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By a guest author
18.02.2022

Canadian communists denounce the right-wing 'Convoy'

The following are edited excerpts from a Feb. 4 statement issued by the Communist Party of Canada and a Jan. 29 statement from the Communist Party of Quebec, a constituent part of the CPC with the right to set its own policies on matters relating to Quebec. Full statements are at tinyurl.com/2nsjz5rt and tinyurl.com/2zmr9737.

Translation from the French by Workers World Party comrades.



Right-wing truck convoy blockades the streets of Ottawa, Canada's capital, Feb. 5.

Statement by the Communist Party of Canada

The Communist Party of Canada views the “Freedom Convoy” as a public expression of the increasingly organized and assertive far right. The clear links between the organizers of the convoy and far-right networks indicate that this is not a spontaneous working-class demonstration. On the contrary, it is part of a global phenomenon: the rise and mainstreaming of the far right, which is demonstrated by the strong support (ideologically and financially) from the U.S. far right and circles close to Donald Trump and the Jan. 6 insurrection. . . .

We understand the frustrations of a growing part of the population. They are justified. Since the beginning of the pandemic, both federal and provincial governments have been busy ensuring that corporate interests are placed firmly ahead of public health. The deaths we mourn from this deadly pandemic are victims of decades of privatization of our public health system...

However, these self-proclaimed “spokesmen of the people” [in the convoy] refuse to address these questions. They substitute a populist and anti-scientific discourse in order to funnel the anger of the working people towards other workers, particularly immigrants, women, Black and Indigenous People, Muslims, health care workers (who’ve been attacked), teachers and other public organizations. Racism, misogyny, violence and hate speech are commonplace in this convoy, which seeks only to divide workers and instill the idea that the enemy is not the bosses, but working people themselves...

They don’t say a word about the central issue of defending and expanding our public services, especially our public health care system; about raising wages and controlling the prices of basic necessities; not a word about nationalizing the pharmaceutical industry to stop Big Pharma’s profiteering...

Communists recognize the interests behind this demonstration very well: big business and the far-right (white supremacists, fascists, fundamentalists, etc.) We know what it means when the far right organizes itself and tries to take root among the unemployed, the unorganized and the bankrupt...

We call on the most conscious workers, the trade union movement, also on all progressive and democratic forces to block these reactionaries by unmasking them and to oppose them by fighting for a genuine people's recovery.

Statement by the Communist Party of Quebec

The Communist Party of Quebec and its members should in no way endorse this movement. Its initiators, as well as the various political forces that have since joined it, have very skillfully taken advantage of the widespread and growing frustration that exists in large sections of the population, both here and elsewhere in Canada, sometimes for very good reasons and sometimes for not-so-good reasons.

This movement has become, in a few days, a kind of symbol for all those who are more and more shocked by everything that is happening in our society, but who — and this should not be underestimated — are also more and more attracted to right-wing and even extreme right-wing movements...

All this reminds us how, just because people demonstrate in the streets or on the roads and/or carry out other more direct types of actions, it is not necessarily for a good cause. Although they constantly repeat the word "freedom," most of these people are thinking above all about their own individual freedom and not about the common good.

Note that the majority of workers in the trucking industry are employed by large trucking companies and do not support this movement. Those who make up these demonstrations are either independent truckers who own their trucks or are owners of the many small companies who have also encouraged their employees to join in this movement. This was confirmed once again on Friday by a representative of the Teamsters, which represents the majority of unionized truckers in Quebec, as well as in the rest of Canada...

All of this demonstrates the importance of the ideas and the proposals of organizations, such as the Communist Party, which clearly offer an alternative to those ideas advocated by the right and extreme right organizations and which must become more widely known to the general public. We must not cede this ground to the right...

One last point: Those who continue to say that right-wing and extreme right-wing ideas are more dominant in Quebec than in English Canada should go and do their homework,

because this movement started in English Canada and remains, to a very large extent, a movement that is first and foremost linked to English Canada much more than to Quebec.

Workers World 16.02.2022