada, the U.S. and Mexico, or there should be no Free Trade Agreement. It is our policy -- and it is a matter of principle for the Marxist-Leninists -- that trade should be mutually beneficial. There is no need to even have an agreement unless trade is carried out for mutual benefit. Many groups are going to speak about protecting our jobs and so on, as a means of not clarifying what issues are involved. It is very important to awaken people that the same propaganda is carried in the U.S. and in Mexico. These are the kinds of things which go from trade wars to actual wars. We do not want this. We want to have the unity of the people of North America for their mutual benefit."

In October 1994, *TML Daily* published an article, "Hardial Bains Accuses Liberals of Destroying the Canadian Nation State." Referring to the way NAFTA was being promoted under the slogan of the necessity for "competing in the international economy," CPC(M-L) leader Hardial Bains said that the time of national sovereignty and national economies is a thing of the past in the new international economy based on the destruction of the nation states, in the sense of destroying their positive achievements.

Nation states are civilized to the extent that they assume responsibility for general health, hygiene, sanitation, education, public works and so on, Hardial Bains said. Instead of looking at these issues related to the state and its responsibility to society, he said, a debate is being promoted on the validity of two bankrupt theories: Keynesian economics and Reaganite or

Thatcherite economics. The key point skirted around is that both these economic theories could not defend the nation state and its responsibilities. The social-welfare state policies did not deal with the question of moving society forward from the achievements already accomplished by the modern nation state. The Reaganite policies followed by Mulroney, and now by the Liberals, advocate privatization and the state's complete abdication of its responsibilities.

Today, the main role of the government in destroying the nation state and its responsibilities is to integrate the economies of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico by establishing common trade, energy, security and communications corridors, for which regulations and standards must be "harmonized," meaning dictated by the U.S. imperialists.

Governments negotiate or rather conspire on behalf of the biggest financial interests and corporations, and the oligopolies whose private interests have been politicized to achieve what those private interests want outside the rule of law and norms that have been established. To achieve this, they engage in diversionary propaganda so that the people line up behind this or that faction of the imperialist bourgeoisie rather than have their own independent view and reach warranted conclusions about what is going on.

Governments and the media also promote state-organized racist attacks to divide and rule the people and divert their attention from the all-sided crisis with economic crisis at the base in which their countries are mired. The aim of these attacks and disinformation is to deprive the working class of its own outlook with which it can formulate its own demands to resolve the deep all-sided crisis in which the U.S. economy and state are mired along with Canada and Mexico and open a path forward.

The future is grim unless the working class leads the people to forge a new direction for the economy and politics that serves the people and society, guarantees the rights of all and opens a path to humanize both the social and natural environments leading to the emancipation of all human persons from the oppression of class privilege.

A good start is to speak out against these renegotiations of NAFTA by rejecting them and demanding instead that all imperialist free trade blocs be dismantled.

***No to NAFTA!***

***No to the Integration of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico into U.S. Homeland Security and Fortress North America!***

***Change the Direction of the Economy!***

***Make Canada a Zone for Peace and Mutual Benefit and Development for the Peoples of the World!***



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