

**No to Creating a War Government in Canada!  
Get Canada Out of NATO! Dismantle NATO!**

## **Broad Opposition to NATO and U.S. Takeover of Canadian Economy and Institutions**



- **Legislation Ratifies 1952 NATO Protocols to Enable NATO Installations in Canada**  
– *Pauline Easton* –
- **Ignoble Episode of U.S. Foreign Interference in Canadian Affairs at Crucial Period Post World War II**  
– *Anna Di Carlo* –
- **Opposition to Pentagon's Takeover of Quebec Open-Pit Graphite Mine Project**  
– *Alain Tremblay* –
- **U.S. Appropriation of Quebec and Canada's Subsurface**
  - **No Nickel For Genocide Petition Passes Three Thousand Signatures**  
– *Dave Starbuck* –
- **Disgraceful Canada Day Attempt to Get Canadians Onboard with War Preparations**  
– *Pierre Soublière* –

### **Spate of Anti-Worker Laws Passed In Quebec**

- **Legault Government's Privatized Restructuring Plans Oppose Modern Nation-Building**  
– *Fernand Deschamps* –

#### **Bill 51 – Act to Modernize the Construction Industry**

- **Construction Workers Oppose Their Working Conditions Being Subject to Private Interests and Defend Their Dignity**  
– *Christine Dandenault* –

#### **Bill 69, An Act to Ensure the Responsible Governance of Energy Resources**

- **Sharp and Immediate Opposition from Trade Union Organizations to Further Privatization of Hydro-Québec**  
– *Geneviève Royer* –

### **Blatant Theft of Public Assets in Ontario**

- **Support Striking Liquor Control Board of Ontario Workers Defending Their Rights and Rights of All**  
– *Barbara Biley* –
- **Interview with Veteran Liquor Control Board of Ontario Worker**
  - **Systematic Privatization of Liquor Control Board**  
– *Rob Woodhouse* –
- **Unfettered Use of Executive Police Powers for Privatization**

### **Another Glaring Example of Theft of Public Assets**

- **Private Interests Take Control of Vancouver City Council**  
– *K.C. Adams* –

### **Toronto--St. Paul's Federal By-Election**

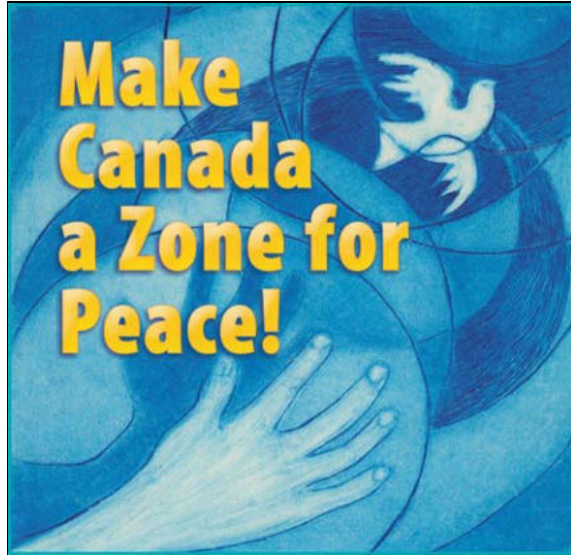
- **Taking a Stand for Political Renewal**  
– *Philip Fernandez* –
- **Significance of Liberal Defeat**  
– *Hilary LeBlanc* –

**No to Creating a War Government in Canada!  
Get Canada Out of NATO! Dismantle NATO!**

## **Legislation Ratifies 1952 NATO Protocols to Enable NATO Installations in Canada**

**– Pauline Easton –**

While more and more voices in Canada and around the world are opposing the dangerous, bellicose expansion of NATO and demanding its dissolution, it has come to the attention of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada (MLPC) that the Trudeau government snuck legislation into the 2023 budget to ratify NATO agreements from the time of NATO's foundation. These NATO agreements allow for the establishment of NATO military operations in the country. While the fact they were not ratified at the time they were first adopted is used to dismiss this development as unimportant, the fact is it is done surreptitiously and underscores that attention is being put to look after everything the U.S./NATO aggressive military alliance needs at this time which makes Canada a zone for war.



This is done by enabling the further penetration of NATO into various spheres of life, from research in the universities, to the financial incentivisation of tech start-ups to place their skills in the service of aggression, destruction and war, to the installation of NATO premises and all-sided militarization of culture. Amongst other things, it also includes projects related to the integration of Canada's economy into the U.S. war economy, including the takeover of mines by the Pentagon and pay-the-rich programs for electric vehicles and infrastructure to enhance the transportation, energy, communications and security corridors between Canada, the United States and Mexico.

Crossing the t's and dotting the i's on unfinished business certainly shows how deliberate the government is in putting the conditions in place for war.

The latest shenanigans of the Trudeau government can be found buried in its 430-page 2023 Budget, enacted through Bill C-47, which amends the 1985 *Privileges and Immunities (NATO) Act* which it failed to ratify in 1985. The original legislation is now titled the *Act to provide for privileges and immunities in respect of the NATO and any international military Headquarters or organization established under that Treaty*.

The key element of the legislation gives parliamentary approval (ratification) to a September 1951 NATO *Ottawa Agreement* related to the status of its international staff and country representatives and the August 1952 *Paris Protocol* that governs the status of international military headquarters and installations in member states. The legislation also specifies that going forward the Governor-in-Council is authorized to "make any orders [it] considers necessary to enable any international military Headquarters or organization established under NATO to exercise its powers or perform its functions in Canada...."

The legislative measures are required so that two NATO installations that the Liberals had previously announced it would set up in Canada could be set up: the NATO Climate Change and Security Centre of Excellence (CCASCOE) and the North American Regional Office of the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA). Notwithstanding the prerogative powers of the executive on foreign and military affairs, their sham democracy requires that they

have "democratic" ratification of the two agreements. So they buried the new law in the 430 page 2023 budget which they railroaded through Parliament.

Besides anything else, it shows that it is high time Canadians kick the cartel parties out of Parliament and not permit corrupt party governments to continue the practice of railroading megabills through to Royal Assent. Furthermore, crucial matters related to war and peace, the economy and how to resolve international conflicts must involve the Canadian people directly in giving their views in a process not subject to the manipulation of ruling factions.



The legislation to expand the U.S. war machine in Canada was adopted without further ado by both the House of Commons and the Senate. The Finance Committee referred the section of Bill C-47 dealing with NATO to the National Defence Committee, but it did not deliberate on the matter. In the Senate, it was discussed for about an hour. Blair Brimmell, Head of Section for Climate Change and Security Policy at Global Affairs and Interim Director of CCASCOE explained to the Senate that it is actually "an international military organization" which necessitated ratification of the two agreements.

A Senator asked Brimmell: "Why now? Why not sooner? The [Paris Protocol] is an old protocol; it has been in place for many years. I'm curious why it is coming now."

Brimmell explained: "It's a great [question]. It's one that we asked ourselves when we found that Canada had not yet ratified this 1952 agreement, although we signed it in 1952. We did a thorough examination of the text of the *Paris Protocol* and found no legal or policy reason why Canada could not have ratified it previously. [...] [I]t might simply be the case that there wasn't a pressing need to do so previous to this. Canada has not previously hosted NATO headquarters or international military organizations accredited by the North Atlantic Council, but we are going to now."

Another Senator asked, "Why use the budget implementation act for a protocol under the *Privileges and Immunities Act*? I assume it's because that is required as a prerequisite to actually getting organized, but it is not a usual process."

Brimmell explained that it is "a time-sensitive measure to ratify the *Paris Protocol* at this time and use it to enable appropriate status being given to the Centre of Excellence and the privileges and immunities to it and its personnel."

The August 2023 Order-in-Council authorizing CCASCOE also explained, "A plausible explanation for not having ratified the *Paris Protocol* is that there were no plans until now for Canada to host a NATO international military headquarters or organization. With Centres of Excellence now treated by NATO as international military organizations, and Canada selected as CCASCOE host, ratification is necessary in order to enable the granting of privileges and immunities covered by the *Paris Protocol*."

The CCASCOE subsequently opened its doors in Montreal in late 2023 and is expected to become fully staffed and operational by the end of 2024.

Most recently, on June 10, an Order-in-Council was registered to establish that DIANA is an official subsidiary of NATO. It states "the Order is necessary to establish the North American

Regional Office of DIANA, which will support the already strong and favourable relationship between NATO, NATO Allies and Partners, and the Government of Canada."

Already in November 2022, at the Halifax International Security Forum, Canada announced it would host DIANA. At the Forum, Defence Minister Anita Anand boasted that DIANA would "facilitate cooperation between military operators and the Alliance's best and brightest start-ups, scientific researchers, and technology companies to solve critical Allied defence and security problems."

"With more than 300 entrepreneurial science and technology start-ups, Canadian Forces Base Halifax, Defence Research and Development Canada, and seven universities, the Halifax Regional Municipality is a natural host for DIANA," Anand added.

This front of NATO war preparations will deal with what it calls "emerging disruptive technologies." DIANA will direct both public and private research in the fields of artificial intelligence (AI); data autonomy; quantum-enabled technologies; biotechnology; hypersonic technologies; space; novel materials and manufacturing; and energy and propulsion.

Aside from the main site in Halifax which is expected to have a permanent office set up by the summer of 2025, a second "satellite office" will be created in the Greater Toronto Area. Scheduled for 2025-2026, it is described as "an administrative space primarily used for meetings, engagement, and relationship management, to fully leverage the region's globally ranked innovation centre ..."

The announcement in the *Canada Gazette*, the official newspaper of the Government of Canada, provides examples of the immunities and privileges accorded to NATO establishments in Canada. They list "inviolability of its premises, documents and archives and immunity from legal process, ...exemption from direct taxes (i.e., income tax), rebate of sales taxes (e.g., the Goods and Services Tax/Harmonized Sales Tax); and exemption from customs duties and taxes..."

Personnel of both NATO and DIANA are granted "immunity from legal process in respect of words spoken or written and/or acts done by them in their official capacity; immunity, together with their spouses and family residing with them, from immigration restrictions; exemption from taxation on salaries and emoluments paid by the organization; the right to import free of duties and taxes their furniture and personal effects at the time of first taking up their post in Canada; and the right to temporarily import free of duty their private motor vehicles."

The government states that "granting certain privileges and immunities to NATO and DIANA officials, representatives of member states and experts on mission when in Canada is essential so that they can adequately carry out their functions in Canada."

It further declares that the establishment of DIANA's North American Regional Office in Canada, "will support the already strong and favourable relationship between NATO, NATO Allies and Partners, and the Government of Canada. [...]"

"Granting certain privileges and immunities to NATO and DIANA officials, representatives of member states and experts on mission when in Canada is essential so that they can adequately carry out their functions in Canada. This will support Canada's deepening relations with NATO and improve existing diplomatic and programmatic engagement with the organization by facilitating meetings in Canada with key NATO counterparts. Strong diplomatic relations with NATO are expected to advance Canada's explicit interests in the transatlantic region, including regarding peace and security and technology and innovation."

The Government announced that, "The Order implements Canada's obligations under the Ottawa Agreement and will be viewed favourably by NATO, NATO Allies, and by other stakeholders."

Canadians can take note that all costs linked to these ventures are outside of Canada's announcement at the 2024 NATO Summit held in Washington, DC that it will devote two per cent

of GDP to the NATO war budget by 2032. Besides other things, the NATO sycophants in Canada must think that using Canada to set up these centres, i.e. not Europe, is a safer bet given the rising revolt of the peoples of Europe against NATO bases and installations in Europe and the dangers NATO poses to the peoples of the world. But the surreptitious ways of doing business pursued by one government of Canada after the other which attempt to keep the people disempowered, no matter what political stripes they boast, do not change the fact that Canadians are peace-loving, have sacrificed their lives for peace, time and again, and will not support Canada's use as a base for war.

*All Out to Make Canada a Zone for Peace!  
All Out to Get Canada Out of NATO and to Dismantle NATO!*

---

## **Ignoble Episode of U.S. Foreign Interference in Canadian Affairs at Crucial Period Post World War II**

– Anna Di Carlo –

The country called Canada came into being as part of the British Empire. It participated in the Boer War on behalf of the British as part of empire-building and so too in World War I. It invaded Soviet Russia in 1918 as one of 14 countries in support of the anti-Bolshevik White Army in a failed attempt to overthrow the Russian Revolution. After World War II it joined the Anglo-American imperialists in launching the Cold War and permitted the U.S. to establish NORAD and subsequently NATO and take over Canadian sovereignty in lieu of the British. Furthermore, to this day Canada has a British monarch as head of state and to this day it continues to be part of the British Commonwealth headed by the same British monarch.

All of this has informed and tainted Canada's conception of sovereignty to mean swearing allegiance to a foreign lord and master in both words and deeds. It joined the U.S. contingent which intervened in the Korean War under the UN flag from 1950-1953 committing the most odious crimes against the Korean people and nation. It conciliated with all Anglo-American imperialist measures which converted the united front of the peoples of the entire world against Nazi-fascism and Japanese militarism, for peace, freedom and democracy, into a virulently anti-communist crusade under whose auspices untold crimes against humanity have been committed in the past 75 years. All of this history records Canada's takeover lock, stock and barrel by the United States and the grave dangers this poses for the country and world peace at this time.

A prime example of foreign U.S. interference in Canadian political affairs is the sordid episode which took place in the early sixties when U.S. President Kennedy intervened directly in an electoral *coup d'état* to get his choice of Prime Minister into office. Much has been written about this but warranted conclusions are not drawn. On the contrary, it is reduced to bad chemistry between John F. Kennedy and John Diefenbaker, while the post war needs for peace, freedom and democracy were abandoned in favour of Cold War anti-communist aims.

In fact, there was a lot of controversy over Canada's joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) when it was founded 75 years ago in April 1949. This was the case notwithstanding the declaration that it was a sovereign act. In the words of then-External Affairs Minister Lester B. Pearson in the House of Commons a week before the official signing of the North Atlantic Treaty: those who would "have the privilege of signing this treaty ... will, in fact as well as in theory, sign it as the representatives -- and indeed servants -- of the parliament of Canada and the whole people of Canada, except those of communist belief who clamour and scramble on the fringes of our national life."

Far from Pearson's Cold War rendition and the fact that Canadians were never privy to any discussions about NATO, there were many concerns, interests and opinions about Canada's entry into NATO within the ruling class itself. A focal point of the controversy centred around the crucial question of whether Canada could maintain its sovereignty and independence within a military alliance dominated by the U.S. and its hegemonic aims as "leader of the free world." This included matters related to the role of NATO as an incitement for renewed militarization and a threat to the hope that the United Nations should be the instrument of mediation and conflict resolution, not U.S. military might.

U.S. designs for Canada were expressed in a February 9, 1950 internal State Department memo to then-President Truman that advised, "Our commitments and risks are so extensive and important that Canada in a military sense must be considered as if it were an integral part of the United States." It stated that Canada was the "most logical avenue for a large-scale attack on the U.S. Even if it were not for the commitments in [NATO] and the extension of the Monroe Doctrine to Canada, it would be necessary to protect Canada instantly from any threat."

For most of the decade, Parliament's 17th Ministry, led by Prime Minister Louis St-Laurent, was in power (November 1948 to June 1957). Lester B. Pearson served as Minister of State for External Affairs under St-Laurent. He and the Liberal government had established a reputation of being at the beck and call of the U.S., especially through Pearson's work of bringing Canada into NATO. In October 1950, in response to criticism of Pearson's "blatant pro-American policies," as historian Arthur Lower put it, Pearson retorted that "[Canada is] constantly faced with the problem of trying to influence the United States policy which will protect both our interests and our conception of what is good for the world."

Within this climate, John Diefenbaker became leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in 1956 and of its minority government in 1957. He subsequently won a majority government in the 1958 general election.

Diefenbaker faced U.S. complaints about Canada's trade with China and Cuba. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, he aroused Kennedy's disdain by calling for an independent inquiry about what was going on in Cuba when the U.S. released satellite pictures about the Soviet military there. Diefenbaker wanted to strengthen trade within the Commonwealth countries, while the U.S. was actively working to develop the European Union, including encouraging Britain to join the European Union, which Diefenbaker openly opposed as detrimental to the Commonwealth. The U.S. wanted Canada to join the Organization of American States (OAS) -- Diefenbaker didn't want to. The sharpest point of disagreement arose around Diefenbaker's reluctance to station nuclear weapons in Canada.

In April 1962, the Parliament was dissolved and an election was set for June 18, 1962. Kennedy decided to directly intervene in the election and he organized a blatant electoral coup d'état to get rid of Diefenbaker in one of the most sordid examples of foreign interference in Canadian political affairs. Despite this, until the present time, the electoral process is touted as the occasion when Canadians choose their own representatives and, when speaking about foreign interference in Canadian affairs, the interference of the U.S. is not even mentioned. In the 1963 election, in cahoots with the Liberal campaign team, Kennedy worked both openly and surreptitiously to install as Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson who had proven his usefulness to the U.S. many times over.

The campaign to subvert Diefenbaker was underway even before the election was called. It was an open campaign against Diefenbaker. In early 1962, a New York Republican Senator came to Canada and in an interview on CBC, said: "I have always regarded Canada as one of our most dependable allies ... I cannot understand, therefore the apparent unwillingness of the Canadian authorities to cooperate fully in imposing economic sanctions against Cuba -- and for that matter also against Red China ... every sale which bolsters the Cuban economy strengthens Castro's hold on the Cuban people and supports this dictatorship."

Diefenbaker made no secret of the fact that his reluctance to comply with U.S. demands, especially regarding the deployment of nuclear weapons in Canada, was because of public opinion in the country. When U.S. Ambassador to Canada and Under Secretary for Political Affairs Livingston Merchant met with Diefenbaker to propose a military deal, including deployment of nuclear weapons, Diefenbaker told Merchant that he had concerns about Canadian public opinion and that there were divided opinions within External Affairs. Speaking of the divisions among the public, he told Merchant that opponents were not all "communists and bums."

When Diefenbaker visited Washington in February 1961, U.S. Secretary of State Dean Rusk prepared a briefing paper on Canada for Kennedy. Typically, crucial matters concerning war and peace were presented as personality conflicts, and Diefenbaker's stand on these matters was presented as dithering and indecisiveness which posed serious dangers of communist infiltration into North America. In his briefing paper, Rusk said that the United States faced "an evolving Canadian attitude of introspection and nationalism ... a Canadian inferiority complex which is reflected in a sensitivity to any real or fancied slight to Canadian sovereignty. Thus the essential element in problems involving Canada tends to be psychological." Rusk suggested that Canada would be reliable on crucial matters of international policy and reported that most Canadians were "favourably disposed toward the United States and believe that each country inescapably needs the other." Predicting what Diefenbaker might say during his meeting with Kennedy, Rusk wrote that Diefenbaker "will be strongly interested in anything which can add to his prestige. He may even suggest to you that anti-Americanism is so prevalent in Canada as to force him to employ nationalistic measures."

Rusk went on to analyze that Diefenbaker's cabinet was split, that its defence budget was "stagnant" and that it was possible that "a drift toward a kind of unconscious neutralism could develop with a loosening of defence ties with the United States." The United States would have to "promote among Canadians a better understanding and an acceptance of the concept of full military interdependence," Rusk advised.

Keep in mind that Diefenbaker was also a strong proponent of social justice and for a vision of Canada based on his understanding of equality and rights. But all of this was dismissed behind complaints about his being nationalistic and a populist. All of it betrays the deliberate attempt to make sure the people were kept out of any discussion on how to realize their striving for peace, freedom and democracy.

Following a meeting with Kennedy in May 1961, the Prime Minister discovered a paper left behind by an American advisor. The infamous "Rostow Memo" outlined several desired results that the United States hoped to "push" Canada toward during the meeting. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, reports reduce the serious issue of relations between Canada and the U.S. to saying that Diefenbaker "was livid," about the "Rostow Memo" "as this incident reaffirmed his nagging belief that the United States wished to dominate Canada. The Kennedy camp was equally enraged: Diefenbaker refused to return the memo even though proper diplomatic decorum required him to do so. Their relationship would never fully recover from this incident."

"Eventually Diefenbaker did agree to put Canadian troops on alert, as all other NATO members supported a proposed blockade and agreed to aid the United States if an attack occurred. However, due to his reluctance to respond to the situation, Diefenbaker acted only after the crisis' climax had passed. Also, under the guidance of the Department of Defence, the Canadian military had taken informal steps to put itself on alert. Ultimately, Diefenbaker believed that Kennedy's "arrogance" had endangered North America and could have resulted in nuclear war."<sup>[1]</sup>

In a November 1961 report from U.S. Ambassador Merchant, Kennedy was informed that "the Conservatives were losing public support and becoming more anti-American." His message to the President was that "only Pearson and the Liberals could be trusted to be friendly to the United States."



According to the story as told by various historians, when the election was called, Kennedy invited Pearson to attend a dinner in Washington along with other Nobel Prize winners. Pearson told Kennedy that he would be happy to attend, but it would not look good and Diefenbaker would certainly protest a visit to the White House by the leader of the Opposition.

Kennedy proposed that Pearson could go to the U.S. to receive an honorary degree. He proposed Harvard and MIT, but after Pearson informed that he already had honorary degrees from those institutions, Kennedy said he would arrange for Pearson to get one from Boston College on the same day as the Nobel Prize winner dinner on April 29, 1962. (Note how Canada arranged for outgoing NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg to get a Louis St-Laurent Award for Excellence from the Canadian Bar Association on the eve of the NATO 75th anniversary Summit in Washington, DC at a meeting of the NATO Association of Canada, at a time Canada is being pressed to increase its military funding to two per cent of GDP according to NATO demands.)

Out of the 175 guests at the dinner organized by Kennedy in 1961, Kennedy chose Pearson as the person with whom he walked into the room. The event was reported widely in the media in Canada despite Kennedy's suggestion at a certain point that the use of the Nobel Prize dinner should not be "so obvious."

This overt endorsement of Pearson, which is also not dissimilar to Obama's 2019 endorsement of Justin Trudeau for Prime Minister, is not the kind of foreign interference Canada's intelligence agencies currently refer to as "foreign interference in Canada's political affairs." Nonetheless, the interference went much further than an endorsement.

Kennedy's 1960 election had been spearheaded by pollster and campaign manager Lou Harris. Harris' innovation was the use of frequent and targeted internal party polling to direct election strategists how campaigning should be carried out. In cahoots with Liberal campaign directors backing Pearson in the 1963 election campaign in Canada, Kennedy deployed him to get Pearson elected. Ostensibly, Harris was called in to help Pearson by the Liberals' campaign chair, Walter Gordon and Keith Davey, who later became a senator. Kennedy arranged for Harris to secretly enter Canada and work without detection on Pearson's campaign.[2] Author John Boyko recounts in his book *Cold Fear*: "For the first time in electoral politics, random sampling was employed to correlate and analyze the massive amounts of data and then use it to help shape the candidate and message according to mathematically demonstrable fact rather than backroom intuition."

In a 2013 *Canadian Press* interview with Lou Harris at 92 years of age, by Alexander Panetta, Harris refers to his "clandestine involvement" in the election of 1962 as his "crowning glory."

In the interview Harris recounts that he "made multiple trips to Canada during the 1962 and '63 campaigns, hiring 500 women to make phone calls in the most elaborate public-opinion research project in Canada's political history. He kept his role as quiet as possible. Harris says he used a fake passport, produced with the help of some friends in the U.S. government. He went by the name Lou 'Smith' -- his mother's maiden name."

Pearson's biographer, John English, told Panetta: "An American president should not interfere in Canadian elections. And there's no doubt that Kennedy did, and he did not treat a Canadian prime minister appropriately."

Harris died in 2016. He told Panetta during the 2013 interview that he wanted to write a book, but he would keep to himself the "details of the polling techniques he introduced to Canada." What is known is that his techniques were part of the takeover of political parties by marketers and strategists to the extent that what policies would be adopted and promoted became their purview. The 1962 election resulted in a minority Conservative government; in another election in 1963, Lou Harris also assisted and the Liberals won their majority. Asa McKercher, a former archival assistant at Library and Archives Canada, wrote in an article published in *International Journal* in 2011:

"Analyzing the results of the 1963 Canadian federal election, which saw the Liberal party victorious after six years of Progressive Conservative rule, American Ambassador Walton Butterworth predicted that Canada would henceforth 'be more stable, responsible, sophisticated and generally cooperative than at any time since 1958.' That Butterworth would single out that year as being of such importance is interesting but not a surprise. Although Tory leader John Diefenbaker became Canadian prime minister as head of a minority government in 1957, it was not until a snap election in March 1958 that he won a resounding majority of seats in the house of commons, the most to that point in Canada's history. A former lawyer and long-serving member of parliament, Diefenbaker was a fiery populist who rose to power on a growing tide of nationalism -- some would call it anti-Americanism -- that was coming to prominence in Canada thanks to uneasiness among Canadians over the economic ties between their country and the behemoth to the south. That Diefenbaker was a populist and nationalist is no secret. His clashes with John Kennedy, the American president from 1961 to 1963, are well known and have been the subject of much academic and popular history. Less well known, and examined, is how Canada-U.S. relations played out during the years 1957 to 1961 when Dwight Eisenhower was the American president." [2]

Today, opposing NATO has become "taboo" and the cartel parties of all political stripes do not even raise an eyebrow when U.S. and NATO officials dictate what Canada should be doing. On the contrary, they view foreign interference that is pro-NATO as a good influence while they criminalize and cast aspersions on any opinion expressed by those who disagree with Canada's membership in NATO or its bellicose campaigns, treating them as "enemies of the state" or "enemy agents." All of this is coupled with dramatic increases in Canada's military spending not just on NATO but to install NATO institutions on Canadian soil, build military bases in the Arctic and much more.

These are the actions of a war government and should be taken very seriously by peace-loving Canadians who never cease to find the ways and means to make sure it is they who set the direction for the economy and the country, not those who have usurped the government of Canada in the service of NATO and war. Learning from history, a most important and decisive step in this direction is to oppose the disinforming Cold War outlook of the ruling class whereby everything is rendered as a matter of personal politics, foibles and conflicts while the substantive conversation on matters related to war and peace is silenced. The most urgent task is to smash this silence by making sure Canadians themselves establish their own vantage point in the discussion about current events. It is high time Canada declared its independence and took all necessary measures to be a zone for peace. It is up to the peoples of Canada, including Quebec, the Indigenous Peoples and Métis to make it so.

## Notes

1. Diefenbaker Canada Centre.
2. "Dealing with Diefenbaker -- Canada-U.S. Relations in 1958," Asa McKercher, *International Journal*, Autumn 2011.

# Opposition to Pentagon's Takeover of Quebec Open-Pit Graphite Mine Project – Alain Tremblay –

On May 16, the United States Department of Defense (DoD) announced funding for the mining company Lomiko Metals Inc. (Lomiko) to the tune of U.S.\$8.35 million to develop an open pit graphite mine project in the heart of the recreation and tourism area of Petite-Nation in Quebec. The Canadian federal Ministry of Energy and Natural Resources added a grant of C\$4.9 million.

The La Loutre graphite project site is located between Duhamel and Lac-des-Plages on the territory of the Kitigan Zibi Anishinabeg (KZA) First Nations. The KZA First Nations are part of the Algonquin Nation and the KZA territory is located in the Outaouais and Laurentides regions.



This announcement has angered people in the region and opposition is being broadly organized. There is no question of the people of Petite-Nation serving the military aims of the Pentagon, they declare. Many organizations and municipalities have spoken out to denounce war production and the general militarization of Petite-Nation's subsurface. The project does not have the support of local communities and organizations, they said. Quite the contrary. They denounce this appropriation of Quebec territory for military purposes.

What spokespeople have said:

**David Pharand, Mayor of Duhamel; Co-Spokesperson, Alliance of Petite-Nation Nord Municipalities (AMPNN):** "With this joint announcement by the Canadian government and the U.S. Department of Defense, as elected officials we see what was already strong social opposition to this mining project turning into outright anger. More than ever, citizens feel they are being completely ignored."

**Louis St-Hilaire, President, Group for the Protection of the Lakes of Petite Nation (RPLPN); and Spokesperson, Quebec Coalition of Lakes Incompatible with Mining Activity (QLAIM Coalition):** "We have been told for five years that this mine will be associated with an ecological transition project. And there you have it. You have let us discover in your pages that this mine, which no one wants, will be used for the military industry. This is absolutely unacceptable."

**Claude Bouffard, Coordinator, Citizens' Committee Opposing La Loutre Mining Project (CCOPML):** "Ottawa and Washington, with the complicity of Quebec, are prepared to sacrifice the Petite-Nation to wage war. Sacrifice and war are words that go well together. But that doesn't change anything, the people here will continue to defend themselves and do everything to prevent this project.... Until now, the population have mainly mobilized for environmental reasons and the real risk that this project constitutes for the surrounding lakes (Lac Simon, Lac Doré, Lac des Plages, etc. [...]) But here, we are talking about something completely different. It has become clear that our resources will be used for the needs of the U.S. army and they find themselves involved in the cold war between China and the United States. It is no longer the energy transition and electrification of transport that we were talking about at all."

**Rébecca Pétrin, Director-General, Water Emergency (Eau Secours):** "In the wake of all these mining projects, lakes, rivers and underground water sources are being systematically sacrificed. This reality is already very worrying, but to note that these sacrifices will be made on behalf of U.S. militarization is simply unacceptable. Our governments must understand the seriousness of the issues and act accordingly."

**Rodrigue Turgeon, Lawyer, Co-spokesperson, Coalition Québec Meilleur Mine (CQMM), Mining Watch Canada counterpart in Quebec:** "Militarizing a harmful mining project that has been rejected by the population even before an environmental assessment has been carried out is an incredible act of violence by the system against the people and nature that our governments are supposed to defend, not attack."

**Jamie Kneen, Co-Lead of National Program, MiningWatch Canada:** "The U.S. military's outright interference openly confirms that the 'energy transition' propaganda of Canada's mineral development policy has been hijacked to serve a military purpose."

**Pierre Jasmin, Secretary General, Artists for Peace:** "It's shameful to lie to those who support recreation and tourism that sacrificing their lands will serve a transition to renewable energy to save the planet, when what they're doing is the opposite -- supporting militarism that accelerates its destruction."

## Opposition to Mining Project Is Not New



For years, Lomiko Metals and the government of Quebec, among others, have promoted this mining project as essential to the energy transition and the electrification of transportation. Today, the massive investment by the U.S. Pentagon is unacceptable and the fact that it is done before any environmental assessments have even been carried out constitutes an additional affront.

Already in 2022, the Group for the Protection of the Lakes of Petite Nation (RPLPN) received support from numerous municipalities for their stand that mining activities be prohibited in areas designated by the Papineau regional municipal county government as reserved for vacationing, recreational-tourism, eco-tourism and forestry. On May 15, 2022, their resolution received the support of 13 municipalities and at least 13 businesses and organizations[1].

In May 2023, about a hundred briefs were produced during the Quebec government's public consultations on the supervision of mining activity in Quebec. These included one by the Association for the Protection of the Environment of Lac-des-Plages (APELDP), and more than 25 from members of the QLAIM Coalition.

On August 6, 2023, 450 people demonstrated in the streets of Lac-des-Plages against this mining project. Dozens of signs against mining activity were then posted throughout the region.

In the Upper Laurentians in August 2022, citizens of Mont-Laurier and the surrounding area were concerned to see a graphite mine development in the area of the Kiamika Reservoir Regional Park. A letter from the Kiamika Reservoir Owners Association (APRK) to Northern Graphite expressed strong opposition to the project:

"Given a high probability that negative impacts will be felt, such as noise, dust, heavy truck traffic, deterioration of the environment, reduction of biodiversity, acidification of the groundwater and surrounding waters, effects on physical and psychological health; and given the negative consequences of these impacts on the tranquility of residents and the value of properties, two major elements of our mission, the APRK expresses its opposition to this project to exploit a graphite mine in our neighborhood and will join in concerted action to obstruct this development."



## People in Region Are Getting Organized

On July 7, the Lac Simon Owners Association (APLS) at its annual general meeting in Chénéville addressed, among other things, the situation concerning the La Loutre mining project, and actions planned by the Alliance of North Petite-Nation Municipalities (AMPNN).

On Sunday, August 11 at 10:00 am, the Group for the Protection of the Lakes of Petite Nation (RPLPN) is organizing a screening of *Malartic*, a film on the reality of a mining village, to be followed by discussion. The screening will be held at 63 Hôtel-de-Ville Street, Salle Danny Legault, in Chénéville.

### Note

1. The municipalities which endorsed the resolution: Duhamel, Lac-des-Plages, Papineauville, Montebello, Saint-André Avellin, Thurso, Notre-Dame-de-Bonsecours, Plaisance, Ripon, Chénéville, Montpellier, Lac Simon, Val-des-Bois, Bowman, Mulgrave-et-Derry, Mayo, St-Sixte, Notre-Dame-de-la-Salette, Namur, Notre-Dame-de-la-Paix, Canton-de-Lochaber-Partie-Ouest, Boileau, Lochaber, Fassett, and St-Émile-de-Suffolk.

The companies and organizations that endorsed the resolution: Lauzon-Forestry (Trust); Association of Hunters, Fishermen, Trappers and Archers of the Petite-Nation (ACPTA-Petite-Nation); Outaouais Regional Council for the Environment and Sustainable Development (CREDDO); Kenauk Nature; Laurentians Regional Environmental Council (CRE Laurentides); Nature Conservancy of Canada; Quebec counterpart of Mining Watch (CQMM); Group of Associations for the Protection of the Lakes and Watercourses of the Upper Laurentians (RAP-HL); Biodiversi-Terre Foundation; Quebec Papineau and Pontiac Solidarity Associations (AQSP); Association for the Protection of the Environment of the Upper Laurentians (APEHL); and Water Emergency (Eau Secours).

*(Journal de Montréal, Info de la Lièvre, Association des propriétaires du Lac Simon, Eau Secours, Coalition québécoise des lacs incompatibles avec l'activité minière, Association pour la Protection de l'Environnement du Lac des Plages, U.S. Department of Defense)*

---

## U.S. Appropriation of Quebec and Canada's Subsurface

Natural Resources Canada and the U.S. Department of Defense announced that they are also co-investing \$32.5 million in Fortune Minerals, which is working on a bismuth and cobalt project in the Northwest Territories. The U.S. Department of Defense said the investments are part of its National Defense Industrial Strategy and strengthen North American materials supply chains. On June 3, Robert P. Sanders, Consul General of the United States in Montreal, confirmed that other projects related to critical minerals would eventually be funded by Washington. "There are others in the process," he said, adding that one of the goals is to reduce their "dependence on China."

The media reported that Minister Maïté Blanchette Vézina seemed surprised by the announcement. At a press conference, she said that the development of mining projects must go hand in hand with social acceptance. "This file demonstrates the importance of respecting our field of expertise to ensure the best possible integration of projects in the environments in which they are implemented." On the other hand, on April 25, during the study of the assets of the Quebec Ministry of Natural Resources and Forests (MRNF), she expressed her objective of "developing an energy sector and supply chain for the transition of U.S. government."

But there will never be social acceptance of war and aggression. The people of Quebec have a proud tradition of opposing Canada's participation in wars of aggression and occupation against other peoples of the world, as they have been doing by the thousands for months against Canada's participation in the genocide of the Palestinian people. The people of Petite-Nation will not yield their place for that.

---

## No Nickel For Genocide Petition Passes Three Thousand Signatures

– Dave Starbuck –



The No Nickel For Genocide petition was launched by the No Nickel For Genocide Working Group of Palestine Solidarity (Sudbury) on June 12. The petition calls for a ban on the sale of nickel to Israel and to armament manufacturers supplying Israel. Sponsored by Timmins-James Bay MP Charlie Angus, it recorded its 3,000th signature in only 25 days, by July 7. As of July 17, the petition now has 3,397 signatures. It has been signed by people from all 10 provinces, Yukon and the Northwest Territories.

Nickel, described as the perfect war material, when alloyed with other metals, greatly increases their strength and resistance to corrosion and the stresses of heat. First used in armour plate at the time of World War I, nickel is now used in a myriad of military applications: jet engines; tanks and armoured vehicles; bomb, artillery and ammunition casings; missiles; drones and warships; as well as in many components of modern instruments of war. The No Nickel For Genocide Working Group believes that about one per cent of Canadian nickel ends up in Israel's instruments of death.

We are demanding Canada ban the sale of nickel to Israel directly or to arms manufacturers supplying Israel as long as they do so. Forty per cent of the nickel used in U.S. manufacturing comes from Canada. This nickel is used to manufacture such weapons as the MX-80 series bombs and the F-16 warplanes that deliver them. Canada has banned the sale of armaments to Israel. Our estimate is that U.S. purchases of Canadian nickel for the manufacture of weaponry destined for Israel total around \$50 million per year. This is more than the sale of finished weapons from Canada to Israel. This nickel is used as a raw material in the manufacture of billions of dollars of

arms. If we ban the sale of finished weapons to Israel, shouldn't Canada also ban the sale of the raw materials to manufacture those weapons if we want to be effective?

The response of the Canadian people to this petition is very heartening. The Canadian people are showing that they do not want the resources of Canada and the labour of our people to assist the Israeli campaign of genocide in Gaza. They want our land and labour to go towards the development of peaceful uses of nickel that benefit humanity. This petition is providing a concrete way that the Canadian people can stand with Palestine and make a contribution towards stopping the flow of armaments and munitions to Israel.

Since it has received more than 500 signatures, it will be read in Parliament by Angus and the government is obligated to respond within 45 days.

### **Petition to the Government of Canada**

Whereas:

- The State of Israel is carrying out a campaign of genocide against the people of Palestine through indiscriminate military actions against the civilian population, killing and maiming more than one hundred thousand people, and destroying the physical and social infrastructure of Gaza;
- Many of the weapons used in this genocide are supplied to the State of Israel by the United States and other NATO Countries;
- Nickel is an important raw material in the manufacture of these armaments;
- Forty per cent of the nickel consumed in U.S. manufacturing originates in Canada;
- The people of Canada do not want the natural resources of this land or the labour of our people contributing to this campaign of terror and mass murder;
- The Government of Canada has banned new contracts for the sale of armaments to Israel; and
- The Government of Canada can enact programs that promote the development of peaceful uses of nickel.

We, the undersigned, Citizens and Residents of Canada, call upon the Government of Canada to:

1. Institute a ban on the sale of nickel to Israel and to those armament manufacturers that supply Israel; and
2. Require purchasers of Canadian nickel to certify that they will not re-sell Canadian nickel to Israel or to arms manufacturers supplying Israel.

The petition is open until October 10 and can be signed by any Canadian citizen or resident who has reached the age of fourteen by going to the House of Commons website [here](#).

---

## **Disgraceful Canada Day Attempt to Get Canadians Onboard with War Preparations**

**– Pierre Soublière –**

On July 1, the 157th anniversary of Confederation by Royal Proclamation in 1867, also known as Canada Day, the government put on a despicable military flypast which it boasted was the largest in

the last 20 years. The flypast featured more than 45 aircraft, including one from every Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) fleet, and several historic and "future" planes and helicopters.

The aircraft -- some of which are stationed at the Gatineau airport -- flew over Parliament Hill at around 1:00 pm, ahead of the formal Canada Day ceremony at LeBreton Flats Park. The participating aircraft included the CT-156 Harvard II trainer, the CC-177 Globemaster and CC-330 Husky cargo planes, and CF-188 Hornets jet fighters, as well as the CH-148 Cyclone, CH-147 Chinook, CH-149 Cormorant, and CH-146 Griffon helicopters. CF-188 Hornets were used in Operation Echo, the code name for Canadian Armed Forces air strikes in the NATO bombing of Yugoslavia in 1999. Between March 24 and June 10 that year, Canadian aircraft flew 684 sorties in 224 missions there, dropping nearly 500,000 pounds of gravity- and precision-guided bombs on civilian infrastructure.



This "celebration" or "Parade in the sky" is part of the events underway since April 1 to mark the 100th anniversary of the RCAF, said to honour its "distinct heritage," with a focus on highlighting "contributions to national safety and security, international peace and global stability." Government websites state that since its inception in 1924, the RCAF "has served Canadians in peace and war," and played a vital role in the Second World War, reaching its "golden age" in the late 1950s, with dozens of combat squadrons "on the front lines of the Cold War."

This is a direct reference to Canada's participation in NATO Integrated Force Europe, immediately following Canada becoming a member of NATO in 1949. The RCAF is said to have been second only to the U.S. Air Force in the number of modern aircraft it contributed to NATO forces everywhere in Europe at the time. These commitments to NATO are what led to a gigantic leap in arms production, such that at its peak in the early 1950s, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) consumed more than 50 per cent of the total federal budget. From 1951 to 1959, Canada stood fourth among NATO members in per capita military expenditures.

While *de facto* it is the U.S. President who, as Commander in Chief of NATO and NORAD puts Canada's armed forces into action when an emergency is declared, in terms of Canada's Constitution, the CAF is part and parcel of the anachronistic political arrangements that are celebrated on Canada Day which disempower the people. A *Wikipedia* article entitled "Monarchy of Canada and the Canadian Armed Forces" points out:

"The king of Canada" is "the commander-in-chief of the Canadian Forces and he and other members of the Canadian royal family" hold "honorary positions in various branches and regiments, embodying the historical relationship of the Crown with its armed forces. This construct stems from Canada's system of constitutional monarchy and through its 500 years of monarchical history.... The role of the Canadian Crown in the Canadian Armed Forces is established through both constitutional and statutory law. The *Constitution Act, 1867* declares that command-in-chief of those Forces is 'to continue and be vested in the Queen' and the *National Defence Act* states, 'the Canadian Forces are the armed forces of Her Majesty raised by Canada.'...

"Formally, there is a direct chain of command from the monarch to the governor general, through the chief of the Defence Staff to all of the officers who hold the King's Commission, and, through them, to all members of the Canadian Forces. No other person, including the prime minister, other cabinet ministers, nor public servants is part of the chain of command; neither does any other person have any command authority in the Canadian Forces, an arrangement maintained to ensure



that 'the military is an agent for, and not a master of, the state.'...

"The monarch issues letters patent, known as the *King's Commission*, to commissioned officers in the Canadian Army, Royal Canadian Navy, and the Royal Canadian Air Force. Further, all regulations for the Canadian Forces are set out by the sovereign in the *King's Regulations and Orders*.... Declarations of war, the mobilization of troops, and the organization of the Forces all fall within the royal prerogative. Direct parliamentary approval is not necessary; though, the Cabinet may seek it, nonetheless, and the Crown-in-Parliament is responsible for allocating moneys necessary to fund the military."



At this time Canada is part of prolonging the U.S./NATO proxy war in Ukraine and is criminally complicit in the Israeli genocide of the Palestinian people. To hold such a warmongering event to mark Canada Day -- said to be dedicated to celebrating "the richness and diversity of Canadian culture" -- is a direct attack on people's consciousness and an open and unrepentant glorification of war crimes and genocide. In today's circumstances, it serves to amplify the trauma experienced by the

Palestinian community in the Ottawa-Gatineau region, whose members have lost entire families at the hands of these empire-builders and nation-wreckers.

In the past few years alone, important steps have been taken to question the very basis of the 1867 Confederation, such as in the wake of the discovery of mass graves of Indigenous children across Canada, and the refusal of members of the Quebec National Assembly to swear an oath of allegiance to King Charles III. There is an objective need to rid ourselves of these old arrangements and to abolish the Royal Prerogative on which the Constitution is based.

This Canada Day show of military prowess with the RCAF airshow cast a shadow over the Canadian polity. It underscored the burning need for a modern constitution which rids itself once and for all of the archaic structures based on those who rule and those who are ruled over, with the crucial matters related to war and peace placed in the hands of the people, not cartel parties in the service of narrow private interests of which war production and private contractors dominate the field. The underlying message of the airshow is that elites will protect their positions of power and privilege and make the people dispensable come what may. Canadians do not agree with that.

---

### **Spate of Anti-Worker Laws Passed In Quebec**

## **Legault Government's Privatized Restructuring Plans Oppose Modern Nation-Building**

**– Fernand Deschamps –**

Quebec's Legault government continues to adopt measures and laws that put human and natural resources almost directly into the hands of large private interests. This is not happening without great opposition from the people of Quebec. They are confronting a government which defines autonomy and nationalism as getting rid of everything that prevents it from catering to the demands of narrow private interests and the U.S. war economy.

It is in this context that the recent activities of the Legault government must be examined. On May 23, the National Assembly adopted Bill 51, *An Act to modernize the construction industry*. On May 9, it tabled Bill 61, *An Act enacting the Act respecting Mobilité Infra Québec and amending certain*

*provisions relating to shared transportation, and Bill 62, An Act mainly to diversify the acquisition strategies of public bodies and increase their agility in carrying out infrastructure projects.*

The government is attacking construction workers head-on with Bill 51, imposing greater labour mobility, increasing the versatility of workers, and facilitating and increasing the hiring of untrained workers and undermining safety standards on construction sites. “Versatility” means that journeymen in many trades can be required to perform tasks “related to those covered by their competency certificate” but which are not included in their competency certificate and job description.

With Bills 61 and 62 on infrastructure projects, the government opens the door wide to greater privatization in the awarding of public infrastructure projects.

Bill 61 establishes Mobilité Infra Québec, providing it with sole jurisdiction over complex transportation projects, which the government has entrusted it with planning or implementing. The legislation allows Mobilité Infra Québec, among other things, to acquire -- by mutual agreement or expropriation -- the buildings that it deems necessary within the framework of its mission, on its own account or on behalf of the government, a local municipality, a public transport company, the Metropolitan Transport Network or the Regional Metropolitan Transport Authority. All of this is within the context of integrating transportation, communications, energy and security corridors across North America, i.e. integrating Mexico and Canada into the U.S. war economy.

In its Bill 62, the Quebec government introduces the concept of "partnership contract" in a "collaborative approach" and with Article 4 deletes the term "public-private" from the *Act respecting contracting by public bodies*. In fact, the government is not abolishing public-private contracts. It is expanding them with the government itself becoming solely a distributor of capital to private companies which will now be able to participate in the design, construction, financing, maintenance and operation of public infrastructure. In addition, the bill establishes the sharing of risks and responsibilities between the government and the private sector for financing, maintenance and operation. The mantra for this collaborative approach is the sharing of know-how, innovative solutions, and best approaches.

This "new way of doing things" already exists. It has been shown that the private multinational consulting firm McKinsey participated in setting up the Canada Infrastructure Bank, while a former McKinsey partner ended up as CEO of this bank to offer contracts to McKinsey.[1]

Similarly, McKinsey already has an attentive ear among certain of Quebec's state-owned companies, including Hydro-Québec which has paid millions of dollars to McKinsey to help it manage its dams.[2] The Quebec Ministry of Health used their services during the COVID pandemic, as did the Quebec Ministry of the Economy.[3][4][5]

Bill 62 provides for the sharing of risks, gains and losses, possible contracts with consortia, and over-the-counter contracts outside of the public tender process. According to data produced by the Secretariat of the Treasury Board, the use of over-the-counter agreements has increased by 30 per cent over the last three years. In comparison, the use of public tenders increased by only eight per cent during the same period. This creates situations where companies may decide not to participate in calls for tender, instead awaiting recourse to private tender.

These contracts allow private interests to enter into agreements, without publication of a notice of intent, in cases where no bid compliant with the call for tender has been submitted. Over-the-counter agreements may be entered into whether or not the contract meets the need expressed in the call for tender or whether or not the successful tenderer meets the requirements of the call.

In its brief, the Public Procurement Authority underlines: "[T]his way of doing things could have the insidious nature that companies would not bid on contracts and instead wait to receive an invitation to conclude a contract by mutual agreement, particularly for regions where there is

already little competition. The production costs could therefore be higher than anticipated when the call for tenders are launched." Consortia can be created to take advantage of this situation.

This brings to mind the Charbonneau Commission of Inquiry into the awarding and management of public contracts in the construction industry. Its report, published nine years ago, revealed the existence of systems of corruption and collusion among those who control the sector. The official mandate of the Charbonneau Commission, created in 2011, was to eradicate collusion and corruption in the awarding of public contracts in construction, to reveal possible links between this corruption and the financing of political parties and the possible infiltration of the construction industry by organized crime.

One of the report's recommendations was to ensure better development of internal construction expertise, which, among other things, has now been thrown in the trash. Far from eliminating corruption, the cartel parties and government and its ministers have taken over acting as organized crime using their positions of power and privilege to act with impunity to pay the rich and integrate Quebec into the U.S. war aims.

This also brings to mind the secret deals surrounding SNC-Lavalin which showed that it is the workers of Quebec and Canada who bear the brunt of the corruption and collaboration of large companies and the state.

To get away with its corrupt schemes to pay the rich, the government presents the simplistic thesis that the problems with infrastructure projects are due to delays and high costs caused by the workers' insistence that wages, working conditions and safety measures including training must be maintained. The solution, it says is to collaborate for the greater good and eliminate these problems. On the one hand, they say they need more flexibility, mobility and versatility on the part of workers, who are disposable anyway. On the other hand, they say they now need partnership contracts with a collaborative approach which will resolve the problems of delays and high costs.

It is clear that the government is pushing further its neo-liberal plan of making all the human, material and natural resources of society available to narrow private interests in the name of the speed needed at lower cost. This is supposed to give rise to beneficial outcomes for the people.

Quebeckers are not fooled by the sagas of numerous public infrastructure projects, with their studies, emergencies, non-emergencies, buck-passing, and consultations with major experts, which have ended up costing them double or triple the initial projection. The destruction of all human potential and human expertise in Quebec's public sector is the result of the Quebec government's agenda to serve the ambitions of the most powerful oligarchs, in contradiction with the interests of the people.

The people of Quebec systematically oppose privatization in health care, education and all public sectors of the economy, because it is done to destroy everything related to the public domain and hand it over -- on a silver platter -- to narrow private interests. When the government raises concerns about speed and cost reduction, no one is deceived. Its concern above all else is the speed with which it wants to respond to the demands of the financial oligarchy to monopolize Quebec's wealth: our electricity, our mines, our roads, our soil. Recent bills and laws concerning Hydro-Québec, energy, and mines, and these last three bills confirm this eagerness.

## Notes

1. See "Close ties between McKinsey and the Canada Infrastructure Bank," February 7, 2023, Radio Canada, February 7, 2023.

2. See "Hydro-Québec paid millions of dollars to McKinsey to help it manage its dams," Thomas Gerbet, Radio Canada, October 26, 2022.

3. See "In the shadows, the McKinsey firm was at the heart of the management of the pandemic in Quebec," Thomas Gerbet, Radio Canada, September 30, 2022.
  4. "Snapshot of the Influence of Consulting Firms and Hedge Fund Managers in Governance," by Pierre Soublière, *TML Monthly*, October 2022.
  5. See "A mysterious contract with McKinsey at the Quebec Ministry of the Economy," Thomas Gerbet and Daniel Boily, Radio Canada, April 25, 2023.
- 

**Bill 51 – Act to Modernize the Construction Industry**  
**Construction Workers Oppose Their Working  
Conditions Being Subject to Private Interests and  
Defend Their Dignity**  
**– Christine Dandenault –**

On February 1, Quebec Minister of Labour Jean Boulet tabled Bill 51, an *Act to modernize the construction industry*, in the National Assembly. On May 23, the bill was passed and received royal assent from the Lieutenant-Governor on May 28.

The final document is 24 pages in length and modifies three laws and seven regulations. Thirty-one briefs were submitted to the Committee on Labour and the Economy concerning the bill, a majority from the construction trades. Twenty organizations were heard during special consultations and public hearings in mid-March.

Bill 51 is part of the government's intensification of actions further restructuring the Quebec state. This is aimed at putting Quebec's human and natural resources under the full control of private interests, and criminalizing citizens who express their opposition.

Already in May 2023, Minister Boulet held a conference organized by the Montreal Chamber of Commerce emphasizing these objectives:

- modernize industry practices;
- increase productivity on construction sites;
- develop solutions promoting workforce retention and the addition of employees from under-represented groups; and
- increase the overall efficiency of the industry.

With Bill 51, the government is attacking construction workers head-on to impose greater labour mobility, permitting employers to require journeymen in many trades to perform work not included in their competency certificates, and increase the hiring of untrained workers on construction sites, endangering the safety of the workers they are claiming to assist, and undermining safety standards affecting all the workers and potentially the public as well, and further weakening worker defence organizations. All of this is done in the name of increasing productivity and efficiency in the organization of work to meet the demands of private companies.

The numerous submissions and interventions during consultations made by representatives of different construction trades and their union organizations opposed the government's thesis that opening labour pools, the introduction of versatility in these, and the hiring of untrained workers equates to productivity and efficiency. It is professional competence that guarantees effectiveness, efficiency and productivity in the construction industry, increasing safety at work, they repeated

again and again.

This brings to mind the struggle of Quebec crane operators in 2018, who opposed the decision of the Quebec Construction Commission (CCQ) and the government to abolish the requirement that a crane operator obtain a Diploma of Vocational Studies (DEP) to operate a crane. The DEP was established as a rigorous 870-hour training program taught by professional instructors that had significantly reduced accidents in the sector. The government has imposed in its place a 150-hour training program which is delivered on construction sites and is the responsibility of employers.[1]

## **Worker Versatility**

Bill 51 introduces the notion of versatility by amending the "Regulation Respecting the Vocational Training of the Workforce in the Construction Industry." In section 79 of the bill, the government modifies this regulation by adding at the end of the definition of "shared activity" the following: "or, as the case may be, by a holder of an occupation competency certificate, where and to the extent provided for in Schedule E."

There are three types of competency certificates: occupation competency, apprentice competency and journeyman competency.

In Bill 51, versatility is introduced in Articles 80, 81 and 82:

In Article 80 of the bill, the following paragraph is added to the end of section 4 of the Regulation:

A person who carries on an occupation is also authorized to perform a shared activity, where and to the extent provided for in Schedule E. Where the person performs a shared activity, the person is deemed to carry on his or her occupation.

Article 81 amends the Regulation by inserting after section 4:

4.0.1. Despite section 4, a journeyman may perform a task not included in the definition in Schedule A that applies to the journeyman's trade if performing the task is in keeping with the principle of versatility in work organization."

Performing tasks that meet all the following conditions constitutes versatility:

- (1) the tasks are related to the tasks provided for in the definition of the trade of the journeyman;
- (2) the tasks are part of the same work sequence and allow work, including preparatory or finishing work, to progress; and
- (3) the tasks are of short duration in a working day.

The principle of versatility does not apply to the operation of cranes of any type or to work pertaining to the stability or load carrying capacity of a structure. Nor does it apply to tasks relating to the trades of electrician, pipe fitter, fire protection mechanic, refrigeration mechanic or elevator mechanic.

Article 82 of the bill, amends the Regulation by adding the following paragraph at the end of Section 5.8:

Where and to the extent provided for in Schedule E, a person holding a valid occupation competency certificate who has successfully completed the professional training recognized by the Commission for a shared activity is eligible to sit for the qualification examination related to that shared activity.

As many have raised, an occupational competency certificate is held by a person who has no experience in the field or on a construction site. They have completed general training from the CCQ. It is an additional burden for those who are journeymen or apprentices and it increases the risk of danger to the safety of workers and the public and leaves room for the arbitrary actions of employers.

Further, as indicated in the memorandum of the FTQ and several other trade bodies, "if the entry of non-graduate labour through the opening of pools appears as a short-term solution, it creates a serious long-term problem in terms of labour retention. Initial training is the foundation of skills development and is a key factor in workforce retention. For the profession of carpenter, 41 per cent of non-graduates leave after five years, compared to 21 per cent of graduates. Generally speaking, the data shows that a new graduate worker will accumulate more hours per year in the industry than a non-graduate worker. The CCQ shows that the higher the hours worked in the first year, the lower the dropout rate."

## **Worker Mobility**

The government is eliminating any obstacles to worker mobility. As of May 1, 2025, the government is putting an end to any clause in a collective agreement that limits workers' mobility. It is in fact a decree which removes this aspect of their working conditions from negotiations.

Article 96 of the bill reads: "Any clause of a collective agreement within the meaning of the *Act respecting labour relations, vocational training and workforce management in the construction industry* that restricts the mobility of employees who could be assigned anywhere in Québec under a regulation made under subparagraph 13 of the first paragraph of section 123.1 of that Act or that restricts an employer's freedom to hire such employees ceases to have effect as of May 1, 2025."

This increased state intervention in labour relations and collective agreements has been denounced.

The government has also added other clauses legislating further control of the organizations concerned:

42.2. Not later than the first day of the sixth month preceding the expiry date of the collective agreement provided for in section 47, the representative associations, the sector-based employers' association and the employers' association shall transmit, in writing, to the other parties their requests, offers and proposals on all the matters that may be the subject of negotiations.

42.3. The negotiations shall begin between the representative associations and the sector-based employers' association or the employers' association, according to their respective roles, and shall be pursued with dispatch and in good faith. To that end, the associations may agree on a bargaining structure and bargaining procedures.

## **Misleading Concern for Diversity**

The government is amending the *Act respecting labour relations, vocational training and workforce management in the construction industry* by introducing, among other things, the objective of improving the labour supply in the construction industry. In particular, it is putting in place measures to attract and retain what it calls "persons who are representative of the diversity of Quebec society so as to favour their access to and maintenance, retention."

The government is making various modifications relating to "women, diversity and under-represented groups" in Bill 51, which are high-sounding ideals to say they want to attract cheap labour. These categories are defined as "an Indigenous Person, a person belonging to a visible or ethnic minority, an immigrant or a person with a disability." In response, many labour

representatives insist on the importance of professional training in all respects, no matter what.

## New Interference in Labour Relations

Bill 51, in Article 5, creates a labour relations committee in the construction industry, whose goals are:

- (1) to study any matter related to labour relations in the construction industry and to employees' conditions of employment, except the matters under the authority of the Commission's board of directors, the Committee on vocational training in the construction industry or the Committee on employee benefits in the construction industry; and
- (2) to discuss any problematic situation experienced in the context of labour relations in the construction industry or any disagreement relating to any of the matters provided for under a collective agreement, in order to prevent or settle any dispute that could lead to a grievance and, where applicable, to inform the Commission of any interpretation agreed on with regard to a clause of a collective agreement.

## Increased Measures to Criminalize Worker Opposition

Finally, the various fines provided for in Bill 51, the *Act respecting labour relations, vocational training and workforce management in the construction industry*, are increased, doubled, or even tripled. These are detailed in Articles 26, 27, and 33 to 58. Situations incurring possible fines are numerous. These are just a few:

- Anyone who molests, inconveniences or insults a member or employee of the Commission in the exercise of their duties, or otherwise obstructs such exercise, commits an offence and is liable to a fine;
- Anyone who attempts to commit one of the offences provided for in this law, or aids or incites someone to commit or attempt to commit such an offence commits an offence and is liable to the penalty provided for such an offence;
- Anyone who orders, encourages or supports a strike, a work slowdown or a lockout contrary to the provisions of this law or participates in it is liable, if it is an employer, an association, a member of the office or a representative of an association, of a fine of \$9,556 to \$95,543 for each day or part of a day during which this strike, this lockout or this slowdown exists and in all other cases, a fine of \$239 to \$1,157 for each day or part of a day.

There are many other egregious features to Bill 51. The fact remains that Minister Boulet's objective in modernizing the *Quebec Construction Act* is to meet the demands of private interests and the state's restructuring plans for their purposes. Throughout the consultations, the various representatives of the construction trades defended their expertise, the dignity of their work, their knowledge of that environment and the conditions necessary for everyone's safety. They said at that time that even if Bill 51 passed, this will not stop them from speaking in their own name to defend their rights, their security and that of all the people.



## Note

1. See "Unacceptable Actions of Quebec Government: Crane Operators Back on the Job: the Fight Continues," *Workers' Forum*, June 26, 2018.

---

**Bill 69, An Act to Ensure the Responsible Governance  
of Energy Resources**

**Sharp and Immediate Opposition from  
Trade Union Organizations to Further Privatization  
of Hydro-Québec**

**– Geneviève Royer –**

On June 6, Minister of the Economy, Innovation and Energy, Pierre Fitzgibbon, tabled Bill 69, *An Act to ensure the responsible governance of energy resources and to amend various legislative provisions*, at the Quebec National Assembly.

The 56-page bill is part of the restructuring of the State to better serve large supranational private interests, and more specifically to integrate Quebec's resources into U.S. energy transportation corridors. Bill 69 will grant the Minister of the Economy, Innovation and Energy new powers including "establishing and implementing an integrated energy resource management plan" for Quebec. The preamble to the bill provides that part of this plan "specifies the electric power supply target that Hydro-Québec must achieve to meet the electric power needs of Québec markets within the time frame indicated in the plan." The bill will allow private power utilities to enter into over-the-counter contracts with Hydro-Québec to harness Quebec's still untapped natural resources by placing "at Hydro-Québec's disposal any immovables or water powers forming part of the domain of the State" and by withdrawing "the obligation for Hydro-Québec to obtain the Government's authorization."

A number of organizations, including trade unions, issued statements the same day opposing Bill 69.

### **The Canadian Union of Public Employees-Quebec (CUPE-Quebec)**

CUPE-Quebec states that Bill 69 "is a gigantic step backwards for the people of Quebec."

CUPE-Quebec, which represents more than 16,000 members in the energy sector, issued a statement on Bill 69. In it Pierre-Guy Sylvestre, an economist with CUPE-Québec said "This is a dark day in Quebec's history. The public power utility, embodied by Hydro-Québec, has enabled almost miraculous social and economic advances. Today, on the contrary, we are witnessing an advance for private companies and investment funds. Workers will certainly lose out."

CUPE-Quebec points out that dynamic pricing, which will be introduced on April 1, 2026, "is a regressive measure that will penalise low-income households," and believes that efforts should instead be made to promote energy efficiency: "Let's reduce residential, commercial and institutional demand by improving the performance of heating and lighting equipment, rather than applying unfair pricing," adds Patrick Gloutney, President of CUPE-Quebec.



## **The Confederation of National Trade Unions (CSN)**

CSN issued a press release, entitled "Bill 69 -- We must remain masters of our own destiny," that said:

"Bill 69 opens the door to more private electricity generation, in particular through section 38[1], which allows a company to generate electricity and distribute it to a customer located on adjacent land."

"The increase in private hydroelectric production to a maximum of 100 megawatts (MW), rather than the current 50 MW, is another way in which new private producers could emerge."

"Despite certain positive points, such as the planning of long-term needs, Fitzgibbon's bill does not close the door to private projects. There is a risk that these projects will not be socially acceptable and will prevent us from achieving an overall vision of what will be produced in the long term," points out Caroline Senneville, CSN President. "Planning should make it possible to avoid unpleasant surprises and to take into account all of Quebec's social, economic and environmental needs."

The CSN is opposed to major rate changes: "Two elements of the rate framework will disappear after 2026: dynamic rates will no longer be optional, and domestic rates may vary according to energy intensity. The pricing model could therefore change radically from 2026 depending on consumption." It's a well-known fact that the cost of heating a home is the largest part of an electricity bill, accounting for up to 55 per cent of the total amount. However, as the CSN press release points out, "some less fortunate people do not have the means to renovate their homes. This is even truer for tenants whose homes are like heat sieves."

The CSN denounces public-private partnerships for "clean" energy with Hydro-Québec taking all the risks. It believes that "the development model for the wind energy sector in Quebec is untenable in its current form" and wants Hydro-Québec to be the sole developer in this area.

What the CSN is referring to is the fact that since 2003, under the Liberal government of Jean Charest, Hydro-Québec has been signing electricity purchase contracts with private wind turbine power producers. In many cases, these contracts guaranteed the private companies a fixed rate that Hydro-Québec is forced to pay, regardless of the price of electricity on North American markets, resulting in huge losses for Hydro-Québec during periods of electricity surplus.[2]

In the current period of high demand for "clean" electricity, Hydro-Québec will guarantee private companies a rate for the electricity they produce. In 2026, Hydro-Québec will find itself with an energy production deficit, as it will have to honour all its firm electricity export contracts to the United States and supply "clean" electricity to all the new facilities producing battery components and extracting/refining critical minerals such as lithium, nickel, scandium, titanium, niobium and aluminium, to name but a few.[3]

The CSN concludes its press release by stating that it "will study the bill in greater depth to better understand all its impacts on the concerned workers."

## **Québec Federation of Labour (FTQ)**

"[...] the Minister is concentrating a great deal of power in his own hands by appropriating a significant portion of the files from the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry," says the FTQ.

The arrangements that Bill 69 puts in place are ones where Hydro-Québec will "no longer be obliged to proceed solely through calls for tenders. For example, it will be able to enter into supply contracts by mutual agreement, [...] develop new supplies itself or establish partnerships," and

where projects will not have to go before the Energy Regulator for approval.[4]

It was revealed in 2022 that the Legault government and Hydro-Québec had regularly called on private consulting firms, the most famous of which was the U.S. multinational management consulting firm McKinsey, to advise them on the preparation and awarding of over-the-counter contracts without a call for tenders, disregarding the in-house expertise within the government's public service and among the Crown corporation's engineers. Hydro-Québec's new Executive Vice-President -- Strategy and Finance, Maxime Aucoin, is himself a former McKinsey employee. We can therefore expect this trend to continue and accelerate with Bill 69.

"As the devil is in the details, the FTQ will take the time to carefully study this ambitious 56-page bill. For the FTQ, there are democratic issues at stake here. We must be wary of politicizing the future of energy. Not everything can be decided off the side of a desk by a single ministry," says FTQ president Magali Picard.

"There are also issues of transparency and cost of living. For example, the fact that Hydro-Québec could sell off certain assets to the private sector worries us. There's also the whole debate to come on residential rate modulation. The government is capping residential rates at three per cent until 2026, but what happens after 2026? For the FTQ, Hydro-Québec must remain in control of its projects," the press release concludes.

## Notes

1. Bill 69, *An Act to ensure the responsible governance of energy resources and to amend various legislative provisions*, section 38:

Section 60 of the Act [Respecting the Régie de l'énergie] is amended

(1) by replacing "operate an electric power distribution system" in the first paragraph by "distribute electric power to a consumer";

(2) by replacing the second paragraph by the following paragraphs:

"Such rights do not prevent anyone from consuming the electric power they produce.

"Such rights do not prevent anyone producing electric power from renewable sources from distributing it to a single consumer to meet the needs of the consumer's installations, insofar as the installations are situated on a site adjacent to the production site and the Government authorizes such distribution on the conditions it determines."

2. See "Le rôle attribué à Hydro-Québec par le gouvernement Charest, Pas du tout un projet de 'bâisseur', Correspondant de Québec", *Le Marxiste-Léniniste*, numéro 78, 1er mai 2010.

3. See "Hydro-Québec's "Shared Ownership" of Power Lines with Blackstone Hedge Fund," *TML Monthly*, April 2023.

4. "Bill 69 to Modernize Energy Legislation," Ministry of the Economy, Innovation and Energy, June 6, 2024.

## Blatant Theft of Public Assets in Ontario

# Support Striking Liquor Control Board of Ontario Workers Defending Their Rights and Rights of All

– Barbara Biley –



The workers at the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO), members of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), began a strike on July 5, with a 97 per cent strike vote. The workers are demanding increased job security and an end to the Ford government's plans to expand privatization of alcohol sales -- calling on the government to *Keep It Public!*

Rather than privatize alcohol sales the union is proposing that the LCBO expand, build more stores, increase hours of operation and create more permanent full and part-time positions. Far from protecting workers against layoffs and store closings, the LCBO management has taken the stand in negotiations against renewing existing job protections in the current contract.

The union outlined its main concerns and the reason for the breakdown in negotiations at a press conference on July 4. Colleen MacLeod, chair of the OPSEU bargaining committee, stated "We've been very clear that we won't back down in our fight for a strong future for the LCBO and the public services funded by LCBO revenues." She said that the biggest unresolved issue is Premier Doug Ford's recent decision to allow alcohol sales in convenience and big box stores, originally slated for August 1.



Ontario Premier Ford increased his attacks on striking LCBO workers with the announcement on July 15 that as of July 18, ready-to-drink cocktails and large beer packs can be sold in licensed grocery stores.

# The LCBO is Ontario's best kept secret – and worth protecting.

Frontline LCBO workers are proud that the revenues we help to generate give back to our communities. That's why we're fighting to:

**Grow**

the LCBO to meet demand and increase convenience with more stores & increased hours of operation

**Expand**

public revenues by growing the LCBO

**Support**

good jobs at the LCBO and in our communities



Did you know?

**Did you know: 70% of LCBO workers are casual?**

They don't have guaranteed hours, which means most won't have access to benefits and there aren't opportunities to move into permanent part-time and full-time positions.

Join the fight for the future of the LCBO



Take action at: **KeepItPublic.ca**

MacLeod pointed out on July 4 that this decision will have a serious impact on LCBO revenue, decreasing the Crown Corporation's \$2.5 billion annual profit that contributes to funding public services. There are already 2,300 private retailers across the province, including grocery stores, wineries and distilleries, Beer Stores and small general stores licensed to sell alcohol.

The union is in particular demanding the government reverse its decision to make ready-to-drink beverages available in convenience and grocery stores which the government will not agree to, stating, "If OPSEU is now prepared to agree that ready-to-drink beverages are a matter of public policy and not something that should be discussed as part of bargaining, we strongly encourage them to respond to our July 4 offer."

The expansion of sales of wine, beer, cider and ready-to-drink beverages to convenience stores, big-box outlets and additional supermarkets was originally scheduled for 2026 but in May Ford announced that his government was handing over \$225 million to the Beer Store to break a contract with them that was to expire in 2026, so

as to fast-track the expansion of alcohol sales to about 8,500 new locations as of August 1, 2024.

The LCBO workers are demanding guarantees that wholesale, storage and distribution and any work related to the expansions linked to the beer deal be done only by OPSEU members, not private-sector contractors, as well as guarantees that no stores will close and that no workers will be laid off or have their hours reduced. Currently 70 per cent of the 9,000 LCBO workers are casual, with no guaranteed hours of work or benefits and few opportunities to move into permanent part-time and full-time positions.

The workers are receiving broad support on their picket lines from both private and public sector workers, including nurses and education workers across the province.



Meantime the Ford government is actively undermining the workers, providing an interactive map on where people can buy alcohol during the strike, as well as threatening to re-open 32 liquor stores three days a week if the strike lasts more than 2 weeks. A worker at a Mississauga LCBO warehouse also reports that scabs are being brought in to fill orders.

The LCBO workers fight to *Keep It Public* is part of the broad movement of Ontario workers and their communities against the wrecking agenda of the Ford government to hand over health care, education, social programs and Crown Corporations to narrow private interests. Workers are presenting and demanding solutions that favour the people.

*TML* salutes the fighting spirit of the LCBO workers and calls on everyone to join the workers on their picket lines! Speak out to support their just cause! Denounce Ford's anti-social and anti-worker attempt to bypass unions and enter into one-on-one direct links with anonymous workers, on whose behalf he then claims to speak. It is a fraud from A to Z. Hold Ford to account! The demands of LCBO workers must be met!

To find a nearby picket location [click here](#).

---

## Interview with Veteran Liquor Control Board of Ontario Worker

*The following is an interview with a 30-year veteran worker at the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) and member of the Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU), currently on strike for better wages, benefits and job security, and against the Ford Government plans to further privatize the Crown Corporation.*

**TML:** The issue of job security is front and centre in the LCBO workers' strike. What is the current situation and what is needed to protect worker's rights in light of the fast-tracked expansion of beer and wine sales and ready-to-drink beverages in the private sector?

**LCBO Worker:** What is needed is a solid guarantee that the workers will keep their jobs despite the Ford Government's plans to further privatize the LCBO, otherwise this is merely a protest for severance. This strike is not only about wages and working conditions. The 9,000 LCBO workers play an important role in the economy of Ontario at the local and provincial level and also contribute to the economy of Canada. Through their labour, LCBO workers generate a net profit for Ontario to the tune of \$2.5 billion annually and 80 per cent of this comes from the LCBO retail stores.

There is another aspect of this strike that is not spoken about by the government and is of concern to LCBO workers. The Ford government's schemes to hive off more of the LCBO to hand over to the private sector, such as to the Weston Family, is being presented to the people of Ontario as giving them "choices" and making it more convenient to access liquor products.

We are very concerned about the sale of beer and wine and especially of mixed drinks or ready-to-drink (RTD) beverages -- which is the most rapidly expanding category -- at Loblaw's or other big retailers. The problem is that this is a drink most favoured by kids -- it's sugary, fruity and you can't taste the alcohol. Teenagers will be vulnerable to the easy availability of liquor which will be much less rigorously monitored in grocery and convenience stores than in an LCBO store where the workers are focused and trained in their social responsibility to make sure there are no sales to minors.

RTDs are popular and sales are very profitable, which is why the Weston family want it. Premier Ford has even appointed a member of the Weston family, which controls Loblaw's, to the LCBO Board and we wonder about what went on behind closed doors to make this cozy arrangement.



**TML:** You have noted that the privatization of the LCBO is not new. Can you explain how this Crown Corporation has slowly been dismantled and parts handed over to the private monopolies?

**LCBO Worker:** Since the beginning of its operation in 1927 the LCBO has been the subject of political debate over how it should operate. In election after election, voters have rejected parties that favour its privatization. The manner in which governments have bypassed the democratic wishes of the people and attempted to fool the public has been to lie and say that privatization is not on the agenda, while quietly selling the business piecemeal to the private sector. The agenda of successive governments, and in particular the Ford government, is also to attack and weaken the union. LCBO workers have produced net profits for the province of Ontario year after year and we have been a stable work force.

This is the first time LCBO workers have gone on strike to defend our rights as workers and get a just and fair contract that protects our jobs and the LCBO itself, which is a net benefit to Ontario and Canada. Besides attacking our jobs and livelihoods, this is open theft, turning a public enterprise that contributes to public funds into a private enterprise to benefit narrow private interests.

**TML:** Can you elaborate on the union's proposals for the government to increase investment in the LCBO retail operations, opening for longer hours, increasing the number of stores and the number of permanent staff etc.?

**LCBO Worker:** The union is open to negotiations on many points, but the essential demands are simple. Stop using zero-hour "casual" positions, where workers have no security, no guaranteed hours, no guarantee that they can make a living. Casual employees make up 70 per cent of the LCBO workforce. Hardworking people are forced to sacrifice everything for the vague hope of a permanent position with some stability some time in the future. It's a brutal and cynical violation of workers' rights and makes it impossible for many to continue to work for the LCBO.

OPSEU has called for the building of more LCBO stores and an increase in operating hours and staff to meet increasing demands. We want casual workers to be made permanent, not treated as slave labour with no pensions, benefits or guaranteed hours of work. Hardworking people should not be forced to sacrifice everything for the vague hope of a decent wage in the future.

The union has called for the strengthening of the LCBO as a public asset which supports local communities, the tourism industry and other sectors of the economy. That is why we are calling on the public, our neighbours and fellow workers to stand with us, come and join our picket lines as we defend our rights and what is in the public interest in Ontario.

---

## **Systematic Privatization of Liquor Control Board**

**– Rob Woodhouse –**

The Ford government has long been implementing a program of privatization at the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO). This latest move of expanding alcohol sales through grocery stores and convenience stores follows the privatization of the LCBO's "specialty services" operations and online services in the 2020 to 2021 period.

Specialty services refers to the sale of products that are not sold in LCBO retail outlets. Private entities, many of them very large corporations, directly contract with wine, beer and alcohol producers to be their exclusive sales representatives in the province. The LCBO serves as the middle man for these transactions.

Prior to 2021, the LCBO operated this service out of its headquarters in downtown Toronto, staffed

with unionized employees. It was a combined office and warehousing building from where orders were processed, filled and distributed by unionized workers. In the name of modernizing, including building a new headquarters to replace an old building, the LCBO chose not to build the public character of its operations, and certainly not to retain unionized employees. Instead it hired a private global monopoly – the Supply Chain division of DHL Group (then Deutsche Post) to take over significant areas of operation.

In a May 2020 announcement to the trade, the LCBO described DHL as "a leader in supply chain solutions with significant experience in the logistics and warehousing of beverage alcohol in a regulated environment." Not only was the specialty service taken over, the LCBO announced that DHL would "locate, set up and operate a distribution centre to perform our non-core and online operations including our e-Commerce, Vintages Shop Online, and Specialty Services."

At the time, the LCBO declared that contracting out this work would mean "increased efficiencies, improved processes and productivity, enhanced operations and, in turn, improved supply chain capabilities and better service to our customers."

The DHL Trillium Supply Chain service, a massive warehouse operation in Caledon north of Toronto was up and running by 2021, with LCBO unionized employees having been bought out, transferred, or otherwise severed from these LCBO operations.

The Ford Government changed the liquor laws in 2019 to allow grocery stores to sell wine and beer. Now, private sales will be allowed at an increased number of grocery stores and convenience stores of not only wine and beer, but also of hard liquor-based drinks, referred to as "ready-to-drink products."

Convenience stores can obtain a licence for an annual fee of \$500, while grocery stores need to pay \$3,250 per year. Both licences entitle the holder to sell and deliver beer, cider, wine and ready-to-drink products. Existing grocery store licensees can begin selling ready-to-drink products on July 18 while convenience stores can begin sales on September 5. New grocery store licensees can start selling on October 31. By that time, every convenience, grocery, and big-box store in Ontario will be able to sell beer, cider, wine, and ready-to-drink alcoholic beverages if they choose to.

This is the precursor to large chain stores and "food" monopolies expanding their dominant position by taking up the distribution of alcohol. This will certainly include using their economic power to control pricing and other crucial elements of the business.

For the time being, the LCBO remains the sole wholesaler of alcohol. It retains the right to set minimum prices and taxes. At this time, the mark-ups set and collected by the LCBO are very significant. The Alcohol and Gaming Commission informs that "as the exclusive wholesaler, LCBO coordinates with all supplying sources." This includes the LCBO itself, the Beer Store which is owned by brewery monopolies, and Ontario producers. It also includes companies operating under the specialty services division of the LCBO. Retailers will pay the LCBO directly and the LCBO will pay the supplying sources. Deliveries from the LCBO to retailers will be handled by third party logistics companies.

### **Revenue Generated by LCBO**

For the year ending March 31, 2008, the LCBO had net sales of \$4.13 billion, including a profit (or dividend) of \$1.35 billion transferred to the general revenues of the Government of Ontario. This is the revenue the public treasury stands to lose should the LCBO be privatized for private profit. That year it also collected \$383 million in provincial sales tax, and sent a further \$458 million to Ottawa in federal sales tax (GST).

Over the five years prior to that, LCBO profits totalled nearly \$6 billion for the province. At that time, the agency operated at a profit margin of 48.9 per cent. The LCBO's amounts for the claims

of workers in wages and benefits and operating expenses as a percentage of net sales totalled only 16.1 per cent during the 2007-08 year.

Today, based on information in its annual report, the retail stores appeared to turn a profit of at least \$1.9 billion, accounting for more than 75 per cent of the money that flowed to the province from the LCBO.

CBC's Mike Crawley breaks down how the LCBO currently turns a profit and how things are expected to change with the Ford government's reforms -- including the premier's plan to sell select alcohol in Ontario convenience and grocery stores. Crawley writes:

"The LCBO brings in about \$2.5 billion for the Ontario government each year. ...

"LCBO retail outlets – the 680 stores currently shut by strike -- account for nearly 80 per cent of the Crown corporation's gross revenue, according to its most recent annual report. The rest comes primarily from LCBO's role as a distributor to bars, restaurants and supermarkets.[...]

"[Ontario Premier] Ford insists that the reforms will not hurt provincial coffers. However, industry sources and an LCBO internal document obtained by *CBC News* suggest the changes will take hundreds of millions of dollars away from the public purse each year.

This is because the LCBO provides its products to the convenience and grocery stores with what it calls a "wholesale discount," 10 per cent off the pre-HST and deposit price.

### **Breakdown of LCBO's Revenues in 2023**

Crawley explains that the LCBO's gross revenues totalled \$7.41 billion in 2023. "The vast bulk of that, \$5.87 billion, came through the LCBO's own retail outlets, including its online direct-to-consumer sales," he writes.

The other most significant contributors are:

- Licensed establishments (bars, restaurants, venues): \$598 million;
- Grocery stores: \$410 million;
- LCBO Convenience Outlets: \$252 million;
- The Beer Store: \$229 million.

Subtracting the following figures from the \$7.41 billion in total sales leaves the LCBO with a net income of \$2.46 billion, all of which flowed to the provincial government.

- \$3.78 billion product costs (including the price the supplier charges, excise tax and freight).
- \$1.19 billion in claims to the workers for wages and benefits, and expenses, including administration costs.

Based on information in its annual report, Crawley points out that the retail stores appeared to turn a profit of at least \$1.9 billion, accounting for more than 75 per cent of the money that flowed to the province.

The LCBO says the cost of products accounted for 51 cents of every dollar in revenue, while the amounts claimed by the workers and expenses, amount to 16 cents on the dollar, leaving 33 cents in income from each dollar in gross revenue. Thirty-three per cent of the \$5.87 billion in revenue from the retail stores works out to \$1.94 billion in net income.



## How the LCBO Prices Its Products

Crawley writes that the LCBO makes its profit the way just about any retailer does by selling products at prices that are higher than what it pays its suppliers. However he notes, "What makes the LCBO different from just about every other retailer: the calculations it uses to set those prices are standardized and publicly available."

For examples of pricing from the LCBO's website, [click here](#).

*(National Union of Public and General Employees, CBC Life)*

---

## Unfettered Use of Executive Police Powers for Privatization

The theft of Ontario's public assets is being carried out at an ever faster rate through privatization decided by governments using executive powers with impunity. Prior governments did this in the form of public-private partnerships (P3s) and other schemes to have the public finance private profit. It removes immense amounts of added-value from the economy and puts it in the hands of the filthy rich who destroy societies to enrich themselves further and maintain their positions of privilege. These "partnerships" have been used to attack the wages and working conditions of the working people. Meanwhile, the government uses its stranglehold on the decision-making power to dictate austerity for the working people in order to steal more funds for its schemes.

In 2014, the Liberal government of Kathleen Wynne announced it would sell off public real estate in Toronto, sell its shares in GM and establish a panel to "review" other government assets -- Hydro One, Ontario Power Generation and the Liquor Control Board of Ontario. It was all part of a plan to raise funds for a so-called Trillium Trust that was created to finance \$29 billion in infrastructure and public transit over 10 years. The announcement was designed to sound very noble but of course, what took place under the Liberal government is like what the Ford government is doing now. It is all decided behind the backs of the people who are not party to any evaluation of either the assets or the infrastructure projects.

Opposition to the austerity agenda of one cartel party government after another has been constant since the NDP government of Liberal mole Bob Rae opened the door with his treacherous legislation which imposed a wage freeze on public sector workers and civil servants. He introduced what became known as "Rae days," which required public sector workers to take up to 12 days off per year without pay. The neo-liberal ruling class praised these measures to the sky as generating nearly \$2 billion in "savings" for the government of Ontario, without laying off any public sector workers.

This was followed by the Conservative government of Mike Harris in 1995 who unleashed a vicious anti-union onslaught and the sell-off and privatization of public assets. This started the habit of the rich depriving the workers of what belongs to them by right -- wages and working conditions and a retirement commensurate with the standard of living they have created for themselves, as well as the right to health care and education, at the standard society has achieved, for themselves and their families. As for the cost of infrastructure the working people require, it could be readily financed in a manner which is not destructive to the economy and the people if the motive was to do so, and if governments stop paying the rich and increase funding for social programs. The example of the revenue generated by the Liquor Control Board of Ontario (LCBO) which goes into government coffers shows how it can be done.

By continuing to build on the experiences the workers have already gained in the fight against the anti-social offensive, the working people can continue to establish new landmarks from which to advance their own pro-social program for the society. This fight of LCBO workers against privatization is to defend their own livelihoods and standards of living and working conditions

against the attempts to turn all workers into cheap disposable labour. It is also a fight to provide society with a way forward that can guarantee the well-being of all.

*(TML Archives)*

---

**Another Glaring Example of Theft of Public Assets**  
**Private Interests Take Control of**  
**Vancouver City Council**  
– K.C. Adams –

Private interests have taken control of Vancouver City Council in a glaring example of what is occurring at all levels of government throughout Canada. The current Mayor of Vancouver, Ken Sim, is a wealthy businessman who engineered a coup in the 2022 city council election. Sim is co-owner of a global private health care company called Nurse Next Door. His capture of Vancouver City Hall -- with his gang of co-conspirators called "A Better City (ABC)" -- appears in retrospect quite easy, using his own money and that of rich donors, and social connections within the local ruling elite including the mass media.

Sim and his ABC gang are pushing the city further towards privatization of its functions and public space on the basis of their executive powers. These are not subject to rule of law which is why they are referred to as police powers. A significant aspect of his program is not to deal directly with the multiple social problems plaguing the city including poverty, homelessness and crumbling public infrastructure and people's facilities. Instead, 100 new police officers were hired while those in need are supposed to rely on the charity of rich philanthropists and private enterprise to address symptoms of the underlying problems. This promotes multi-millionaires and private enterprise as leaders and saviours, in opposition to the modern trend towards the people's empowerment and control of the socialized economy and politics.

Sim and his ABC gang seek to use the city's problems to enrich private companies and owners. At the same time, working people are shut out from advancing their views and outlook for democratic renewal and a new pro-social direction and aim for the economy.

Charity appears central to Sim's solution to social issues. He has been seen at public charity events promising to match donors' donations from his own personal wealth. To fix the broken down Stanley Park children's train, Sim made the banal phone gesture to his ear and said he would find a solution with a few calls to his rich friends. He uses the obviously deteriorating public infrastructure and facilities to push his privatization agenda, which of course is what his own private health care company is built on. He presents privatization as an alternative to taxes, a situation he concocts from his self-serving outlook. At the same time, he does not oppose raising city user fees, a form of taxes on public services, which are generally considered illiberal as they mostly apply to all regardless of income.

For example, Sim's ABC controlled city council has pushed through parking fees for people wanting to enjoy Spanish Bank Beach, an area that is almost inaccessible using city mass transit. The long beach and famous banks stretching far out into Burrard Inlet during low tide are situated in Point Grey, which is possibly the wealthiest residential area with the most expensive homes in all of Canada. Here, Sim owns his private residence, a long way -- not in distance but in social and living conditions -- from most working people.

Mayor Sim's privatization agenda includes a proposal to sell naming rights to public facilities and parks and have more private businesses contracted to operate on public land. For example, the Vancouver Aquatic Centre, which is in desperate need of repairs or replacement, would raise money by naming itself the Lululemon Aquatic Centre. To repair or replace the idle outdoor

Kitsilano Pool, he proposed private investment to create a public-private business. For the July fireworks spectacular at English Bay Beach, the best viewing area is fenced off throughout July to allow private interests to build stands and sell seats, food and drinks to the few who can afford it during the three-day event. Sim's privatization campaign also includes the public library system.

To extend City Council's control and privatization agenda of common public land and facilities, his ABC group has submitted a resolution to the provincial government to eliminate the Vancouver Park Board. This is despite the objections of the elected Park Board members, the majority of whom were elected on the ABC party ticket, yet who now face extinction. The NDP government has agreed to implement the resolution to disband the Park Board and turn its authority over to City Council but will wait to do this until after the October 19 provincial election.

One of Sim's main initiatives as Mayor is to change zoning regulations to allow big developers to build taller buildings across the city and increase population density. To accomplish this he must overturn City rules that restrict density and prohibit new construction from blocking residents' remaining views of the surrounding mountains and sea. Sim says allowing private developers to fill in "open spaces" and increase density are ways to address the housing and homeless crises and to bring more people to live in the downtown.

In Canada, as is also the case elsewhere, no alternative to densely populated megacities is ever seriously discussed. Big business demands people be crowded together to satisfy the self-serving aim of the rich to glean maximum private profit. They demand that social housing must be built using private construction companies at great expense and that no public enterprise be organized to build, supply and manage housing for the people with the produced value remaining in the public community under the control of the people.

Private interests seizing governments, highlights the necessity for democratic renewal. By establishing a modern political system and constitution people must empower themselves to decide and control all those affairs that affect their lives.

---

## **Toronto--St. Paul's Federal By-Election**

# **Taking a Stand for Political Renewal**

**– Philip Fernandez –**

The June 24 federal by-election in Toronto--St. Paul's was notable for the work of an array of forces to expose the dysfunctional and anti-democratic electoral process that violates the rights of citizens to participate in decision-making. A bold stand was made by those who participated in the Longest Ballot project and others who used the by-election to discuss issues of concern to the people, from electoral reform to housing and poverty to Canada's complicity in genocide against the Palestinian people. While a representative of the cartel parties "won" the election, concrete advances were made in the political struggle for electoral reform and democratic renewal in Canada.



Besides the candidates of the cartel parties, there were 78 candidates registered to run. Of the 84 candidates on the ballot, the longest ballot in the history of Canadian federal elections, those 78 were candidates representing small parties, the Marxist-Leninist Party, the Marijuana Party, the Rhinoceros Party and the Centrist Party, and independents. The very fact that there were so many

candidates and Elections Canada had to come up with a ballot 90cm long and 30cm wide was a physical manifestation of the desire of Canadians for electoral reform.

The aims of the organizers of the Longest Ballot Project clearly resonated with the 12,543 people in the riding who signed the nominations papers for their candidates, reflecting the sentiment of people to break with the status quo and support a different approach to participating in the elections. One proposal of the Longest Ballot Project is for the creation of a Constituent Assembly to come up with a new electoral law. This would allow Canadians to decide what kind of electoral system they want which would not be a system that allows a political party to "win" and govern with the votes of as few as 17 per cent of eligible voters, in which the voters are disenfranchised when they vote without any way to hold those elected accountable.

During the by-election, *The Marxist Leninist Supplement* stated: "The Longest Ballot Project is a courageous and significant expression that Canadians are not only demanding democratic renewal but taking practical steps to enable themselves to make it so, including building their organizational capacity to make themselves heard."

The Longest Ballot Project was presented in the media as a novelty at best and a nuisance at worst including the fact that the results on election night were held up because of size of the ballot meant only 100 ballots fit per ballot box as opposed the usual 1,000, meaning more boxes to process, and so on. However, in the door-to-door work that MLPC carried out in the riding to popularize its candidate and the Longest Ballot Project, many people expressed enthusiasm for the initiative designed to bring attention to the need to change the first-past-the-post method of counting votes.

*TML* congratulates all the candidates and the organizers of the Longest Ballot Project, and MLPC candidate Meñico Turcotte for their courageous work during the elections to open up the space for electoral and democratic renewal so that it is the people who are empowered to choose and elect their own peers to public office, not the cartel parties who champion the interests of the rich. The results that were achieved bode well for the upcoming by-election in the riding of Verdun in Quebec and also for the 2025 federal elections.

During the by-election, of the 84,934 registered voters, 36,954 voted, giving a participation rate of 43.51 per cent. The candidates from the Liberals, Conservatives, NDP and Green Party garnered 40.48 per cent of the eligible vote which means that 59.52 per cent did not vote for them, refused to vote and over a thousand voters voted for the independents and small party candidates who were part of the Longest Ballot Project. As well, 590 voters signed the pledge initiated by Toronto--St. Paul's for Palestine not to vote for candidates who refused to take a stand for a ceasefire and the rights of the Palestinian people.

The "winner" Conservative Don Stewart, a Bay Street banker and champion of militarism, won with the votes of 15,565, 18.32 per cent of those eligible to vote, which was, according to the mainstream media, a "stunning victory" over the Liberal candidate Leslie Church who got 14,932, 633 votes less than the "winner."

The initiative taken by the non-partisan group Toronto--St. Paul's for Palestine was to use the by-election to put the issue of Canada's support for Israel in front of voters and demand the cartel party candidates take a stand on the matter of the ongoing genocide against the Palestinians. True to form, the cartel party candidates sidestepped the issue, giving vague answers or tried to divert from the question posed, wringing their hands over what they say is increasing anti-Semitism in Toronto. *TML* congratulates the activists from Toronto--St. Paul's for Palestine for going all out to put the U.S./Israeli genocide in Palestine and Canada's complicity on the agenda.

# Significance of Liberal Defeat

– Hilary LeBlanc –

Media had all but called the winner of the federal by-election in Toronto--St. Paul's on June 24 to be Liberal Leslie Church when, late into the night, with 189 of 192 polls reporting, the lead flipped to Conservative candidate Don Stewart who then won the seat. Final results gave Stewart about 42 per cent of the vote against the Liberal candidate Leslie Church, who got about 40 per cent of the ballots cast. The NDP got 11 per cent and the Green Party got 2.9 per cent. The candidates on the Longest Ballot received from 97 votes (Meñico Turcotte of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada got the third highest at 59), to no votes in the case of one independent. Total votes for the Longest Ballot candidates was 1079 (2.9 per cent).

Now that the by-election is over, news media are telling Canadians that Trudeau "has seen his popularity plummet as inflation, the cost of living crisis, high home prices and surging immigration levels drive voter discontent." No mention of privatization and pay-the-rich schemes, or Canada's integration into the U.S. war economy. No mention of Canada's flouting of international rule of law when it provides arms, settlers and support for the Zionist genocide of the Palestinian people. Let alone is anything said of the crimes being committed by NATO and the dangers of NATO expansion into the Asia-Pacific, into Canada's arctic or Canada's support for the neo-nazi regime in Ukraine and much more.

With just over 36,954 votes cast out of more than 82,891 eligible voters, it is difficult to accept the conclusion of Canada's cartel political establishment that two per cent less Liberal votes than the votes received by the Conservative candidate indicates a plummeting Liberal popularity and a surge in popularity for the Conservatives. A real stretch of the imagination of what goes for political discourse in Canada. It is deliberately aimed at diverting the attention of Canadians away from the need to renew the political process and adopt a new electoral law which ends party government, ends public funding of political parties, funds the electoral process not the parties and enables electors to cast an informed vote.

The language in the newspapers and on the air waves is hyperbolic to say the least. Hyperbolic statements are, in the words of one dictionary, "tiny dogs with big barks: don't take them too seriously." But their intent to declare which are "the issues" Canadians should vote on in an election is always evident. "Here is the verdict: Trudeau can't go on like this," Conservative Leader Pierre Poilievre posted on X. "He must call a carbon tax election now."

As the results of the Toronto--St. Paul's by-election once again show, the first-past-the-post system of counting ballots to determine who represents a constituency makes a mockery of the very concept of representation. It is high time it is replaced with a system chosen by the people on the basis of which they can empower themselves.

---

Website: [www.cpcml.ca](http://www.cpcml.ca) Email: [editor@cpcml.ca](mailto:editor@cpcml.ca)