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Hatches Plots Against the Peoples**



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Warmongering Halifax International Security Forum

Warmongering Insecurity Forum Hatches Plots Against the Peoples



January 11, 2020. Halifax anti-war rally against U.S. imperialist aggression against Iran.

The Halifax International Security Forum (HISF), convoked November 20-22 in Halifax, is, in its own words, "the first major gathering of defence and security leaders since the United States presidential election." To its chagrin, the U.S. presidential election is not yet concluded. Only some 20 countries have recognized Biden as the new president of the United States, others are awaiting some sort of a formal announcement by an electoral commission of some sort. However, the U.S. institutions are mired in such crisis that they cannot decide who and what constitute that authority.



Thus, far from the U.S. election opening a clean line of march for the warmongers gathered in Halifax, the dysfunctional U.S. democratic institutions are impossible for the HISF to surmount. From the get-go, the agenda of the HISF, based on the pretense that adopting good policies will get them out of the profound crisis they are stuck in, is mired in crisis.

Attempts to blame this or that individual for the crisis are not convincing. The crisis cannot be surmounted because the imperialists cannot surmount the conditions which have far surpassed their ability to control everything through their monopoly on the use of force. The HISF agenda speaks to problems the rulers are facing in deciding how to maintain the U.S.'s role as "indispensable leader." This is indicated in three main

public sessions: "Democracy vs. Ourselves: Divided We Fall," "75 Years On: Re-Making The Democratic World Order," and "After 2020: The World With America."

The agenda betrays the increasingly grave problems of the ruling circles which are stuck with old forms that are anachronistic and do not suit their purpose today. Their model of nation-state was first established after the English civil war in the 1660s, perfected and imposed on the world in the form of liberal democratic states in the 19th and early 20th centuries, based on self-serving definitions of "peace, order and good government," then bolstered after the Second World War in the form of the social-welfare state based on anti-communist Cold War ideology and mechanisms and to keep the people disinformed and disempowered. Since the fall of the Soviet Union 30 years ago, far from this imperialist democracy proving its superiority, it has shown its elitist, racist and fundamentally inhuman essence and inability to provide any justification for itself and its monopoly over the use of force, both domestically and internationally.

Intensifying conflicts among rival factions vying for power both internally over control of executive powers and the military, as well as internationally and especially within the NATO bloc itself, are giving rise to ever more dire expressions of a morbid preoccupation with defeat. Their desperation is palpable as they plot and scheme how to train women and youth to take over the functions of the bureaucracy to keep it going while also keeping the peoples dispersed and disempowered. Despite talk of finding peaceful solutions to problems, and ending the "endless war" scenario -- or keeping it under the hoax that it constitutes legitimate "robust anti-terrorist" methods -- this fight is not about eliminating the war governments and war economies and all this means at home and abroad.

Canadians are demanding that Canada get out of NATO and NORAD as the very basis for a new direction for foreign relations, and for an economy founded in self-reliance and public enterprise to guarantee the rights of all. All attempts to impose NATO on the polity as a "Canadian value" and, even more, an integral part of the decision-making institutions, is against what Canadians want. To criminalize their opposition under the hoax that it is "foreign interference" shows how desperate the rulers are because no argument they come up with can justify their war economy and arrangements. Despite attempts by the NATO Association of Canada, echoed by the Parliament of Canada, to impose the view that opposition to NATO by Canadians amounts to foreign interference in Canada's internal affairs, this is not accepted. The criminalization of people's perceptions and voice by declaring them to be, willingly or unwillingly, "dupes of Russia," or "Chinese agents," and the like, will merely deepen the crisis they are in.



The spectre of China is once again in the crosshairs of the HISF as a tool to this end. It is beneath contempt. In conformity with its ballyhooed initiative to present a concerted, strategic trans-Atlantic plan against China and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the lead topic of the sessions to be broadcast is "Democracy vs. China: The Greatest Game." This deliberately invokes the 19th century Eurocentric striving of Anglo-American imperialism called "the Great Game" -- to dominate Asia, its peoples and vast mineral wealth -- and "white man's burden." It merely reveals how bankrupt they are because this is the 21st century, not the 19th century and China has long since stood up. Try as the U.S. imperialists and their henchmen might, they cannot escape history and the peoples will not accept force and violence as the method of sorting out problems in favour of rival imperialist interests.



November 2012. Tony Seed addresses anti-war rally outside the Halifax International Security Forum. Rallies have been held yearly since the forums began.

One of the important questions being discussed at the HISF and within the ruling circles concerns a narrative of "endless wars," also known as "forever wars." It is not an end to aggression and interference, rather a different form for it. Both Biden and Trump spoke demagogically against "endless wars" in the U.S. election. The Trump path of open destruction, use of force and elimination of rule of law, failed to succeed in uniting the vying factions, including the military. The Biden team, as with Obama who followed Bush's War on Terror and pre-emptive war based on "good versus evil" with his own doctrine of drone warfare, needs a legal and theoretical framework to justify what cannot be justified. This is Canada's endeavour as well: to justify in law the open violation of rights, which the U.S. Empire routinely practices.

The Biden phantasm also haunts the Trudeau government: to transcend the conditions by imposing an authority which is not on par with the needs of the times. They need a justification to quell the mounting domestic unrest and unify the rival factions in the U.S. ruling elite and also the "allies" of the NATO bloc, which are split and fragmented based on their own private interests. There is no consensus over U.S. demands to increase military spending, safeguard U.S. hegemony, perpetuate Cold War notions of "collective security" and "trans-Atlantic partnership." Their coerced "coalition of the willing" comprised of a mere 30 countries of the 193 member nations of the United Nations is not gaining traction but is, on the contrary, increasingly isolated and opposed. At a moment when the Group of 77 and the Non-Aligned Movement operate within the bounds of the United Nations and the rule of international law as established in the post-World War II period and NATO does not, the conflicts are bound to increase. NATO is a rogue military alliance that flouts the rule of international law but whose aggressive activities are opposed by a majority of the world's peoples, who decry it as the "North Atlantic Terrorist Organization."

TML Weekly is carrying a supplement this week with informative material on the agenda of the 12th Halifax International Insecurity Forum.

SUPPLEMENT
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Privacy Law Amendments Provide More Evidence of Government Take Over by Private Interests

- Anna Di Carlo -

The Liberal Government has introduced new privacy legislation, Bill C-11, entitled the *Digital Charter Implementation Act, 2020*. Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry Navdeep Bains tabled the legislation on November 17. At a press conference the same day, Bains said the legislation will give Canadians the privacy protection they need as big data is increasingly being used in all sectors of the economy. "We must find a way to protect that data, while still being open to the economic opportunities of a data-driven world," he told reporters.



Bill C-11 enacts the *Consumer Privacy Protection Act* and the *Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal Act*, along with consequential and related amendments to other acts. The long title of the *Consumer Privacy Protection Act*, Part 1 of Bill C-11, confirms an orientation which puts private economic interests in the first place: *An Act to support and promote electronic commerce by protecting personal information that is collected, used or disclosed in the course of commercial activities.*

The use of the term "charter" in Bill C-11^[1] serves merely to obfuscate and create the impression that the legislation has something to do with the entrenchment of rights that would allow people to exercise control over how their personal information is used in an era where big

data is routinely referred to as the "new oil" of the economy.

Currently, the collection, use and sharing of personal data is governed by two laws. The *Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act* (PIPEDA) applies to commercial activities. The *Privacy Act* applies to governmental and public sector institutions.

In brief, Bill C-11 repeals the 20-year old PIPEDA and replaces it with *The Consumer Privacy Protection Act*. A problem with the limited application of PIPEDA to commercial activities is that political parties are not covered. This is the case even though they are entitled to receive the Elections Canada register of electors, including each elector's unique identifier number, which they use as the base for compiling voter profiles, adding information from various sources. They receive from Elections Canada as well a digital list of who has voted. The cartel parties keep huge databases on electors which also are not subject to privacy legislation.

In this regard, the legislation has a new provision enabling organizations not involved in commercial activities to apply for certification of their privacy practices. This may be a Liberal attempt to circumvent the broadly supported demand that political parties be brought under the jurisdiction of privacy laws.^[2] It is too soon to tell.

Bill C-11 mirrors PIPEDA but includes new provisions that capture technological developments of the past two decades, such as the practice of "de-identification" in the use of artificial intelligence.^[3]

As for law enforcement, Bill C-11 expands the powers of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner to issue compliance orders, including ordering a company to stop gathering data. It empowers the Office of the Privacy Commissioner to conduct audits. The Commissioner will also be empowered to recommend significant monetary penalties in cases of non-compliance, but not to impose them. That matter will be decided by a new Personal Information and Data Protection Tribunal, set out in Part 2 of Bill C-11. The Tribunal, comprised of three to six individuals appointed by the government, will be the decision-making body on matters of punishment and will also hear appeals of any orders issued by the Privacy Commissioner.

Bill C-11 is long and complex. Websites of legal firms specialized in the field of privacy law are abuzz with first-round interpretations of the law. Michael Geist, author of *Law, Privacy and Surveillance in Canada in the Post-Snowden Era*, says the legislation "will require considerable study to fully understand the implications of the new rules." Others were quick to criticize it, particularly the many provisions that remove the requirement for informed consent.

On November 17, the Public Interest Advocacy Centre issued a statement calling for it to be withdrawn and rewritten "to protect consumers, not to favour big business." Executive Director John Lawford stated, "We are aghast that the federal government feels it can weaken consumer privacy with a doublespeak Bill that removes a consumer's right to protect his or her personal information that is used for any 'business activity' if it is 'de-identified' or used for what the government deems is a 'socially beneficial purpose.'"

Response of the Privacy Commissioner

While Bill C-11 enhances the Privacy Commissioner's powers to monitor and protect the privacy of Canadians, the drafting of the legislation reveals a contemptuous disregard for the expertise and authority of the Office. A mere five days before the tabling of the legislation, Privacy Commissioner Daniel Therrien issued recommendations on how the use of artificial intelligence should be regulated, emphasizing the need for a "human-rights centred approach." It is clear that recommendations issued on November 12, could not have been taken into consideration by the Liberal Government, and why it would draft legislation without receiving the Commissioner's input is troublesome. There is no legal requirement for the government to either listen to, or to seek the input of the Privacy Commissioner who is appointed by and accountable to Parliament. Nonetheless, its decision to pay no heed to the Commissioner speaks volumes about the takeover of government by private interests.

Privacy Commissioner Therrien issued a statement on Bill C-11 on November 19, in which he welcomes some of the improvements in the draft legislation and identifies some problems. He raises concerns about the imposition of penalties falling under the responsibility of a new Tribunal and the appeal mechanism it provides. "We believe citizens should have access to quick and effective remedies. We are examining whether the addition of a new structure is likely to achieve this result," he states.

The Privacy Commissioner continues: "That being said, new enforcement powers are only a means, a tool by which to enforce the law. In the case at hand, the primary role of the legislation is to enact standards and rules that effectively protect privacy while permitting and encouraging commercial activities.

"We have previously recommended that the law should permit the use of personal information for responsible innovation and socially beneficial uses, which is consistent with the Bill, but *within a legal framework* (emphasis in original) that would entrench privacy as a human right and as an essential element for the exercise of other fundamental rights.

"Bill C-11 opens the door to new commercial uses of personal information without consent, but

does not specify that such uses are conditional on privacy rights being respected. Rather, the Bill essentially repeats the purpose clause of the current legislation, which gives equal weight to privacy and the commercial interests of organizations. In fact, the new purpose clause^[4] places even greater emphasis on the importance of the use of personal information for economic activity.

"The government states its refusal to adopt a rights-based approach is based on constitutional grounds. It says only the provinces have jurisdiction to legislate civil rights matters and the federal Parliament's jurisdiction is limited to trade and commerce. We will examine this issue further before presenting our views to the parliamentary committee that will study the Bill. As the Supreme Court of Canada pointed out in a recent judgment on the constitutionality of the *Genetic Non-Discrimination Act*, privacy is of vital interest. It is validly subject to protections in several federal statutes made under one or another of the heads of power of Parliament.



This should also apply to the *Consumer Privacy Protection Act*, enacted under the trade and commerce powers of Parliament.

"Ultimately, it is up to Parliament to decide how much weight to give to privacy rights and the interests of commercial enterprises. In our view, it would be normal and fair for commercial activities to be permitted within a rights framework, rather than placing rights and commercial interests on the same footing. Generally, it is possible to concurrently achieve both commercial objectives and privacy protection. This is how we envision responsible innovation. However, where there is a conflict, we think that rights should prevail.

"In the coming weeks, our work in analyzing the government's legislative proposals will therefore seek, among other things, to identify possible amendments to better promote responsible innovation while respecting rights, including the right to privacy."

Notes

1. *The Digital Charter* was announced by Justin Trudeau during a keynote speech at the May 2019 VivaTech Conference in Paris, France. VivaTech is described as "an event bringing together the world's leaders in technology and business."

The *Oxford Dictionary* provides several definitions for "charter." The first is "a written grant by the sovereign or legislative power of a country, by which a body such as a city, company or university is founded or its rights and privileges defined." It also can mean "a written statement of the rights of a specified group of people," such as a charter for patients' rights. Finally, Oxford says it can also mean "A policy or law regarded as enabling people to engage more easily in a specified undesirable activity," with the illustrative sentence, "He described the act as a charter for vandals."

2. The fact that Canadians do not agree with political parties being exempt from privacy legislation has been repeatedly raised over the past fifteen years, particularly since the 2011 Robocall Voter Suppression Scandal when it was revealed that operatives of the Conservative Party had used the information compiled about voters to misdirect them to phony voting places. Even before that, in a survey commissioned by the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada in 2009, an overwhelming majority of Canadians (92 per cent) said that political parties and politicians should be subjected to legislation that sets out rules governing how they collect and handle the personal information of Canadian citizens. Every privacy commissioner across Canada, as well as the current and past chief electoral officers have called for political parties to be covered by PIPEDA.

3. De-identification removes identifying information from a dataset so that data cannot be linked with specific individuals. De-identification can reduce the privacy risk associated with collecting, processing, archiving, distributing or publishing

information. De-identification is thus said to balance the contradictory goals of using and sharing personal information while protecting privacy.

4. The Purpose Clause of the *Consumer Privacy Protection Act* states: "The purpose of this Act is to establish -- in an era in which data is constantly flowing across borders and geographical boundaries and significant economic activity relies on the analysis, circulation and exchange of personal information -- rules to govern the protection of personal information in a manner that recognizes the right of privacy of individuals with respect to their personal information and the need of organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information for purposes that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances."



United States

Election Clash Continues

- Kathleen Chandler -



November 12, 2020. Nurses in San Francisco demand safe staffing levels and conditions of work they require.

The continuing clash in the United States over the results of the presidential election, in the face of COVID-19 cases surging across the country, has only further confirmed the sentiment among the people that the country is headed in the wrong direction and those in government, at all levels, are unfit to govern. Health care workers and other first responders and essential workers still do not have sufficient personal protective equipment (PPE) and testing. For example, nurses in Minnesota caring for COVID-19 patients say they have not been tested since the pandemic began. Firefighters and teachers are sleeping in their cars so as not to infect their families. It is commonly felt and spoken of that what is occurring is criminal and government must be held accountable -- for all the deaths and for not guaranteeing free PPE, testing, and health care for all in need.

There are 11.4 million diagnosed cases and growing, approximately one out of every 32 people. Already 250,000 people have died and it is likely to reach 300,000 in the next two months.

The U.S. has consistently had the most cases and most deaths of anywhere in the world. The daily average number of new cases currently stands at more than 158,000 -- far more cases every day than reported in total in China (91,906), which has a far larger population. One million new cases occurred in just the past week.



To visualize 250,000 deaths, consider the entire population dead in cities of that size, such as Rochester, New York; Norfolk, Virginia; Birmingham, Alabama; Baton Rouge, Louisiana; Irving, Texas; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Des Moines, Iowa; Spokane, Washington.

Despite this reality, while it is generally accepted that Joe Biden won the presidential election, the clash persists among the rulers over controlling the reins of power of the presidency. This is reflected in the ongoing lawsuits and contention for a "peaceful transition" from Trump to Biden.

Trump has filed about 30 lawsuits at this point, with most dismissed, but others could potentially prevent Biden from keeping the 270 Electoral College (EC) votes needed for election. If rulings are made to not certify elections in Pennsylvania (20 EC votes) and Michigan or Georgia (each with 16 EC votes), or Nevada (6 EC votes) for example, Biden would not have the 270 Electoral College votes needed. Such rulings could be made by the Supreme Court. If no candidate secures 270 EC votes, the House of Representatives would decide, possibly in Trump's favour as each state gets only one vote. Or if the 600,000 workers who have called for a general strike consider such a ruling or House decision illegitimate, they could act and be joined by millions of others -- something all the rulers want to avoid. The clash then is further deepening their crisis, including strengthening the resistance and its demand for a democracy that favours the people.



November 18, 2020. Airline workers take action for measures required for a safe workplace.

"Peaceful Transition"

Biden has increased his calls for Trump to cooperate with the transition. On November 18 he said of Trump "It's just outrageous what he's doing." Biden has not ruled out legal action.

Reflecting the politicization of cabinet agencies, Attorney General William Barr, head of the Justice Department (DoJ) sent a memo authorizing any federal prosecutor to investigate allegations of election fraud prior to state certification as another means to delay that process. Richard Pilger, the leader of the election crimes division for the DoJ immediately resigned and denounced Barr's action. Sixteen prosecutors from that division, responsible for enforcing federal voting laws, called on Barr to rescind the memo. They said it was not based on fact and "thrusts career prosecutors into partisan politics." As is more broadly the case, the conflict reflects divisions within and between the various cabinet-level agencies making up the Office of the President. Governing arrangements are being restructured to strengthen dictate from the top and politicizing them serves this.

A current focus is also on the General Services Administration (GSA), which has to "ascertain" a victor. The GSA has so far refused to do so, blocking millions in resources and joint meetings between the Trump and Biden forces. Two main concerns raised by Biden and others is access to

the presidential briefings that deal with security issues both foreign and domestic, as well as COVID-19 information, including current levels of federal stockpiles of PPE and plans for distribution of a vaccine. Biden has repeated, "More people may die if we don't coordinate."

The transition process involves both providing continuity for rule by the oligarchs as well as putting Biden's stamp on the bureaucracy. It includes replacing some 4,000 political appointees, 1,200 of which require Senate approval, in about 40 agencies in the Office of the President. It involves announcing new cabinet heads as well as "trading binders, doing briefings, and having meetings" with mid-level staff of both. The departments and agencies involved oversee the federal coronavirus pandemic response, military, homeland security and other national security forces, social services, including health care and education, trade, finances, labour, etc. Biden has assembled a team of 500 "agency review teams" to oversee transition on all these fronts but they are unable to proceed.

Continuity also involves maintaining U.S. standing in the world, something that the clash has also undermined. While many countries have congratulated Biden, with Canada the first to do so, along with others like Britain, France, Germany, Japan, South Korea, Australia and Israel, others like Russia, Brazil and Mexico have not. China initially did not then, on November 13, congratulated Biden but included the qualifier that the election "result will be confirmed according to U.S. laws and procedures."

Further delegitimizing the election, Trump's Secretary of State Pompeo said November 10 there would be a "smooth transition" to another four-year Trump administration. He was sent November 13 to speak with seven countries that had recognized Biden's victory: France, Turkey, Georgia, Israel, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia.

Dysfunctional Institutions Cannot Resolve Conflicts



The concern about "peaceful transition" stems from the fact that U.S. institutions of democracy are dysfunctional and fail to resolve differences among the rulers which jeopardizes attempts to make them appear to be legitimate in the eyes of the people. This is further evident in the growing possibility of a government shutdown if an emergency spending bill is not passed by December 11. As well, tens of millions of workers will lose extended unemployment benefits at the end of December, with additional federal funding nowhere in sight. If there is a vaccine, states need at least \$6 billion in federal funding to distribute it. Not a few are also worried that the vaccine will be mandatory and the military responsible for enforcing that.

However people may have voted, or not voted, large numbers no longer consider the government legitimate, especially when it comes to meeting the needs of the people for COVID-19 and use of force, at home and abroad. The use of violence in cities across the country -- by state and local police, by Immigration and Customs Enforcement and other federal forces -- has been broadly

and repeatedly condemned. The large majority also support an end to U.S. wars and use of violence against the peoples worldwide.

A "peaceful transition" is said to be a hallmark of U.S.-style democracy and proof that the U.S. Constitution provides governments with legitimacy. The concern is such that U.S. Chamber of Commerce President and CEO Tom Donohue, National Association of Manufacturers President and CEO Jay Timmons, and the Business Roundtable for CEOs trade group President and CEO Joshua Bolten have all said it is time for the transition process to move forward.

Referring to Trump's failure to permit the transition process to proceed, Barack Obama said, "But there's damage to this because what happens is that the peaceful transfer of power, the notion that any of us who attain an elected office, whether it's dogcatcher or president, are servants of the people. It's a temporary job. We're not above the rules. We're not above the law. That's the essence of our democracy."

All are concerned to hide the actual situation today, that the notion of public and elected officials as "servants of the people" has been eliminated right alongside following rules and laws. The oligarchs that have seized the state machinery exclusively for their own interests do not want to be fettered by rules, laws or serving the public interest.

The vying factions among the rulers no longer follow any rules, as the clash shows. Perhaps more importantly, the utter lawlessness of U.S. policing and military forces is evident for all to see here and worldwide. Obama and his illegal drone warfare and role as Deporter-in-Chief, separating millions of families, showed this and Trump followed suit by even further eliminating any rule of law here or abroad. The failure to follow rules for the transition is consistent with this.

The continuing clash is evidence of the dysfunction and the desperate attempt by the rulers to overcome their sharpening divisions in a situation where they no longer have mechanisms and structures to do so. Biden's calls for unity, repeating "We have to come together as a country," remain futile as a result.

What is being revealed is that U.S.-style democracy is exhausted and unfit for the modern age. Its legitimacy, particularly using elections, is in shambles whatever the result of the transition. In some respects it can be said that the people, through their organized resistance and demand to play their role in deciding and solving the problems facing humanity are coming forward to fill the breach left by a dysfunctional and violent government. They are acting to keep initiative in their hands and advance their fight for rights and people's empowerment as necessary to secure them.



Update on Trump Lawsuits

As the U.S. election drama continues to unfold, President Trump and various Republican forces have filed about 30 lawsuits so far and more are possible. Most have been dismissed, many for lack of evidence of fraud, but others are still pending. The more significant among these are the efforts to block certification of the vote in Pennsylvania, Michigan, Georgia, and Nevada. If Trump were to succeed in blocking certification in Pennsylvania and Michigan and one of the other two, Biden would not have the 270 Electoral College votes necessary for election. The main aim is not changing the vote count, but in blocking certification and pushing Biden below 270, which would mean the House of Representatives would decide the presidency. In that vote, each state gets one vote and currently 27 states have a majority of Republicans in the delegation. However that could change when all results are in for House elections.

Besides the issuance of an injunction, one result of each of the lawsuits could have been to block certification of the voting results in a given state by causing enough delay so as to prevent certification in the state by the date required by state law. However, the results were already certified in Georgia, where the deadline was November 20. Certification is expected in Michigan and Pennsylvania, both states where the deadline is Monday, November 23. The county results were already certified in Nevada on November 16 and the statewide results will be certified on November 24.

In Arizona, where the deadline is the 23rd, the Republican Party called for a broader audit of votes beyond Maricopa County, which includes Phoenix. Such an audit would delay certification. An Arizona state judge threw out the lawsuit with prejudice, meaning there can be no appeal. He also denied the party's request for an injunction to block Maricopa County from certifying its election results. This effectively removed Arizona as an arena for decertification.

Georgia

Georgia completed a hand recount that gave Biden the most votes by 12,780 out of 5 million cast. The Georgia Secretary of State, Brad Raffensperger, a Republican, has repeatedly said the count is valid and there was no fraud. He ordered the recount to counter Trump claims that the election was not conducted fairly. Raffensperger certified the election results on November 20 and Governor Brian Kemp then approved the slate of electors for Biden November 21. This then complicates Trump's efforts as he will need more than decertification of Michigan and Pennsylvania to put Biden below the 270 mark needed for election. With Georgia, Biden now has 306 Electoral College votes and losing Michigan and Pennsylvania would still put him at 270.

Michigan

Michigan is required to certify by November 23. Already, the certification process is showing that the structure is designed to leave the decision in the hands of a few people from the cartel parties. Each county has a Board of Canvassers, commonly made up of 4 people, two Republican and two Democrats. They vote at the county level and their results are sent to the State Board of Canvassers, also four people, two from each party, which certifies the state vote.

When the time came for Wayne County, which includes Detroit, to certify, there was at first a 2-2 vote with Republicans saying there were irregularities in Detroit. The city is about 80 percent African American. There was then "discussion" among them and a second vote taken and Wayne County certified 4-0. Afterward the two Republicans said they wanted to rescind their vote in favor of certification, but no mechanism exists to do so.

However, the Trump forces had filed a federal lawsuit calling to block certification based on irregularities, Detroit being one of the places given. They have since withdrawn the suit, saying affidavits from the two Republicans rescinding their vote showed they had won. This then prevents a court ruling while also positioning them to have a new lawsuit, one that could go to the Supreme Court, if the State Board certifies the vote. It also provides Republicans on the State Board ammunition not to certify. In this manner the control by this handful of people and the partisan nature of the decisions is evident.

Pennsylvania

For Pennsylvania two federal lawsuits could go to the Supreme Court. One involves the decision by the state Secretary of State to extend the deadline for receiving mail-in ballots from Election Day November 3 to November 6. Supreme Court Justice Alito has already said it is a case worth review by the Court and that the decision by the Secretary of State, rather than the state legislature, could be unconstitutional. Such a ruling could impact Michigan and Wisconsin as well. So far the

Supreme Court has not agreed to hear the case.

A second lawsuit involves directly preventing certification of the vote. Trump is saying that the entire process was unconstitutional as a result of a broad array of irregularities. These include that mail ballots were illegally counted and that voters were improperly allowed to fix defective ballots, meaning perhaps a signature was missing or an inside envelope. While claiming the vote is invalid, the lawsuit also asks for "the remedy of Trump being declared the winner" in Pennsylvania. At the least they do not want the vote certified so Biden would not secure the 20 Electoral College votes.

U.S. District Judge Matthew Brann, hearing the case, said halting certification would effectively disenfranchise all voters in the state: "At bottom, you are asking this court to invalidate 6.8 million votes, thereby disenfranchising every single voter in the Commonwealth." He added, "Can you tell me how this result can possibly be justified?"

Two of the law firms that had been preparing the case withdrew, with lawyers saying there was not sufficient evidence. Trump lawyer Rudy Giuliani then took over. He said during the hearing that there was "widespread, nationwide voter fraud," but offered no evidence. The judge asked for written filings and, on November 21, dismissed the case in its entirety. Trump can still appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States. One of the difficulties, however, is that among the people, a ruling by the Supreme Court in Trump's favour would be rejected. The Court is seen as stacked in Trump's favour and any such decision would no doubt trigger broad resistance and perhaps strikes by the workers. An attempt to use violence against such actions would only further discredit the entire process and strengthen resolve among the people for change in their favour.

Nevada

With Georgia likely no longer in play, Trump is now turning to Nevada, with 6 Electoral College votes, just enough to put Biden below 270 when combined with Pennsylvania and Michigan. Nevada has a system where county clerks reported to groups of commissioners for each of the 17 counties on November 16. Clark County includes Las Vegas, and Washoe includes Reno and both are considered key. Clark commissioners voted 6-1 in favour of certification and Washoe 4-1. The overall results favoured Biden by 33,596 votes of the almost 1.4 million votes cast. The votes certified by the county commissioners now go to the Nevada Supreme Court for final certification of the statewide vote on November 24.

Trump filed a lawsuit November 17. According to a court filing released by his campaign, the lawsuit requests a court order that Trump "be declared the winner of the Election in Nevada," or, alternatively, that the results in the state are annulled and no winner is certified there. The lawsuit was brought by Trump's slate of electors for the Electoral College. The lawsuit claims, again providing no evidence, that "fraud and abuse renders the purported results of the Nevada election illegitimate."

Other Concerns

It can be seen that in addition to attempting to decertify the vote, Trump is also laying the groundwork for eliminating the role of county and state officials when it comes to presidential elections. He has repeatedly directed his fire at these officials, whether Republican or Democrat, as part of discrediting the current structure for elections.

Trump's move to have an obedient Supreme Court is to establish as a *fait accompli* the open link between the Supreme Court and the Office of the Presidency. It smashes any pretense that the U.S. Constitution provides what are called "checks and balances" and pushes the envelope on what can be accomplished by the prerogative powers of the U.S. executive not only abroad but

domestically as well. Biden will avail himself of this precedent just like Obama availed himself of the powers seized by Bush before him.

All of it shows the urgent need to renew the U.S. Constitution and its institutions on the new historical basis. They are rotten to the core and unfit for the modern era.

(Voice of Revolution)



Discrediting of Elections and Proposals for a Direct Vote for President

Part of the current election clash among the rulers involves discrediting the existing structure for U.S. elections. That structure is primarily state based and puts considerable power in the hands of state and county officials. Trump has gone out of his way to target these officials, whether Republican or Democrat, as he spreads claims of election fraud.

In addition, the existence of the Electoral College is also being challenged. It is indeed obsolete and a remnant of slavery. Because it is state-based -- a compromise adopted to enforce national unity at the time of the Electoral College's creation -- this can no longer be reconciled with what is supposed to be a national election for president based on universal suffrage. It has shown itself repeatedly to not enfranchise all electors equally and the results are not seen to be representative of the overall vote, as occurred with Trump's 2016 election and others before that.



The current structure also gives states the power to decide electoral law for their state. This means rules for registering to vote, voting itself, running candidates and getting on the ballot, etc. vary considerably. It ensures inequality among the electorate and in participation in the political life of the country more generally.

One means that has been put forward for dealing with the situation is a direct vote for president, without the Electoral College and very likely without the same role for the states. It would more likely be designed as a federal election, with uniform rules across the country controlled by the federal government. It may perhaps even include facilitating such a vote, such as a federally based "motor-voter," method. Already state licenses have to be approved by the federal government for use in entering airports and federal buildings. It would not be difficult to extend that for voting purposes in the name of having a single, federal voting roll that would supposedly be more secure, less open to fraud, etc. Certainly voters would appreciate a simplified set up and one that at least appears more equal.

The problem is a direct vote for president and reforms in this direction actually provide a structure that strengthens the power of the presidency and presidential dictatorship. It further removes the people from deciding the electoral system needed while strengthening the notion of a presidential mandate, as the vote is directly for president. Consistent with this, it increases the power of the federal government. This is a key feature of current restructuring of the U.S. state taking place. This is evident in the battles taking place between the states and federal government concerning

COVID-19 funding and supplies, immigration, policing and more. The direction is to increase federal control, particularly when it comes to use of force.

Greater concentration of control and power in federal hands, especially the Office of the President, serves not only to weaken states. It also further removes the people from having a say. It is a direction that is the opposite of what the people are demanding and require, which is to control policing and budgets and themselves be empowered to govern and decide. A direct vote for president is a way to divert and pacify this drive, in the name of increasing democracy.

The entire Constitution with its Amendments and electoral law stemming from it, is obsolete and a remnant of slavery. The direction needed is not a direct vote for president, but rather structures of democracy that favour the people and serve their interests. A new constitution with a new electoral process that empowers the people and guarantees their rights is needed. Reforms must go in this direction, not that of more concentrated power for the rich.

(Voice of Revolution)



All India Rally of Farmers, Workers and Youth in Delhi on November 26
Heroic Opposition to State-Imposed Immiseration and
Violation of Human Dignity



On November 26, workers, farmers and youth of India are planning to rally in Delhi in defence of their dignity, well-being and rights against their further immiseration by the Indian state on behalf of the rich.

On that day, and on November 27, the farmers, answering the call of the All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee (AIKSCC) are converging in Delhi from many states in India. According to the organizers, farmers from states on the periphery of Delhi, including Punjab, Haryana, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, will reach Delhi, the national capital, on their tractors on November 26 and 27 through five highways. Farmers from other states will hold protests in their respective states at the district and village level.



October 27, 2020. All India Kisan Sangharsh Coordination Committee meeting of farmers organizations from different parts of India.

If the government and the police do not allow the farmers to enter Delhi, as they are threatening, using the pandemic as a pretext, the farmers pledge that they will hold their protest wherever they are stopped, for an indefinite period. Farmers will be carrying supplies to sustain a three-month long action. Representatives of farmers' organizations say that the government did not hesitate to pass its new farm laws amid COVID-19 and yet it is trying to stop the farmers from holding their action in Delhi citing the pandemic. The Delhi police have imposed a ban on protests in the capital.

On November 26, ten trade union centrals are holding a one-day nationwide general strike and are also supporting the two-day action by farmers. The ten trade union centrals are the Indian National Trade Union Congress (INTUC), the All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC), the Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), the Centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU), the All India United Trade Union Centre (AIUTUC), the Trade Union Co-ordination Centre (TUCC), the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), the All India Central Council of Trade Unions (AICCTU), the Labour Progressive Federation (LPF) and the United Trade Union Congress (UTUC). Youth are also expected to join.

The main demand of the day of action is the immediate withdrawal of a series of draconian anti-farmer and anti-labour laws which were passed at rapid speed in September by the Indian Parliament, with no debate and despite widespread opposition from workers, farmers, youth and people from all walks of life.

Farmers in particular have been holding mass actions since September to have the farm laws repealed. In the northern state of Punjab, farmers blocked roads and highways and railway tracks to back their opposition to the bills. Instead of listening to the concerns of farmers, the central government retaliated and cancelled all trains carrying goods to Punjab as of October 24, causing great hardship for the people. Workers have been holding demonstrations across India to oppose the government's anti-worker, anti-farmer and anti-national policies. The fact that the Indian state is imposing these laws in the midst of the suffering caused by the pandemic and the economic crisis has increased the people's anger.



October 6, 2020. Protest by farmers at the Dussehra grounds on the Sirsa-Barnala highway in Haryana.

Draconian Farm Bills

The impoverishment of Indian farmers is already extreme. It is estimated that two-thirds of India's 1.3 billion people depend on farming for their livelihood, but the agriculture sector makes up only around 17 per cent of the nation's total economic output, about \$2.3 trillion. About 80 per cent of Indian farmers are considered marginal (less than one hectare) or small farmers (one to two hectares). More than half of India's farmers are reported to be in debt. A huge problem is that the cost of seeds, fertilizer and other inputs has risen steeply. Meanwhile, the prices farmers receive for their crops are not even adequate to cover their costs and provide a net income sufficient to maintain their families. While farmers' incomes decline, the debt they owe to banks and money lenders keeps rising. The combination of falling incomes and rising indebtedness drives thousands of Indian farmers to suicide every year.

Farmers all over the country have been demanding that the state ensure that their crops are purchased at a price that is at least 50 per cent above their full cost of production. This has never happened, neither through the limited form of public procurement by state agencies that currently exists, nor from private traders who do not even abide by the official minimum support prices established by the state. Many farmers end up not even recovering their production costs.

Farmers' organizations estimate that the new bills that were adopted by the Indian parliament will only aggravate their situation. These bills are the *Farming Produce Trade and Commerce (Promotion and Facilitation) Bill, 2020*, the *Farmers (Empowerment and Protection) Agreement on Price Assurance and Farm Services Bill, 2020* and the *Essential Commodities (Amendment) Bill*.

According to the farmers' unions, the new bills give full rein to private trading companies to loot the small farmers. Private corporations can now purchase agricultural products in any trade area, at any price. They do not have to purchase the produce at the regulated market price and pay the required fees. There is no mention of minimum prices in the legislation.

The Indian government is promoting its legislation on the basis that it gives farmers "freedom" to sell their produce anywhere, that the government is opening up options to farmers. The reality, the farmers' unions say, is that 86.2 per cent of Indian farmers own less than two hectares. They are under heavy pressure to sell their crops immediately after harvest in order to pay their debts, buy inputs for the next crop and to meet their other needs. As well, they have no capacity to store

crops or for transport (which government procurement provided) or to bargain for the best price. They have no choice but to go to the nearest *mandi* (market yard), which is regulated by state governments.

What is going to happen is that rich private corporations will replace the minimum support prices and government procurement. According to farmers' unions, this means that farmers will be subjected to total corporate control, with powerful rural elites acting as middlemen for global multinational agriculture corporations which means that both inputs and crop markets will be entirely monopolized by these private corporations. The farm bills open the path for increasing domination of agricultural trade by big corporations, both Indian and foreign.

With deregulation, farmers will lose any guarantee and any control over the price they receive for their crops.

Labour Codes



September 25, 2020. Farmers and youth organize protests in Balangir district, Odisha.

Parliament passed three labour code Bills on September 23 when the opposition was boycotting the monsoon session on the issue of the farm Bills. The three Bills, the *Industrial Relations (IR) Code*, the *Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions (OSH) Code*, and the *Social Security Code*, along with the prior *Code on Wages, 2019*, amalgamate 44 labour laws. All the legislation deals with wages, industrial relations, social security, safety, and welfare conditions. The bills were passed in spite of the fact that all trade unions explicitly opposed them.

To give some examples of the content of the bills, the new code governing industrial relations eliminates the previous requirement according to which all enterprises employing 100 or more workers needed prior government approval to close down or throw workers out of their jobs. The threshold of 100 has been increased to 300. About 45 per cent of all factory workers are employed in enterprises with fewer than 300 employees. The new law also states that the central and state governments can raise the 300-employee threshold at any time.

According to the previous legislation, all enterprises employing 100 or more workers had to have Standing Orders, which are known to the workers and registered with the labour department, relating to classification of workers, the manner of informing workers about working hours, holidays, pay day, wage rates, termination of employment and grievance mechanisms. Workers in enterprises where such Standing Orders were in place could use them to defend their rights against arbitrary decisions by the employers. The change will deprive millions of workers of this mechanism for protecting their rights.

Both the *Industrial Relations Code* and the *Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020* allow the government to exempt any new industrial establishment or class of

establishments from their provisions if to do so is in the "public interest." On occupational safety, the code provides that exemptions are allowed in the interest of "creating more economic activity and employment." Such exemptions can be granted regarding hours of work, safety standards, rehiring processes, trade union rights, use of contract labour, etc.

The list of exemptions is vast, all being imposed by the Indian state on behalf of narrow private interests under the hoax of "flexibility," "red tape reduction" and "job creation."

The All India Days of Action on November 26 and 27 are important events in the fight of the working class and people of India for their rights, their dignity as human beings and producers and their well-being in opposition to further immiseration and violation of their rights by the Indian state on behalf of the rich, which is all the more egregious in the midst of the pandemic and the economic crisis. This is a heroic action that deserves the full support of all Canadian workers and of workers all over the world.

November 5 "Chakka Jam" Actions to Block Highways



November 5 a nationwide "Chakka Jam" was called by farmers organizations demanding withdrawal of the three agricultural laws with farmers blocking state and national highways and roads as well as organizing other actions.

Mehal Kalan Toll Plaza, Punjab



Rampur, Punjab



Amritsar, Punjab



Patti, Punjab



Punjab-Haryana Border at Khanauri



Uttarakhand



Narwana-Delhi Highway



Songarh, Gujarat



Madhya Pradesh



Maharashtra



Bidar District, Karnataka



Tamil Nadu



(Photos: AIKSCC, Alnamdor, A. Saha)



Coup in Chile

Researchers Uncover More on U.S. Coup to Depose Salvador Allende



President Allende's 1970 inaugural speech.

Researchers at the National Security Archive (a project housed at Georgetown University that declassifies U.S. government documents) have uncovered documentation of U.S. plans to overthrow the democratically elected socialist government of Salvador Allende (1970-1973) in Chile, carried out under the administration of President Richard Nixon. The documents were released November 3, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of Allende's inauguration. These documents had been suppressed by the administration of President Gerald Ford.

One set of materials documents the conversation between Nixon and some of his officials, to assess the U.S. government's course of action following Allende's victory in the election of September 4, 1970, in the middle of the Cold War. In one of the memoranda, dated November 5, 1970, then-National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger alerted Nixon to the "most historic and difficult decision in foreign affairs" that the White House would have to make, taking into account the adverse effects that the Allende presidency could have, both in the relationship between Chile and the U.S., as well as its possible influence in the hemisphere. Another of the declassified documents shows clearly that there were divergent positions among U.S. officials on how to carry out the plan. While Secretary of State William Rogers proposed to promote the fall of Allende in a manner that would not be "counterproductive" to the public perception of the U.S., which open hostility and aggression towards Chile might be, Secretary of Defence Melvin Laird stated bluntly: "We have to do everything possible to hurt [Allende] and overthrow him." In this clash of ideas about foreign policy, Kissinger fought for the most aggressive position.

"The U.S. will seek to maximize the pressure on the Allende government to prevent its consolidation and limit its ability to implement policies contrary to the interests of the U.S. and the hemisphere," reads another of the documents. Among the policies that would be carried out was the redoubling of interventionist efforts in the region by coordinating with other governments, including those of Brazil and Argentina.

~~TOP SECRET SENSITIVE/EYES ONLY~~

November 9, 1970

National Security Decision Memorandum 93

TO: Secretary of State
Secretary of Defense
Director, Office of Emergency Preparedness
Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Policy Towards Chile

Following the discussion at the meeting of the National Security Council on November 6, 1970, the President has decided that the basis for our policy toward Chile will be the concept underlying Option C of the Inter-agency paper submitted November 3, 1970 by the Department of State for the consideration of the National Security Council as outlined in the guidelines set forth below.

The President has decided that (1) the public posture of the United States will be correct but cool, to avoid giving the Allende government a basis on which to rally domestic and international support for consolidation of the regime; but that (2) the United States will seek to maximize pressures on the Allende government to prevent its consolidation and limit its ability to implement policies contrary to U.S. and hemisphere interests.

U.S. officials were directed to put pressure on Allende's government by blocking loans from multilateral banks to Chile and terminating U.S. export credits and loans, calling on U.S. corporations to leave the country, and by manipulating the international market value of copper, Chile's main export, "to further damage the Chilean economy," according to the documents. Additionally, the CIA was authorized to prepare related action plans for future implementation.

According to the National Security Archive, at one point Kissinger managed to postpone a meeting between Nixon and the National Security Council so he could talk to the President first. Kissinger wanted to convince him that the risks went beyond the bilateral relationship between the two countries and brief him about how he should push the foreign policy bureaucracy toward a regime change posture.

In a memo, former Chief of Staff Harry Robbins Haldeman described Kissinger's position and his arguments for postponing the meeting: "For Henry, Chile could end up being the worst failure of our administration: 'our Cuba' in 1972," he said. Later, in a conversation with Kissinger, Nixon said: "If [Allende] can show that he can establish an anti-American Marxist policy, others will do the same." Kissinger went even further: "It will have an effect even in Europe. Not only in Latin America."^[1]

Chile's economy would soon fall, with multilateral banks blocked, without access to international credit and with the monopoly media also deployed against it. Financial problems, in addition to the drop in economic activity, created the environment that would pave the way for the coup d'etat. Three years after those talks in Washington, under the leadership of the then commander-in-chief of the Chilean Army, Augusto Pinochet, on September 11, 1973, the Armed Forces would assassinate President Salvador Allende, putting an end, in a violent manner, to the socialist Government of Popular Unity.

Kissinger and other officials involved in planning and executing the coup later justified their actions saying they were for the "preservation of democracy." This same Cold War-era rationale is

still given today by the U.S. imperialists and their allies, to justify their warmongering and brutal crimes, aimed at asserting domination over the peoples of the world who are striving for national liberation, sovereignty, and peaceful and just international relations.



September 11, 2013. March in Santiago Chile on the 40th anniversary of the coup against the Allende government which brought Augusto Pinochet to power demands justice for victims of his brutal rule.

Note

1. To see the full documentation provided by the National Security Archive, click [here](#).



135th Anniversary of the Hanging of Louis Riel

M Louis Riel chanté par Yann Perreau, écrit par Alex... Copy link

*"Riel shall hang
though every dog
in Quebec bark
in his favour."*

John A. Macdonald

Louis Riel

Song by Alexandre Belliard, sung by Yann Perreau.

(For English words, [click here.](#))

Une horde ambitieuse en mal de nouvelles terres
Débarque chez les Métis comme s'ils n'existaient guère
D'un océan à l'autre, chemin de fer à tout prix
Les millionnaires du rail se sont offert un pays

Riel, chef légitime de l'Assiniboia
Réclame en homme digne, le respect de leurs droits
Trahi par Ottawa, traité comme du bétail
Les Métis n'ont plus le choix, il faut livrer bataille
Victoire à Rivière-Rouge et près de Lac aux Canards
Tous leurs espoirs s'écroulent à Batoche plus tard
Riel, les fers aux pieds; écroué à Regina
«Coupable», disent les jurés; Richardson sonne le glas

Parodie de justice dans le plus grand désordre
C'est la haine qui dicte, la potence et la corde
De la furie orangiste, Thomas Scott est le fiel
Macdonald le complice, de la mort de Riel
Telle une cicatrice profonde qui lacère
La mémoire des Métis, que rien ne fera taire
Francophones de partout expriment leur colère
Et pleurent Louis Riel, assassiné hier

Du gibet de ce dernier ne reste qu'une estampe
Un bout de corde, un musée, la maison de ses parents
Et lui qui fut pourtant père du Manitoba
Doit encore aujourd'hui, essuyer les coups bas
Martyr pour les uns et traître pour les autres
L'histoire le portera en vainqueur face aux fauves
On le voudrait oublié, c'est qu'il dérange encore
Toujours controversé, plus d'un siècle après sa mort

Infamous Day in the History of Canada

On November 16, 1885, the British colonial power executed the great Métis leader Louis Riel. Riel had been charged and found guilty of high treason after the Métis were defeated at the Battle of Batoche in May of that year. The execution of Louis Riel was intended as an assault on the consciousness of the Métis nation, but was unsuccessful in putting an end to their fight for their rights and dignity as a nation. The struggle of the Métis to affirm their right to be and exercise control over their political affairs continues to this day.

The two great uprisings of the Métis -- the Red River Uprising (1869-1870) and North-West Uprising (1885) -- were not isolated events but took place at a time when the Indigenous nations and the Quebec nation were also striving to affirm their nationhood, and at a time of revolutionary ferment in Europe. The Métis' uprisings represented a response to the colonial project that sought

to reproduce the British state in North America and block the legitimate aspirations of the nations that comprised Canada.



Métis leader Louis Riel (centre) surrounded by councillors of the Métis Legislative Assembly of Assiniboia.

The *British North America Act* of 1867 and the federal government's purchase of Rupert's Land from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1869-1870, juxtaposed with the decline of the traditional Métis economy based on the buffalo hunt, forced the Métis to engage in a power struggle with the colonial authorities and negotiate Manitoba's entry into the Confederation after the establishment of a Legislative Assembly. The spirit that motivated Riel and the members of the provisional government at the time is contained in the Declaration of the Inhabitants of Rupert's Land and the Northwest that affirms the sovereignty of the Métis over their lands. The latter also refused to recognize the authority of Canada, "[...], which presumes to have the right to come and impose on us a form of government even more incompatible with our rights and our interests [...]."

The *Manitoba Act*, which established that province, was voted on and passed in the federal Parliament in May 1870. The government wasted no time in exerting control over its new territory as evidenced by the Wolseley military expedition later that year -- which led to Riel fleeing to the U.S. for fear of his safety -- the creation of the North-West Mounted Police (1873), and the *Indian Act* (1876). Prime Minister John A. Macdonald championed the colonization of the west and the development of agriculture with the national policy he had been promoting since 1878. With the help of the Oblates (lay members of the Catholic Church affiliated with a monastic community), the authorities sought to settle the Métis and force them to adopt an agricultural lifestyle. Facing an existence within this rigid framework and under pressure from land speculators, some Métis sold the land that had been granted to them and settled in Saskatchewan.

This was a period when nationalism was in the air. The events in Manitoba alerted Quebecers to the fragility of the Métis' situation, while the abolition of the teaching of French in New Brunswick in 1871 indicated the need for organization. National organizations to defend the rights and interests of Francophones, such as the Saint-Jean-Baptiste Society, spread across the continent with the waves of migration from the St. Lawrence valley. The National Convention of Montreal in 1874 and the Saint-Jean-Baptiste celebrations in Quebec in 1880 and Windsor in 1883 brought together delegations from all of French America in a strong show of the vitality of the "French-Canadian family." Acadians held their first convention in 1881 where they held a celebration and adopted a national doctrine.

Métis leaders, under the sway of the Church at that time, did not rock the boat. In the aftermath of the Red River resistance, the Saint-Jean-Baptiste society of Manitoba was founded in Saint-Boniface, Manitoba. Its vice-president was none other than Louis Riel. This association included in its infancy as many French Canadians as Francophone Métis.

However, aware of their distinct identity, Métis leaders wished to forge their own nationalism. Riel would come to articulate a Métis nationalism, with its own holidays and national symbols. This process would culminate in the creation of the Métis National Council at Batoche in September 1884, to promote the development of their political consciousness.

The Métis once again took up arms to affirm their nationhood and right to be in the North West Rebellion of 1885. For three days between May 9 and May 12, 1885, 250 Métis fought valiantly against 916 Canadian Forces at the Battle of Batoche but were defeated and Riel surrendered.



Louis Riel's address to the jury in Regina courtroom, July 1885.

Macdonald and his cabinet took a hard line with respect to Riel and his compatriots. Riel was tried in Regina over five days in July 1885. After half-an-hour's deliberation he was found guilty of treason by the jury, which recommended mercy. Nevertheless, Judge Hugh Richardson sentenced him to death. From September 1885 to October 1886, Riel and several of his comrades, all Indigenous, would be condemned to hang.

While times have changed, the Canadian state has inherited the colonial power and it persists in the aim of negating the nationhood of the Métis, Indigenous nations and Quebec. The proud history of the Métis and their fight to affirm their rights and nationhood is not some historical artifact gathering dust, but continues to gleam brightly in the light of the present day. The fight to affirm rights that belong to people by virtue of their being human is precisely the fight for modern, human-centred arrangements. Louis Riel's life epitomized the fight for the recognition of rights on a modern basis.

Louis Riel's life is an important legacy that is as relevant as ever at this time when the Canadian state is doing its utmost to negate the rights of the Métis, Indigenous nations and the Quebec nation, as well as the workers, women, youth, national minorities and all the collectives in the society, all in the name of security, balance, austerity and other phony high ideals.

(Based on an article by Marc-André Gagnon published in *Chantier politique* no. 32, November 18, 2013. Translated from the original French by TML Weekly. Photos from public archives.)



Étincelle Radio

Louis Riel and the Struggle of the Métis Nation

On the occasion of the 135th anniversary of the hanging of Louis Riel, *Étincelle Radio* has released a new episode entitled "Louis Riel et la lutte de la Nation Métisse" (Louis Riel and the Struggle of the Métis Nation). It explains the Métis' fight for nationhood and its suppression by the Canadian state, and incorporates musical tributes to Riel and the Métis. To listen, [click here](#).



Eille!

- Song by Pauline Julien -

Music by Jacques Perron

To listen, [click here](#).



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