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Ushering in the New Year
Make Way for Renewal!

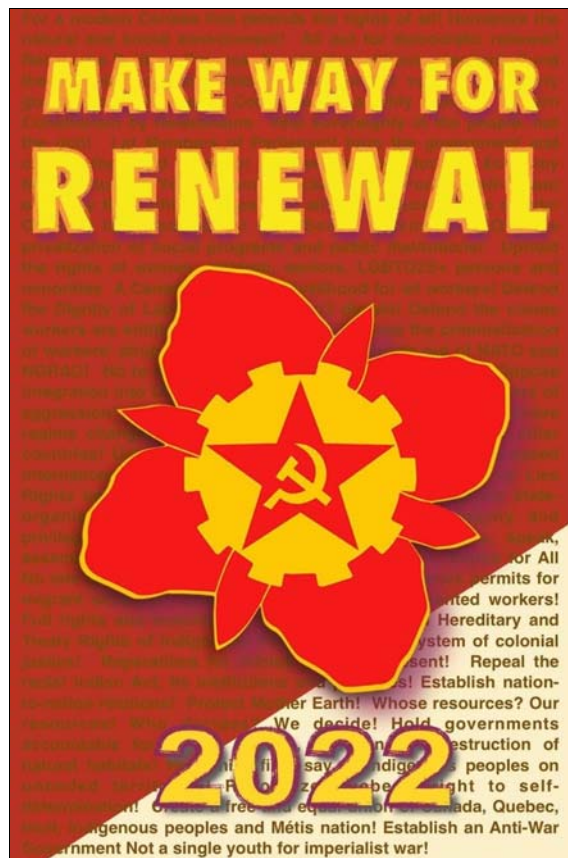


Montreal action for climate justice, November 6, 2021

As we head into the third year of the COVID-19 pandemic, the inability of liberal democracies all over the world to unite their populations behind a social project has come into sharp relief. Entering the New Year, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) has put forward the call to *Make Way for Renewal*. This marks the beginning of the fourth decade of direct contest between the masses of the people and an increasingly degenerate and corrupt ruling elite on the issue of what constitutes democracy. Who occupies the space for change which exists objectively persists as the field of contention.

In a bid to control the situation characterized by widescale anarchy and violence, the U.S., with countries like Canada in tow, has now launched a major offensive claiming it is defending true democracy against the dangers of totalitarianism, authoritarianism and the like. Unable to control the factions fighting over the decision-making powers within the U.S. itself, the Biden administration is concentrating executive powers in ever fewer private hands to say it represents the union against the warring factions and advance the U.S. striving for world domination. Descriptions of what U.S. democracy stands for are also to divert the people's striving for empowerment while criminalizing their resistance struggles.

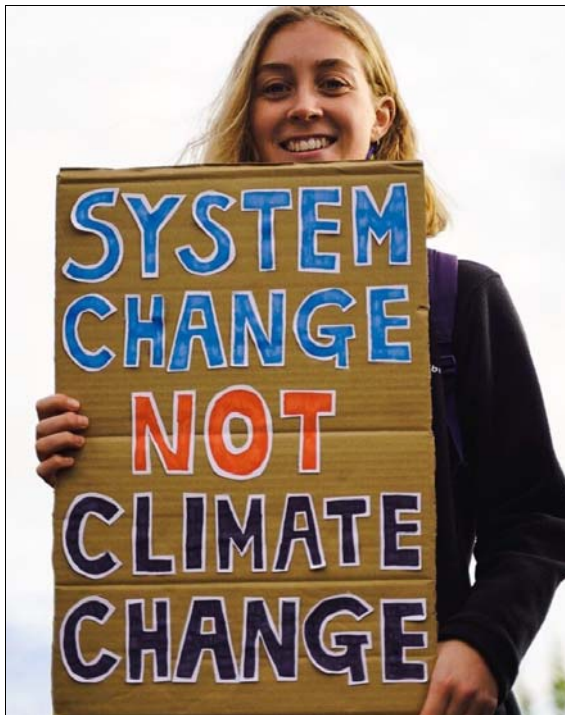
Canada is an integral part of this desperate attempt to forestall the collapse of the democratic institutions by concentrating powers in the Office of the Prime Minister. This can be seen in the number of mandates issued via orders-in-council, the lame role assigned to Parliament and the fact that Canada marches in lockstep with the Biden administration at this time.



The year 2021 was a difficult one with the worsening of the COVID-19 crisis and 2022 has begun plagued by difficulties. Within this, the workers and people are expressing their social solidarity with one another by acting responsibly to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic and trying to make sure they are not overwhelmed by the confusion and difficulties. Once again, workers are asserting what was revealed to all in 2021, that they are the essential force in producing goods and delivering services in the most perilous of circumstances and in protecting the health and safety of the people, often at the cost of their own health and safety.

This key role could lead to even greater achievements if it were supported by the state and governments. However, state institutions and governments at every level persist in attempting to stifle any initiative on the part of workers and to silence them by governing strictly through executive orders. This allows the rulers to transform the workers' living and working conditions at will, particularly by continuing to wage an anti-social offensive in the fields of health care, education, social services and matters related to the supply chain for food and other necessities of life. Workers are being deprived of any control over their working conditions even though they are the people's first line of defence.

The pandemic has also revealed the incredible gulf that exists between rich and poor countries as millions upon millions of human beings are excluded from treatment for the coronavirus. This particularly heinous example of the super-exploitation of the countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean further aggravates the crisis, rendering it even more out of control. The irrationality of an authority that claims it can resolve the crisis by disempowering the workers and peoples and suppressing their voices while deepening the inequality in even the most basic living conditions, has caught the imagination of workers and toiling people the world over who are demanding fundamental economic, political and other changes.



A radical change of course is also being demanded by the peoples of the world for the humanization of the natural and social environment, in particular for the resolution of the climate crisis. The year 2021 witnessed its destructive impacts worldwide, including right here in Canada with unprecedented devastation caused in British Columbia first by forest fires, then floods and now extreme cold. The failure of government to forewarn the people, prepare and protect them shall forever remain engraved on people's minds.

The unprecedented productive forces generated within the socialized economy are being destroyed by the narrow private interests in control of the economy and decision-making powers of governments at all levels. Those with privilege and power approach any activity through the narrow lens of private profit for a tiny supranational rich minority. As the conflict

between authority and conditions becomes increasingly acute, anarchy and violence prevail and the situation appears out of control. This was seen most dramatically at the COP26 conference in November, where the oligopolies and their governments put forward their pay-the-rich schemes to extract super profits by "greening the economy."

Again, as in the case of the COVID-19 pandemic, what is excluded is the mobilization of the human and natural resources of each country in a way that puts the needs of the people in first place, beginning with their need to be the decision-makers in all matters of concern to them. It is

the people and society that will pay the price, including through the worsening of the climate crisis. Thousands of people made their voices heard through mass mobilizations during the COP26 conference and demanded action to counter climate change.

Work of CPC(M-L) in 2022

In 2022, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) is focused on involving people in the work to renew the political process through their own empowerment. Our publications will continue to inform everyone from coast to coast to coast of the people's living and working conditions and the struggle they are waging and lessons to be learned. They will continue to elaborate the significance of the work of providing modern definitions, especially when it comes to the battle for democracy and the battle of democracy.

The Party's Workers' Centre will continue developing a news agency by activating the workers themselves to provide information about their working conditions and their concerns and to speak out. This work will continue to play a decisive role to strengthen unity in action in an organized form in the struggle for rights -- justice for the cause of the Indigenous people to uphold hereditary rights and be compensated for crimes committed against them in the past and present and for migrant workers, refugees, immigrants, injured workers as well as women, youth and students, the homeless, and impoverished. It will also pay attention to the striving for people's empowerment by bringing into being an anti-war government and making Canada a zone for peace.



So too first-rate attention will continue to be paid to involving the youth in building the organizations they need to achieve success in their work of humanizing the natural and social environment so as to build a bright future for themselves.

CPC(M-L) wishes everyone success in their endeavours in 2022 and is at their disposal to the best of its abilities.

(Photos: TML, G. Campbell)

Anniversary of January 6 Assault on the Capitol in Washington, DC

January 6 marked the first anniversary of the violent assault on the Capitol building in Washington, DC by supporters of former President Donald Trump. They claimed that Trump had won the election and that it had been stolen by Joe Biden. Many challenges to the elections had been organized through the courts and in protests to contest the choice of Biden for president, claiming he did not win the majority of votes.

Seven people, including police officers, died during and after the unprecedented incursion into the Houses of Congress where acts of vandalism and violence occurred. An FBI investigation has led to criminal charges laid against 725 people who participated in the riot. New reports quote U.S. Attorney General Merrick Garland saying that more than 325 of those rioters face felony charges

and that he also vowed to hold all "perpetrators" accountable. A parallel investigation in the House of Representatives is looking at what Trump and his allies knew before and on January 6 as well as whether Trump stood by and did nothing as the riot unfolded. In this regard, Garland suggested organizers of the riot could also be held to account.



All of it reveals the extent to which conflicts among the rulers and the oligopolies they serve are sharpening over control of the presidential powers. All of them are appealing to the people to join their side to save the U.S. democracy and uphold the Constitution. The people are supposed to forget about their own conditions and reality and those of the country and people and resign themselves to the state of anarchy and violence which prevails.

A recent survey reported that 40 per cent of people in the U.S. have no trust in the electoral system. It confirms that the crisis of credibility and legitimacy in which the U.S. democracy is mired is deepening. Many people point out that elections are always "stolen" by big money because it requires millions of dollars to run for office. The electoral system is stacked against ordinary working families, they say. Elected representatives of both parties are mostly beholden to the moneyed interests and are not accountable to electors, they add. Many people are calling for electoral reforms such as public funding of the electoral process, online voting, direct democracy and other such things.

Meanwhile, the U.S. death toll due to COVID-19 has reached 840,000 with nearly 60 million confirmed cases. The seven-day average of daily new cases in the first week of January is 586,391, an 85.7 per cent increase from the previous week. Prices of food and necessities are rising rapidly and there are serious problems in the supply chain due to shortages of workers caused by the pandemic, while the concentration of wealth in fewer hands is leading to the impoverishment of farmers.

News reports also inform that Dr. Peter Hotez and Dr. Maria Elena Bottazzi of the Texas Children's Hospital and Baylor College of Medicine and their research team have produced a very inexpensive vaccine without recourse to any federal funding. The researchers said that if they had received funding they would have developed the vaccine earlier. They have given the technology to several countries in Asia and Africa without any patent. Hotez also called for decolonizing technology. Big Pharma companies are using it to maximize their profits, risking the lives of hundreds of millions of people, he said.

In related news, it is reported that Irene Bosch, an MIT scientist and her team made a very simple test for COVID-19 in March 2020 which was not approved by the FDA. She points out that the

test would cost 50 cents and could be produced in the millions very quickly. The tests that the U.S. government is supporting and distributing cost people \$25 for two tests. The situation is untenable and everyone knows it.

(Photo: T. Jane)

State of Democracy as 2022 Gets Underway

As the new year 2022 gets underway, the most salient feature is official circles formally acknowledging the crisis of the so-called liberal democratic institutions. Talk within U.S. and Canadian ruling circles refers to the "death spiral of democracy." A dispute has arisen over whether civil war broke out on January 6 when the failed coup took place last year to stop a peaceful transition of power to the new president, or whether it will break out in 2024 when the next presidential election takes place.

Barbara F. Walter, a political science professor at the University of California at San Diego, serves on a CIA advisory panel called the Political Instability Task Force that monitors countries around the world and predicts which of them are most at risk of deteriorating into violence. In a book coming out in January she writes: "No one wants to believe that their beloved democracy is in decline, or headed toward war." But, "if you were an analyst in a foreign country looking at events in America -- the same way you'd look at events in Ukraine or the Ivory Coast or Venezuela -- you would go down a checklist, assessing each of the conditions that make civil war likely. And what you would find is that the United States, a democracy founded more than two centuries ago, has entered very dangerous territory."

Indeed, the United States has already gone through what the CIA identifies as the first two phases of insurgency -- the "pre-insurgency" and "incipient conflict" phases -- "and only time will tell whether the final phase, 'open insurgency,' began with the sacking of the Capitol by Donald Trump supporters on January 6."

The perception that the U.S. is a democratic country deteriorated so dramatically under Trump and since then that the United States no longer technically qualifies as a democracy, the pundits tell us. Citing the Center for Systemic Peace's "Polity" data set -- the one the CIA task force is said to have found "to be most helpful in predicting instability and violence" -- Walter writes that the United States is now an "anocracy" -- which is described as being somewhere between a democracy and an autocratic state.

U.S. democracy is said to have received the Polity Index's top score of 10, or close to it, for much of its history. "But in the five years of the Trump era, it tumbled precipitously into the anocracy zone; by the end of his presidency, the U.S. score had fallen to a 5, making the country a partial democracy for the first time since 1800," a reviewer notes. Walter writes, "We are no longer the world's oldest continuous democracy."

Meanwhile, the hallmark of the Biden administration has become stepping up the concentration of presidential power and calling it democracy. The presidency seems gripped with a sense of hopelessness, helplessness and humiliation, in large part as a result of the fact that the coronavirus does not obey the Biden administration's measures and use of executive powers. The increased use of presidential powers is aimed at controlling the civil war raging within the United States itself and achieving hegemony internationally as countries rise to challenge the U.S. striving for domination.

At the same time, the striving of the peoples everywhere to acquire the decision-making power directly themselves also continues to make headway. This has been seen magnificently in the successful struggle of the farmers in India for the repeal of three anti-farm laws, and most recently

in Chile through the ballot box as well as in Honduras and Nicaragua, despite U.S. interference in their elections. In Chile, even from the pulpit, a Catholic priest considered it necessary to counter the reactionary U.S. propaganda stating clearly that no, communists do not pose a danger to Chile, communists have never killed anyone in Chile and now it is up to the people to bring about the changes they and the country need.

Everywhere, unfolding events underscore the problem humankind is facing of the need to renew the democracy and democratic institutions if the people are to control the decisions which affect their lives. This striving of the people to control the decisions which affect their lives is precisely the key element required to open a path to progress within this historical transition that is blocked by darkest reaction and retrogression.

The Supplement to this edition of *TML Monthly* carries articles dealing with these matters.

Urgency Increases to Make Canada a Zone for Peace

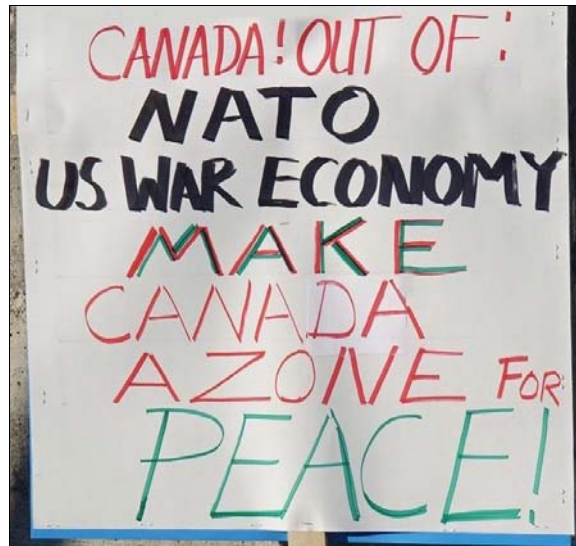


A feature noted at the end of 2021 was the further development of a trend which has been unfolding for several years -- the uneven development of the productive forces which results in contradictions internally within countries and internationally. China's economy has eclipsed that of the U.S. and several other large countries are now approaching the U.S. economy in size. Besides China, whose economy of 1.4 billion people is rapidly transforming from petty production to industrial mass production, India, Pakistan, Indonesia and others are rapidly developing. As well, Russia appears to have found its bearings after the disastrous destruction of the Soviet Union and pillage of its public enterprises.

The global oligarchs who vie for world domination by controlling the U.S. striving for domination -- which includes Canada -- are alarmed at the increasing global competition for markets, raw materials, workers to exploit and regions to dominate, and at the attempts of others to challenge their authority. While Biden increased the budget of the Pentagon even above what it asked for, U.S./NATO military threats and attacks are increasing exponentially as Russia tries to talk some sense into NATO to stand down in the Asia Pacific and on its borders specifically. Meanwhile, Russia and China have come forward to seriously challenge the stranglehold of the global financial oligarchs under the control of U.S. imperialist interests over international economic institutions and transactions. The U.S. imperialists have always used these international economic institutions to thwart the rise of competitors, keeping them in tow and forcing them to submit to their will.

This issue of *TML Monthly* carries articles dealing with these matters.

The situation brings urgency to the call of the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) to *Make Way for Renewal* and to *Make Canada a Zone for Peace*. The aim of bringing into being an anti-war government and disentangling Canada from the U.S. war economy and military requires first-rate attention.



Canada's military is integrated into the U.S. military and follows its directions without the agreement and informed consent of even the Parliament of Canada, let alone the Canadian people. Within the situation, the U.S. ruling elite dictate Canada's foreign affairs and international relations -- which include, importantly, the control and use of the Canadian Department of National Defence, intelligence forces and military. They use toadies within Canada's elite to enforce their dictate and wreck any public opinion to the contrary.

Whether certain Canadians agree or not with the direction of the United States in international affairs is not the issue. The issue is that Canada must have its own independent position decided by the polity.

The situation as it poses itself demands Canadians pay first-rate attention to the need to organize to take Canada out of all military associations with the U.S. such as NATO and NORAD, and to free Canada's economy from the dark abyss of the U.S. war economy.

Resistance to arbitrary control and hegemony is constant. The situation is explosive as U.S. imperialism will not change its ways. Still the peoples are challenging it with mass organization and courageous opposition and struggle to build the New.



In its desperation for control, U.S. actions and those of its aggressive NATO war alliance, which includes Canada, threaten more local wars or even a broader war involving the U.S. and one or more of the larger countries.

Those calling for an anti-war government argue that Canada must not participate in U.S. imperialist war preparations and must also defend its sovereignty in a meaningful way.

This means not permitting the U.S. imperialists to exercise command and control over Canada's air, land, water and government and military assets. We must withdraw from NATO as well as NORAD and work for an independent foreign policy.

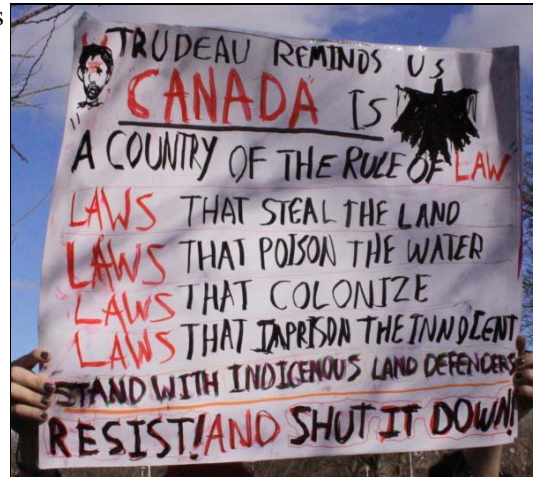
This means removing all Canadian soldiers, ships and equipment from foreign territory and waters as well as international waterways. Most importantly, it means that Canadians must establish an anti-war government.

Necessity for a Modern Definition of Right to Free Speech



In their desperation to stay afloat, U.S. President Biden and the Canadian ruling elite speak about the need to protect "a free and independent media." At the "Democracy Summit" Biden convoked on December 9-10 in Washington, DC, he claimed a free and independent media is the "bedrock of democracy," which guarantees that the public stays informed and "how governments are held accountable." All of it merely serves to provide a justification for the use of ever more executive police powers to keep media which owe their allegiance to the presidency in place and suppress the voices of others they cannot control.

Accountability is one of the most important concerns being raised by people in Canada, the U.S. and all over the world as people contend with the reality that there are no means to hold governments said to be representative to account. In the U.S., the president cannot be charged with war crimes or crimes against humanity. Even current efforts to charge the government with genocide have to first be accepted as legitimate by the existing courts whose existence has the same source as the presidency and the system itself. So too in Canada, the Prime Minister can issue endless apologies for crimes committed against Indigenous peoples in the past without any means to hold him to account for the recurrence of such crimes in the present. The role of the high courts is to interpret and defend the Constitution which is not an instrument of the people but of the ruling class.



Meanwhile, the people are divided by inciting passions based on false ideological beliefs and notions of conscience, rights and speech defined in the past which no longer apply to the conditions today.

Against the promotion of false ideological beliefs to divide the people, divert them and make sure their movement for empowerment cannot coalesce, the Communist Party of Canada (Marxist-Leninist) will continue to pay first-rate attention to providing a modern definition of freedom of speech and involve people in forming their own political opinion.

Speech is a human quality. Freedom of speech exists to the extent that people fight for it. It is always being limited, such as through limits imposed on rights in the name of security and opposition to hate speech, or in the form of free speech zones at demonstrations as one example.

We have to look at these things by connecting them to the human right to conscience, which does not know a social system. Today a lot is spoken about conscience by civil libertarians as well as by what are called the extreme right-wing and the liberal left. They do not know that conscience does not recognize any social system or that rights are inviolable by virtue of their holder being human, whatever the social system. We cannot recognize these rights and act on the necessity for change without freedom of speech. The Canadian Constitution has the notion of reasonable limits to protect rights. The U.S. Constitution gives rights as a way to have the popular will oppose the coercive machine of government. It stipulates that Congress is to make no laws against these rights, against public opinion. However, the idea that rights can be given, taken away and forfeited remains.



Today, once again, in contention with competitors on the world scale, we see the U.S. imperialists' final recourse to settle all the problems facing the democracy and U.S. hegemony around the world with the threat that the U.S. President has the power to launch nuclear weapons. It is not just an issue of nuclear weapons being one technique of warfare. It is a way of wiping out freedom of speech, or at least claiming that it can be done. On that basis, secrecy, espionage and treason are established and the demand is to express loyalty to a Commander-in-Chief or head of state instead of having fidelity to the ensemble of human relations and what they reveal.

When we speak of freedom of speech, we do so by keeping in mind not only culture in ideological and social form but material form as well. The conditions reveal the necessity for

modern definitions to affirm rights by having fidelity to the ensemble of human relations, the relations between humans and humans and humans and nature, which reveal the need for people's empowerment and permit us to delineate and embark on the path which advances this aim.

Articles in this issue of *TML Monthly* also take up these issues.

(Photos: TML, S. Leigh)

Liberal Fantasies Flounder

It is interesting to note how the ruling class, through the promotion of cultural icons, promotes false notions of what it takes to sort out the problems humanity faces. On the eve of the 2016 U.S. election, media and liberal leaders were celebrating hard work and representation as the key characteristics of a leader and everyone else that mattered. Acquiring these qualities would set everything right. Hillary Clinton was their poster child to promote a narrative which claimed that recognition of diversity and difference are decisive. This recognition would conquer racism and the alleged small-minded conformity of presumably uneducated rural and small-town America. It would put violence against women to rest. Notwithstanding the real Hillary Clinton who followed no rules, the idea promoted was that all that was needed was to play by the rules, work hard within the wonderful system established by the U.S. founding fathers, and be rewarded with the chance to smash through the barriers of racial discrimination, the so-called glass ceiling and the like. The flat cardboard cut-out caricature of Hillary Clinton dominated what was referred to as the "left-wing political ecosystem."

"True change" is brought about by those willing to put in the time and follow the rules, media pundits assured the world. Identity politics became the banner of the liberals desperate to impose their beliefs on society and have everyone fall in line.

In the same way as Obama was promoted, "Hillary was also celebrated for the historic nature of her identity. She was the first woman to win the nomination of a major party for the presidency. She was the first woman to win the popular vote for the presidency. Regardless of where her politics lay, the sheer fact of her existence was radical and boundary-breaking. It was all about the symbolic force of their version of politics of representation," as one writer put it.



Then Trump was declared the next President. Hillary and her image as hard working and her commitment to navigating the constraints of the system and her politics of representation did not save the U.S. democratic system, did not eliminate racism, violence against women or any other state violence against the people. Everything then became about flawed people getting the job done and not always succeeding. We are to recognize that public services are gutted, for good; a handful of uber wealthy individuals and their corporations dominate the economy, and one's only hope is to achieve a happy life for oneself within a dysfunctional family, a dysfunctional school system, health care system, economy and world. The climate crisis is wreaking its revenge on even this limited hope for the future where, if only niceness, civility, acceptance and understanding of difference can be made to prevail, everything will be okay; it will be hunky dory once again.

In this vein, Justin Trudeau was used by the champions of 19th century liberalism to promote the idiotic notion that acceptance of difference would get rid of racism and inequality. For the first two terms of Trudeau's ministry this was promoted and we saw it crumble bit by bit in the face of the realities of life. For some time, the cardboard cut-out of Trudeau has no longer been working for the rulers. Today it flails helplessly, tattered and torn like an abandoned billboard faded by sun, wind and rain. The allegedly young hip leader was to eliminate racism and discrimination against women and set everything right. His supposed understanding of difference and unabashed ability to apologize for crimes said to be of the past, and for which the government today is not responsible, and to put women, Indigenous people and "people of colour" into positions of influence was supposed to be all that was needed. But now this narrative seems to have gotten crushed once and for all by the revolving door of key operators stepping in and out of boardrooms and cabinet positions, doing the bidding of the financial oligarchy and the U.S. military, Secretary of State, Homeland Security and departments dealing with all aspects of the economy.

The rulers are now in search of a new narrative. They are floundering because the force of history is such that it debunks fraud which is the hallmark of reactionary ruling elites today. A year after the January 6, 2021 failed coup in the United States, the approval ratings of President Biden are plummeting. He was supposed to be the new champion capable of setting everything right in the U.S. So too in Canada, Trudeau's image is tattered and torn. The collective liberal fantasy of who our leaders could be if only we wish it hard enough has run out of steam. There is a vacuum they are desperate to fill by promoting false ideological beliefs and historical fraud.

Articles in this issue of *TML Monthly* also deal with this matter. It is up to the working people to take matters into their own hands and become the political replacement by taking over decision-making on the basis of a nation-building project of their own.

Anniversary of January 6 Assault on the Capitol in Washington, DC

Attempts to Hide Crisis of U.S. Democracy

- Anna Di Carlo -



Workers across the U.S. are taking action to demand their rights. Above, Alabama miners march in New York City, July 28, 2021 declaring "We Are One."

A feature of the situation as 2021 ended is the failure of attempts to hide the crisis of U.S. democracy. When President Joe Biden opened and closed the Summit for Democracy he convoked in Washington, DC on December 9-10, 2021 with the participation of some 100 governments and others, both he and Vice President Kamala Harris spoke to "challenges" the U.S. faces when it comes to democracy. While they focused mainly on voting and the deepening crisis of a system failing to deliver the human rights being demanded worldwide, they did not fail to issue threats against all those who do not submit to the U.S. "rules-based" international order.

Biden began the Summit by putting forward the U.S. Constitution as the model for "democratic values." He also made it clear that democracy is a matter of ideals, not actual reality. He said U.S. "democracy is an ongoing struggle to live up to our highest ideals and to heal our divisions; to recommit ourselves to the founding idea of our nation," that "all women and men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." This talk is in conditions where human rights and the right to live and be are under brutal attack as governments at all levels refuse to guarantee rights to health care, housing, education, a livelihood and safe living and working conditions. Furthermore, neither Biden nor Harris speak to the fact that the Constitution enshrines a structure of inequality, including keeping the people out of power and the rich in power, evident from the days of slavery to today.

Speaking to the crisis facing liberal democracy, Biden said that "perhaps most importantly and worrying of all" is "the dissatisfaction of people all around the world with democratic governments that they feel are failing to deliver for their needs." He tried to hide this reality by saying democracies are not perfect, are hard work, are fragile, etc. He, like Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Harris, then tried to reduce the issue of democracy to voting. The desperation of the ruling circles is such that they believe that if only the right to vote were recognized nationwide, the U.S. democracy would go back to being the best in the world.

Biden said, "My administration is going to keep fighting to pass two critical pieces of legislation that will shore up the very foundation of American democracy: the sacred right of every person to make their voice heard through free, fair, and secure elections."

If problems could be sorted out by passing laws, what is the problem? Once laws do not suffice, then come the police powers and the threats of war and especially the use of nuclear weapons.

The fact is that despite Constitutional Amendments and numerous laws, such as the *1965 Voting Rights Act*, simply being able to vote is blocked and no explanation is given. In 2013 even the Supreme Court repealed sections of the *Voting Rights Act*.

History shows that yet more legislation is not going to eliminate the many ways voters are blocked from voting, whether through limits and requirements of voter registration, arbitrary elimination from the voter rolls by election officials, rigged drawing of district lines (gerrymandering), the blocking of the equal right to be elected, for third parties to register and run candidates and much more. U.S. elections have long been widely known to be neither free nor fair.

The focus on voting is also meant to divert from what Biden himself admits: the broad dissatisfaction worldwide with the failure and dysfunction of liberal democracy and its institutions.

At the Summit for Democracy, Biden recognized that the world is at a turning point. His response however is to deny its material basis and what it reveals and instead try as he might to unite the contending factions behind what he calls his Presidential Initiative. Biden said:

"My fellow leaders, members of civil society, activists, advocates, citizens: We stand at an inflection point in our history, in my view."

In mathematics, an inflection point is a point of a curve at which a change in the direction of curvature occurs. In business it is a time of significant change in a situation; a turning point. In life it refers to points where events and decisions take one in a different direction, altering the course of at least one aspect of one's life.

Biden said: "The choices we make, in my view, in the next -- in this moment are going to fundamentally determine the direction our world is going to take in the coming decades. Will we allow the backward slide of rights and democracy to continue unchecked? Or will we together -- together -- have a vision and the vision -- not just 'a' vision, 'the' vision -- and courage to once more lead the march of human progress and human freedom forward?"

"The vision," as he puts it, is one where "the march of human progress" is to be blocked by using his Presidential Initiative to institutionalize different organizational forms to attempt to maintain rule by the oligarchs in general and the U.S. imperialists in particular.

Harris also spoke to this turning point but in a different manner. She said: "I believe our world is at the start of a new era -- an era with new challenges, an era with new opportunities, an era that is defined by interconnection and interdependence. In this new era, I believe that democracy is our world's best hope not because it is perfect but because of its principles, because it delivers for the people. Democracy protects human rights and promotes human dignity. It is a means to create peace and prosperity."

It is as if the U.S. is not waging wars, has sorted out the problem of rising poverty, homelessness and attacks on human rights which are reaching new levels of genocide on several fronts. What such assertions serve to achieve is to highlight the crisis of credibility and legitimacy in which the U.S. democracy is mired. Making clear that her reference is to the defunct liberal democracies, Harris said, it is "of urgent concern that democracy is presently under threat and, for 15 years, has been on the decline."

Evidently, the broad mass movements in the U.S. for equality and rights and against the racist government and police killings are not considered part of democracy and nor are the demands of the countries which affirm their right to be and oppose foreign interference in their internal affairs. The rise of a people's democracy is to be averted at all costs. The broad and growing resistance of the working class, among Indigenous peoples, immigrants and refugees, farmers and youth are also not to be permitted because they are described as part of the decline of the democracy. Both the battle for democracy and the battle of democracy are nonetheless the order of the day in which both the quality and the structure of democracy so that it is to the people's advantage is emerging ever more clearly.



Workers shut down the Manhattan and Brooklyn Bridges, March 5, 2021, demanding recognition of their rights and of their critical role in keeping people safe.

This dismissal of the people is further evident in Harris' closing remarks, where she echoes Biden's many statements saying "democracy is the government." She says, "As we go forward, let us do the work that democracy requires. Let us go to work, let us deliver together for the people."

The separation between the people, those governed, and those governing is evident. Those governing, constitute the "we" and the "let us" as in "Let us deliver together for the people," refers to the government.

The issue on the minds of millions worldwide when it comes to democracy is not to defend the likes of Biden or Trudeau or their rivals for power or any of their counterparts in other countries. They are acutely aware of who decides all matters of concern when it comes to questions related to the economy and all that entails, war and peace, politics, culture and the very fate of the natural and social environment. It is the people who pay the price for this retrogression and they are heeding the call of the times to *Make Way for Renewal*.

In the face of the clash between concrete conditions and authority, the effort to stop the advance of democracy is to no avail which is what makes the current situation very dangerous at the hands of a warmongering ruling class. In Biden's concluding remarks at the Democracy Summit, he thanked everyone for "renewing our dedication to the shared values that are the root of our national and international strength." It is precisely these pro-war, anti-social values that the ruling elite has trouble promoting and justifying because they do not accord with the conditions and are being rejected, along with the institutions that uphold them. Again focusing on voting and the values of the rich, Biden said:

"We're affirming the democratic values that are at the heart of our international system and which have been the foundational elements of -- for decades -- of global growth and prosperity."

The other shoe then dropped when he affirmed the U.S. role of deciding who is and is not upholding the values. "We're committed to working with all who share those values to shape the rules of the road that are going to govern our progress in the 21st century," Biden said.

These are the values that are enshrined in the U.S. Constitution and others like it based on the same Covenant Thesis which creates a fictitious person of state which allegedly stands above the fray and can sort everything out if you follow the rules of the road.

(Photos: J. Noor, B. Lander)

Aim of Biden's *Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal*

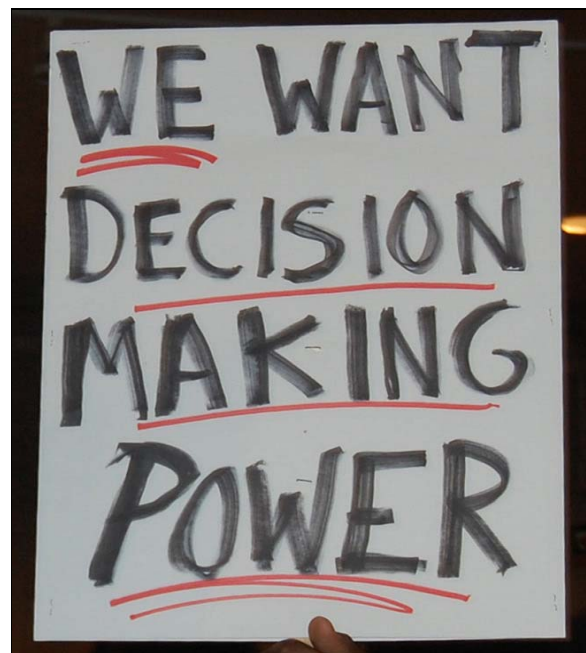
- *Voice of Revolution* -



Rally in Washington, DC, part of nationwide actions for women's rights and abortion justice, October 2, 2021.

The U.S. Congress is so dysfunctional it cannot pass major legislation, such as the budget, due this past October, and instead keeps threatening government shutdowns. Such threats affect hundreds of thousands of federal workers, seniors, mothers, children and unemployed who require federal payments like Social Security to just survive. They also further discredit Congress and reinforce the growing view among the people that it is no longer a viable institution of governance. The Supreme Court has also been discredited, as it is seen as a politicized force catering to one or another vying faction, not only in terms of the right to abortion but other matters as well.

It is in this context of the contention among the ruling factions in the United States, the discredited and dysfunctional institutions, and the increasing claims of the peoples for their rights and greater control, Biden put forward his *Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal*. He is striving to unite what he refers to as "all of us," behind the president and across the usual separations between countries, levels of government, and the peoples organizing to affirm human rights. He is striving to put in place organizational forms that serve to bypass and replace existing authorities and standards, both nationally, such as those between federal and state governments, as well as those enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the UN itself, while putting decision-making power in the hands of the presidency.



Biden's Presidential Initiative is a means to contend with these many conflicts among the authorities, within and between the president and military, with Congress, Governors, intelligence and other policing agencies, etc. and similarly in relation to other countries, by bypassing them and creating direct relations between the presidency and various organizational forms being put in place. He is trying to eliminate various authorities that can stand in the way of presidential dictate. The invitations to the Summit itself indicated that Biden will decide who is and is not to be included. "We're affirming the democratic values that are at the heart of our international system"

and "we're committed to working with all who share those values to shape the rules of the road that are going to govern our progress in the 21st century," Biden explained.

In some ways the initiative is also an effort to bypass the existing bureaucracies, at least the civil ones, and put in place a different machinery dedicated to the presidency. This direction is in part a reflection of the disintegration of political parties and their machinery and puts in place separate machinery, much as Obama did for his election and Bernie Sanders did for his campaign as well. The utter dysfunction and lack of legitimacy of the existing institutions, including the discredited parties, is such that this counterrevolutionary initiative is required in the hopes of preventing what is now referred to as "the death spiral" of liberal democracy.

What gets left out is that all of these authorities are not in step with existing conditions, which demand empowering the people to govern and decide. People are rejecting the framework in which governments preside over them and are superior to them yet are completely incapable of providing the most basic necessities of life and stand in contempt of human rights.

Voice of Revolution is a publication of the U.S. Marxist-Leninist Organization (USMLO).

(Photos: VOR, Nanks H)

Failed State of U.S. Democracy

- Kathleen Chandler -



Minneapolis demonstration during jury selection in trial of George Floyd's killer, April 19, 2021 as people continued to fight for their own interests and demand accountability.

While U.S. President Joe Biden organized a Summit for Democracy in Washington, DC on December 9-10, 2021, close to 100 former high-ranking U.S. national security officials sent a letter to Congress -- not to the President who is Commander-in-Chief or to the Summit for Democracy, but to Congress -- to express their concerns about the state of the U.S. democracy.

Biden organized the Summit to bring together "leaders from more than 100 governments alongside activists, trade unionists, and other members of civil society, leading experts and researchers, and representatives from the business community," to "lock arms and reaffirm our shared commitment to make our democracies better," as he put it. These included various organizations and individuals the U.S. is already funding and backing internationally, such as the Community of Democracies and groups like the Young African Leaders Initiative and Young Southeast Asian Leaders Initiative. What have always been called non-governmental organizations are now called civil society organizations (CSOs). The Service Employees International Union (SEIU), a major health care union and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) were

also present, among others.

At the Summit Biden put forward his *Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal*, which involves establishing various organizational forms that serve to bring all these forces together, both nationally and internationally. They are organizational forms that essentially serve to bypass and replace existing authorities and standards, such as those enshrined in the United Nations Charter and the UN itself, while putting decision-making power in the hands of the U.S. presidency. The Initiative itself is called "a significant, targeted expansion of U.S. government efforts to defend, sustain, and grow democratic resilience with like-minded governmental and non-governmental partners." It is backed by an initial \$424.4 million, with the State Department and its U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) playing a main role.



Meanwhile, the people signing the letter sent to Congress include those from the military, intelligence, and the diplomatic corps who have served Democrat and Republican administrations and/or administrations of both parties. While their letter focuses on elections, they are far more concerned about making sure privileged elites remain in power and the people are kept out on the basis of peaceful transitions of power. They seek to make sure peaceful transitions are not in jeopardy.



The letter begins: "We write to express our alarm at ongoing efforts to destabilize and subvert our elections... We believe these efforts are profoundly damaging to our national security."

Two of the more influential signers, both former Air Force Generals, James R. Clapper and Michael Hayden, also published an op-ed in the *Washington Post*. Clapper and Hayden express the legitimacy problem of the rulers and their preoccupation with defeat. They write: "Poll after poll shows declining trust in our elections and declining belief in the concept of democracy... and these effects will not be contained to our borders... A society struggling to separate fact from fiction is the perfect environment for these actors to further erode electoral trust and kick democracy into a death spiral."

They continue with fear of U.S. decline on the world stage. "The once-high regard for American democracy is in steep decline, and with it America's global influence and moral authority," they write.

Given that the majority of the people in the U.S. are armed, many with military training, the letter writers also fear that the civil war they speak of could turn into one where it is the people who rise and fight in their own interests.

These forces recognize the connection between civil war and imperialist war. One can give rise to the other. In the past, the U.S. has used the tactic of launching an imperialist war to unite the contending factions and prevent civil war. But the latest such wars against Iraq and Afghanistan, besides others such as Libya, Yemen and Syria, have not achieved that aim. The conditions of

disequilibrium brought on by the retreat of revolution have deepened. This disequilibrium set in when the former Soviet Union collapsed and the domination of the world by two superpowers ended along with it. The striving of powerful private interests which have usurped the states of various countries goes hand in hand with their inability to sort out their conflicts on a peaceful basis. Anarchy and violence have been raised to the position of authority revealing the need for democratic political renewal but this need is not what Biden and others in the U.S. are addressing.

The inability of the current institutions to sort out conflicts was further evident on December 17 when yet another public stand was taken by three retired Army Generals shortly after Biden's Democracy Summit. They openly spoke of the likelihood of violent civil war in a *Washington Post* opinion piece where they reference the January 6, 2021 Trump coup attempt and say they are "increasingly concerned about the aftermath of the 2024 presidential election and the potential for lethal chaos inside our military, which would put all Americans at severe risk."

"We are chilled to our bones at the thought of a coup succeeding next time," the three retired Army Generals wrote. They outlined a scenario of a contested election and divided loyalties within the military, with rogue units armed and taking action and arms that "might not be secured depending on who was overseeing them. Under such a scenario, it is not outlandish to say a military breakdown could lead to civil war."

"The potential for a total breakdown of the chain of command along partisan lines -- from the top of the chain to squad level -- is significant should another insurrection occur," the retired Army Generals write.

As a means to solve these problems, the Generals say "the Defense Department should war-game the next potential post-election insurrection or coup attempt to identify weak spots. It must then conduct a top-down debrief of its findings and begin putting in place safeguards to prevent breakdowns not just in the military, but also in any agency that works hand in hand with the military." "The military cannot wait for elected officials to act," the generals said.

The irony of asking a divided military to conduct and oversee war games to avoid civil war seems to escape these Army Generals. The call to "war-game" the situation is a call to prepare for civil war, one which includes targeting and removing what the Generals refer to as "propagandists" within the military's ranks. Despite their facts concerning divided loyalties already existing, they also propose having the Pentagon reinforce "unity of command" to make "perfectly clear to every member of the Defense Department whom they answer to," and have a "review of the laws of war and how to identify and deal with illegal orders."

It is a dictatorial call to concentrate powers. Given that the U.S. wages illegal aggressive wars and relies on illegal orders, including illegal drone strikes, what the Generals plan to implement is not clear, logical or convincing. Nonetheless, while the proposals are irrational in the context of the divided loyalties that exist as part of the vicious battles for power within the military and between the military and president, they are significant in so far as they reflect the very real threat of embroiling the people in violent civil war, and the very real possibility of U.S. military and policing forces dividing not only at the federal level but between states and the federal government. This is also evident in how the National Guard is being used. The National Guard is under the authority of the Governor of each state. They are, however, part of the armed forces and can be federalized by the president, in which case they come under presidential control. The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, for example, could not have been fought without use of the National Guard.

Governors can nonetheless refuse to comply with federalizing the National Guard under their command and they can also call the Guard into action themselves. For example, the Texas National Guard is being used by the Governor at the border against refugees and immigrants coming into the country. Florida and South Dakota sent their Guard to Texas to assist. Federal troops also remain at the border. And there are the armed Border Patrol and Immigration and

Customs Enforcement (ICE) forces as well. One wonders if Biden has kept the military there in part to contend with the Texas National Guard, as well as to potentially launch attacks against Mexico. The border, like the elections, is another potential trigger for both civil war and imperialist war.

In another example, Biden has mandated that all military forces get vaccinated for COVID. The Governors of Oklahoma, Alaska, Iowa, Mississippi, Nebraska and Wyoming are contesting this, saying the National Guard of each state is under the command of the Governors, not the President, until and unless they are federalized. Brigadier General Thomas Mancino, the commanding general of the Oklahoma National Guard, refused the order from President Biden mandating vaccinations, saying his commander is the Governor.

This open defiance of the role of the President as Commander-in-Chief is further indication of the degree to which the divisions among the vying factions are reaching a point of open, violent civil war. And all consider the 2024 elections a likely time-frame, something now being promoted by academics and the monopoly media as well.

Retired or not, the military is not supposed to openly challenge the Commander-in-Chief nor make their concerns public. The fact that this has become the norm, such as when various supposedly public servants publicly lined up behind either Clinton or Trump in the 2016 election, or when the 124 military forces publicly supported Trump's claims that the election was not legitimate in 2020, is an indication that the U.S. state machinery is no longer a single machinery, but is splintering and dividing and does not answer to a single authority.

Clearly the democratic institutions with their elections are no longer able to resolve the conflicts among the contending forces. Further, given that the private interests which have taken over the powers of the state are global, talk of representing a "national interest" no longer jives with the reality. Contending forces are in a vicious fight to claim their faction represents the "national interest" and their rivals are committing treason. Indeed, the more these divisions and lack of "unity of command" intensify, the more difficult it becomes to speak of a United States in any sense of the name.

(Photos: VOR, T. Webster)

Waging the *Battle of Democracy*

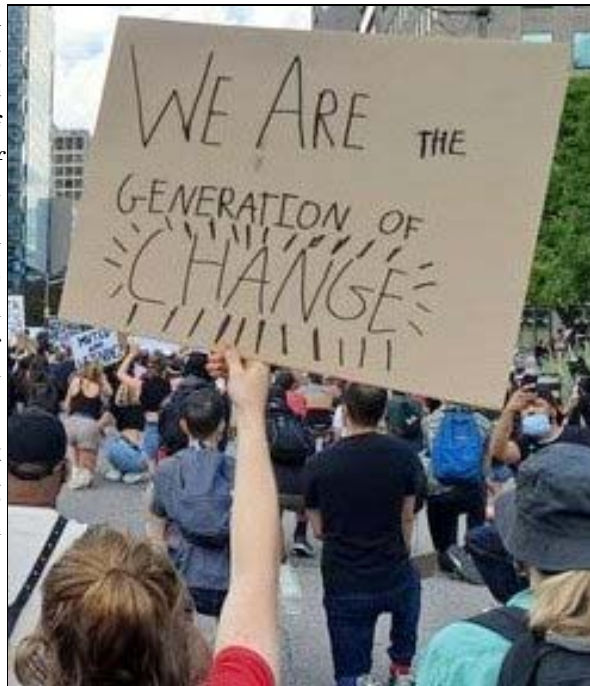
- Pauline Easton -



Indian farmers discuss and decide their course of action to defend their rights at mass meetings, this one in Muzaffarnagar, September 5, 2021.

At Biden's Democracy Summit and since then, over and over again, the claim is made that the U.S. is the bastion of democracy. While no doubt many immediately recognized the fraud of the U.S. claim, the fraud concerning democracy itself may have been missed. Biden recognized that there is great dissatisfaction among peoples worldwide with "democratic governments that they feel are failing to deliver for their needs." Battles for democracy are raging in the U.S. and worldwide, such as those demanding health care for all and everything needed for all to combat COVID-19, justice and accountability, peace and an end to aggressive wars and sanctions, the affirmation of rights of women, Indigenous peoples, refugees, workers, youth, farmers and others. Peoples around the world are indeed dissatisfied with existing governments and their failure and dysfunction.

The peoples' battles are also going beyond those to defend rights within the existing liberal democracies. They are addressing the quality and character of democracy itself which is what comprises the *battle of democracy*. That battle has entered a new phase as a result of the growing organized resistance and consciousness of the peoples that they need to directly exercise control over the decisions which are made in their name. There is a consciousness that they could do a far better job of governing. Biden's drive and initiative is to put different forms and rules in place to block this striving of the people to themselves exercise control over the decisions which affect their lives.



A main problem he faces is that in striving to perpetuate the old and exhausted U.S.-style democracy and its constitution, he is attempting to defraud history, the forward march of history, which is demanding modern definitions of democracy and forms and structures consistent with modern times. He is ignoring the existing clash between conditions of life for the majority and authority by and for the rich. Conditions are demanding an end to the existing authority of the rulers and a democracy of the peoples' own making, where the people decide. The fraud being perpetuated is not only that the U.S. or India, or Britain, France, Canada and other countries do not and cannot deliver on human rights, but that they are trying to uphold a system whose aim is to keep in check the striving of humanity to bring into being governing authorities which are consistent with the conditions today -- with humanity's great advance in terms of all its human productive powers and ability to humanize the natural and social environment and bring into being societies which are fit for human existence.

The *battle of democracy* has entered a new phase in that the existing democracy of the rulers is not only unsustainable, it is rapidly driving the world in a backward and dark direction of greater wars and destruction of the human and natural environment.

The Old has no future. This is something which terrifies the rulers who are doing everything in their power to escape history. The *battle of democracy* recognizes that it is time to make way for the New, like drafting modern constitutions which bring into being arrangements and societies constituted in the interests of the people. Part of making way for the New is settling scores with the Old, particularly the old forms and concepts of democracy enshrined in existing institutions and constitutions.

It is not an accident that Biden chose to call his plans a *Presidential Initiative for Democratic Renewal*. He is hitting not only at existing authorities and striving to put in place different

organizational forms. He is also targeting the thinking and outlook of the peoples to affirm their right to be; their growing demands that their rights be met and that governments that refuse to do so should be removed. He is trying to undermine the work done by the fighting forces which represent the interests of the people all over the United States as well as abroad whose claims on what belongs to them by right are bringing forward modern conceptions of democracy and equality, modern definitions of rights by virtue of being human which humanize the natural and social environment and open the path to progress.

For example, the U.S. commonly promotes concepts like "we the people," and that U.S. democracy is government "of, by and for the people." This phrasing is promoted on a world scale and often taken up by those fighting for democracy. Indeed, the pressure is such that "of, by and for the people" is put forward as the goal of the *battle of democracy*. A problem is that the phrasing provides a reference point to the existing U.S.-style democracy. It comes from a civil war speech by Lincoln, at Gettysburg. As a reference point, it serves to reinforce that it is this U.S.-style democracy that must not "perish from the earth," as Lincoln put it. It seeks to divide people into deciding what and who are legitimately democratic using the U.S.-style democracy as the model and goalpost.

Part of the problem is that "the people," and "rule by the people" are not defined. An impression is given that "we the people," refers to the majority. But both in form and content, in the existing liberal democracies, it does not. Biden, for example, has repeatedly said that "we the people is the government." The rule is by the government, and the people are the ones governed. Vice President Kamala Harris at the Summit spoke in a similar manner. She said, "Democracy is the people. And democracy is our best hope. So, as we go forward, let us do the work that democracy requires. Let us go to work, let us deliver together for the people."

Both make clear that there is a separation between the people, those governed, and those governing. Those governing, the "we" and "let us" referred to are the government: "Let us deliver together for the people." In this manner, the modern striving of the peoples for democracy to be a people's democracy is blocked. It is a given that a people's democracy must empower the people themselves to govern and decide -- not representatives of the rich.

The notion promoted is that this separation between those governing and those governed over, cannot be overcome. Government is seen as something ruling over the vast majority, not something controlled by them and accountable to them.

(Photos: Kisan Ekta Morcha, X. Campbell)

Necessity for Modern Definitions

- Ideological Studies Centre -



Modern definitions of democracy, elaborating and defining issues like the *people, equality, membership* in the polity, mechanisms of empowerment and accountability are needed more than ever at this time to block efforts by ruling elites in the United States and countries like Canada to impose old arrangements which are no longer functioning or suitable to the conditions today.

Modern definitions of democracy also make clear that it is not a matter of ideals, but of structures of equality and of constituting society in such a way that guaranteeing the rights of all is central in both content and form. It is not happenstance that U.S. President Joe Biden began his "Summit for Democracy" by saying democracy is a matter of ideals, not actual reality. He said U.S. "democracy is an ongoing struggle to live up to our highest ideals and to heal our divisions; to recommit ourselves to the founding idea of our nation," that "all women and men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among them life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Biden said this in conditions where human rights and the right to live and be are under brutal attack as governments at all levels refuse to guarantee basic human rights to health care, housing, education, a livelihood and safe living and working conditions, let alone affirm them on a modern basis which is not based on considerations which favour the ownership of private property and furthering the wealth of narrow private interests.

This phrasing that "all are created equal," is promoted worldwide. As with "we the people," a main problem with its use is that the reference point is the rulers' conception of equality. Their equality has to do with owners of private property, today the private global oligarchs, having the equal right to pursue their ownership, their profits, their enslavement of others. To ensure that right for owners of private property, the U.S. Constitution enshrines a structure of inequality, including keeping the people out of power and the rich in power, evident from the days of the system of slave labour to this day.

In taking up the work of modern definitions, the concepts of equality needed for today require elaboration on the part of the people. This involves recognizing and providing structures for two kinds of equality. One is *equality of membership*, whether it be equal members of the polity, or of an organization or collective. *Equality involves membership in a given collective*. It is not separate from that. Further, *being an equal member involves taking responsibility for both rights and duties*. For example, when the people speak of the importance of speaking in their own name, they are referring to an important part of empowering themselves as individuals and collectives today. It is the right of all human beings to speak, to join in discussion, to decide matters of concern to their lives, participate in implementing their decisions and being accountable for the results. It is also a duty if members are going to affirm their rights.



Rights are not an abstraction as delineated in the U.S. foundational documents. They are not aspirations. *Rights exist in their affirmation*. They exist in the form of making claims on society for what belongs to people by right. These claims are both individual and collective ones, on the society on which people depend for their living, on organizations and collectives of which they are a part and lead others to do the same.

There is also *equality on the path*, that path being the forward march of history. It is a path of recognizing and taking up the necessity for change. This is the equality of transition, of the path, of membership on the path, of seizing the openings which the clash between Authority and Conditions reveal exist to bring the New into being by settling scores with the old conscience of society. Modern definitions provide an opening for the New which harmonizes the individual and

collective interests and the individual and collective interests with the general interest of society as identified by the forces bringing the New into being. That opening exists in the here and now today and is one that history is calling on the peoples to utilize for problems to be resolved in their favour and to avert the disasters which the rich and powerful are overseeing.

When it comes to defining *the people*, the category being dealt with is people (individuals and collectives) changing circumstances. In other words, *the people* are the agents of changing circumstances. A people are historically constituted and exist within definite time and space, definite conditions with definite human relations. Human beings are not things. They exist in relations, social relations and, more broadly, in human relations. We have fidelity not to a cause per se, but to the whole ensemble of human relations and what they reveal, which is the need for the peoples to empower themselves to turn things around in their favour. This is the path to progress today.

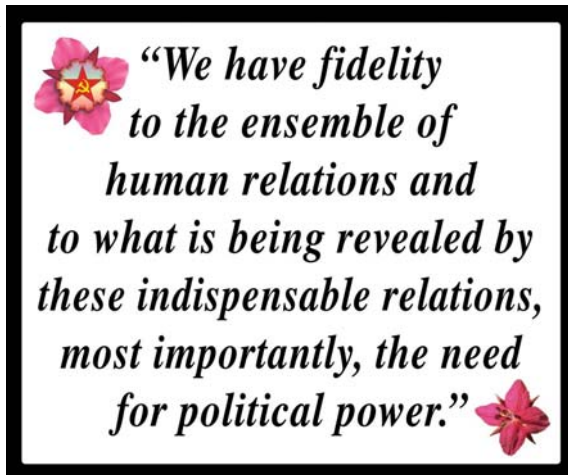
In arguing for modern definitions human beings today are arguing out how to sort out the interests of individual, collective and general -- those of society and humanity. They are arguing that interests come from society, out of the ensemble of human relations and these relations should define constitutions which create modern nation-states. Unlike the rulers who claim that society, citizenship, who is legitimate and who is not are defined by the state and constitutions adopted by those who constituted society in their image in days gone by, those seeking to humanize the social and natural environment on a modern basis say society is the basis for the state, not that the state is the basis for society.

A modern definition also recognizes that individuals are not abstract persons, with their single brains, with individual consciousness in which everyone is greedy or altruistic or whatever characteristic is seen to be good or evil and who fend for themselves on this basis. Individuals exist as individuals and collectives. Each person carries within them individual and collective and general interests.

The origin of the word *interest* is *inter esse* which means, among beings, social beings. The ensemble of human relations is the basis of interest. Individual interest is defined by that ensemble of relations, as is the collective interest. It is a higher order than the way which defines persons who, to form a collective, are added up in an irrational way which dismisses the relations they enter into as a matter of course, independent of their will.

A democratic constitution establishes what rules are to be followed. It is called rule by the people but the arguments required to judge that constitution involve the determination of whether it is suitable for the people and establishing the criteria to make that determination. Today people like Biden, Trudeau and others on both the official left and right of the spectrum talk about democracy by relating to how close to or how far it is from authoritarianism, autocracy, totalitarianism or fascism and such things. They are not giving arguments as to whether the rules they are establishing or the definitions or the constitutions and liberal democratic institutions they claim to defend are suitable to the people.

A modern definition recognizes that to be suitable to the people, the means to sort out the conflicts is to put individual and collective interests on a par, not one over the other. To put them on a par means there is an equivalence. Putting them on a par provides a means to harmonize the interests of all individuals and collectives and of both with the general interests of society and humanity. What is needed is the work to provide the means to harmonize interests by using the ensemble of human relations as the reference point, as the source of these interests. Getting to the interests



involved, identifying them, harmonizing them is at the heart of providing democracy with a modern definition.

For the representatives of the ruling class who occupy positions usurped through control of power and privilege, such as Biden or Trudeau or any other occupants of such positions, the category that it is *people* who *change circumstances*, that the *people are the force for change*, is dismissed as are their interests. This is why the various contending forces speak of the "death spiral" of U.S. democracy and all claim in one way or another that "democracy is presently under threat and, for 15 years, has been on the decline," as Biden put it at his Democracy Summit.

Evidently, the broad mass movements in the U.S. for equality and rights and against the racist government and police killings are not considered part of a rise of a people's democracy and so too the movements in other countries and of entire nations fighting for their right to be are dismissed. The broad and growing resistance among Indigenous peoples, among immigrants and refugees, among other workers and farmers, is also not considered a part of the battle of democracy, a battle waged by the peoples to advance the quality and structure of democracy so it is to their advantage.

The question on the minds of millions worldwide when it comes to democracy is Who Decides? all matters of concern related to peace, war, the economy, politics, culture. Any attempts to ask that question, answer that question or discuss matters of concern are to be blocked. This is what the peoples are dealing with when they wage the resistance movement to anti-democratic measures which constitute the fight *for democracy* which today is an integral part of *the battle of democracy itself*, of heeding the call of history to move on and bring the authority into conformity with what the conditions are demanding and giving rise to.

The U.S. Constitution and the democracy it enshrines is not in any way a model for democracy in these modern times. For the Canadian ruling class to use it as a reference point in everything it does will not save it from being the superfluous force it has become any more than it saves the U.S. ruling class from being the superfluous force it has become. Indeed, imposing the phrase "of, by and for the people" on the world is being used by the U.S. imperialist and reactionary forces to block the advance of democracy, of the creation of structures, institutions and constitutions that provide for equality and accountability and affirm that the people are the decision-makers and no force exists above them.

Biden's definition of what constitutes democratic renewal amounts to nothing. It is akin to renewing a magazine subscription; it seeks to preserve and extend that which already exists. Biden and his courtiers have adopted the language of the forces fighting for people's empowerment in an effort to dismiss and sabotage the rise of the New against the Old which gives rise to modern definitions as required by the conditions today.

Modern definitions of democracy recognize the need to put individual and collective interests on a par and both in relation to the general interests of society and humanity in such a way that these many interests are harmonized -- are sorted out in a manner that benefits each and all. It is this constant and continuous work for modern definitions which includes discussing the needs of democracy today, that contributes to the advance of the battle of democracy. The many battles peoples are waging for control over the decisions which affect their lives, for their right to make claims on society by putting their rights front and center, reflect the urgent necessity for this advance -- for fashioning a democracy where the people, the vast majority of those who have brought into being the advance of the productive powers beyond anything previously conceived, have the power to govern and decide.