



Chantier politique

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Mass Family March in Solidarity with Locked-Out ABI Workers All Out for the May 25 Action in Support of ABI Workers Fighting for Us All!



ABI workers in front of the USW Headquarters in Pittsburgh, May 8, 2019, before marching through the streets to demonstrate outside of the ALCOA shareholders' annual meeting (Photo: FTQ Métallos)

Let's Humanize the Natural and Social Environment!

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Social, Political and Cultural Get-Together

Mass Family March in Solidarity With Locked-Out ABI Workers

All Out for the May 25 Action in Support of ABI Workers Fighting for Us All!



The poster features a black background with white and red text. At the top left, a red banner contains the text "La grande" in white cursive. Below this, the words "MARCHÉ" and "FAMILIALE" are written in large, bold, white capital letters. A yellow fist holding a pickaxe is positioned behind the letter 'A' in "MARCHÉ". Below "FAMILIALE", the text "avec les lockoutés d'ABI" is written in white cursive. A dashed white line separates this from the text "Trois-Rivières" in white capital letters. Below that, the date and time "25 mai 2019 - 10h30" are written in white. Below the poster, the text "Large Family March with Locked-Out ABI Workers" is written in bold black font. Underneath, the location "Outside the Cogeco Amphitheatre 100 avenue des Draveurs" is written in black font. At the bottom, the text "For more information and to reserve seats on buses, click [here](#)." is written in black font.

**Large Family March with
Locked-Out ABI Workers**

Outside the Cogeco Amphitheatre
100 avenue des Draveurs

For more information and to reserve seats on buses,
click [here](#).

On Saturday, May 25, ABI workers, locked out for 16 months by the Alcoa/Rio Tinto cartel, are inviting everyone to a family march along the streets of Trois-Rivières. They are fighting for a negotiated collective agreement acceptable to them and in defence of their union, against the attempts of the cartel, supported by the Quebec government, to break it.[1] The march will take place between 10:30 am and 12:30 pm. The United Steelworkers' Union is organizing buses to provide round-trip transportation from many Quebec cities. Ontario steelworkers have announced that they will be participating in the march.

Chantier politique is calling upon everyone to mobilize to make the march a resounding success. To be fighting for over 16 months to be able to negotiate one's working conditions and ensure an

effective union presence in a modern economy is very telling about the present state of affairs in Quebec and elsewhere. The Quebec government, acting as a flunkey of the Alcoa/Rio Tinto global cartel, does not represent us. It has openly supported the demands of the cartel to further outsource work, lower the standard of living in the region and destroy the union. The government is even allowing Alcoa not to pay for its contracted electricity during the lockout, energy which Hydro-Québec has prepared, budgeted for and set aside for the monopoly at preferential rates thus creating a direct loss to the Quebec people of hundreds of millions of dollars. On May 25, let's speak out in our own name in support of a resolution to the conflict, one which respects the dignity of ABI workers and their community. ABI workers are fighting for us all. Let's directly express our unwavering support for them through our presence at the march.



Note

1. For more information on the ABI workers' struggle, read the May 2, 2019 issue of *Workers' Forum*.



Let's Humanize the Natural and Social Environment!

**"We Want to Fight Climate Change, Not Adapt To It!"
Say Quebec Youth**



On May 2, all Quebec students at the Secondary 5 level were required to take the French-language ministerial examination. They had to respond to a question on climate change in the form of an opinion letter. On April 25, in preparation for the test, they were provided with a collection of articles on the topic.

The question they were asked was, "Can we adapt to climate change?" In light of the fact that Earth Week had just come to an end, that 150,000 students across Quebec, including 50,000 in Montreal, had taken to the streets on March 15, to say that the status quo is not possible in the face of climate change, students immediately denounced the direction taken by the Legault government and its Ministry of Education. Just hours after the test, one student's Facebook page dedicated to preparing for the exam had 30,000 new members. The page quickly became a space for students to take a stand against the government's refusal to take action on the destruction of the natural environment.

One student contributed to the Facebook page by commenting, "They are fine tuning the way the issue is being posed in the education system: we are either being informed that everything will work out because our governments are making informed decisions or that nothing can be done. In either case the call for action is very weak." Another student said, "It was really a strange question. One does not adapt to climate change. Many people die as a result of its impacts. We must fight against climate change." Addressing himself to the government, another added, "Do you take us for idiots? You're making us work on the consequences of climate change while you are not even taking the time to help us in building a sustainable future. Start by doing your homework before dumping it on us! We may not be that different, essentially we may all be kids, the only difference being that we are taking up our responsibilities."

The determination and consciousness of the youth regarding the fact that we can and must effect change to humanize the natural and social environment is in complete contradiction with the regressive status quo of the Legault government and its Ministry of Education. Students are affirming that they are the change and are actively pursuing their discussions to determine how to force the government to take urgent action against climate change.



Youth Call-Out to Participate in "Large Demo on Climate"

The Secondary 5 ministerial examination revealed once again the irresponsibility and lack of seriousness with which governments are treating the climate emergency and the urgency to act.

We, the youth of Quebec and of the entire world, will be the main victims of political inaction. At present, following the call by Greta Thunberg, the youth are rising up around the world to defend their collective right to a future.

We are the hundreds of high school youth who, ever since February 15, have been demonstrating every Friday as part of the marches organized by the collective Pour le future. This will be the last and the culminating point of this mobilization.

Let's show governments that we have the courage they lack.



On Friday, May 17, at 1:00 pm, we will skip school because this symbolizes the future that will evade us.

We will skip school to send a strong message to governments: we, the youth, will rise up, as the situation leaves us no other choice. We will do so because we are the last generation able to act.

Together, we are strong. Let's reclaim our future.

(Source of text and image: Pour le Futur Montréal. Translated from original French by Chantier politique.)



The Fight for Housing as a Right

Over 300 Tenants Demand In-Depth Reform of Rental Board



Demonstration to demand justice for tenants in Quebec City on April 24, 2019 (Photo: RCLALQ)

On April 24, over 300 tenants hailing from various Quebec regions took to the streets of Old-Quebec City to demand a profound reform of the Rental Board. They were responding to the call of the Quebec Network of Housing Committees and Tenants Associations (RCLALQ), which has been celebrating Tenants' Day on April 24 for the past seven years.

"Justice for Tenants: Reform the Rental Board" was the theme adopted for this year. Over 200 community and union organizations and some 7,500 citizens have endorsed the call for the Board's reform put forward by RCLALQ.

"It is urgent that the Rental Board be thoroughly reformed so that tenants are better protected. More than ever before, with a housing shortage in many of Quebec's regions, Minister Andrée Laforest has the responsibility to improve tenant confidence in using the Board to defend their

rights," affirmed RCLALQ spokesperson Maxime Roy-Allard.

On April 3, Andrée Laforest, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, introduced Bill 16, *An Act mainly to regulate building inspections and divided co-ownership, to replace the name and improve the rules of operation of the Régie du logement and to amend the Act respecting the Société d'habitation du Québec and various legislative provisions concerning municipal affairs*. The Committee on Planning and the Public Domain, charged with studying the bill, tabled its report on May 14.

RCLALQ submitted a very detailed brief on the bill, in which it criticizes it as being an internal, administrative change that often impedes access to justice and the protection of tenants' rights, which were already being denied. For instance, RCLALQ is concerned with the change in name being proposed for the Rental Board, which would become the Administrative Housing Tribunal. What is to become of the board's mandate of informing tenants and landlords of their rights and obligations, of producing studies and statistics on the housing situation, which is already not being properly fulfilled?

RCLALQ is also concerned about the bill's proposal to prioritize videoconferencing to the detriment of a hearing where the tenant is in the direct presence of the board's judge and can interact with him or her. The group also notes that the setting up of videoconferences for hearings across Canada regarding employment insurance cases has been disastrous for beneficiaries. Why then generalize that experience, which dehumanizes the process even more? RCLALQ also opposes a clause in the bill that requires applicants to submit supporting documents within 30 days following the opening of a file. The Board, to be renamed the Administrative Housing Tribunal, will also be given the power to close the file in the case where that rule is ignored. This means that the parties will have to send their statements and evidence beforehand. The Group has a serious concern with this, particularly with regard to very vulnerable tenants with major difficulties in reading and is also worried about a reduction in assistance that the Board must provide to tenants for them to be able to present their case.

Overall, in the opinion of RCLALQ, Bill 16 in no way addresses the numerous injustices experienced by tenants at the Rental Board. "Under the guise of professionalizing the Rental Board, many of the proposed measures risk making matters a lot more complex, notably through an accrued use of conciliation, management conferences, file proceedings and videoconferencing. The Board was created in 1980 with the aim of facilitating access to justice and creating a balance of power between the parties. Minister Laforest must go back to the drawing board and address the Rental Board's primary mission," said Mr. Roy-Allard.

To improve access to justice and better protect tenants, RCLALQ is demanding:

- That the Board end the widespread eviction of tenants for non-payment of rent by putting forward alternative solutions (payment agreements);
- That the Board actually ensure the protection of rented dwellings and tenants' right to tenure;
- That the Board actually control rents;
- That urgent cases be heard within 72 hours and that all other cases be heard in ascending order within a maximum of three months;
- That the Board's services be offered free of charge and made accessible throughout Quebec;
- That the Board's information service be adapted to tenant household vulnerabilities (poverty, mental health, illiteracy, etc.);
- That the Board provide full assistance to tenants and that judges facilitate the comprehension of procedures.

Peace is a religious organization that, for almost 30 years, has organized caravans of goods, including computers, health and sports equipment and other items from Canada, the United States and Mexico to Cuba in opposition to the blockade. Today it continues its activities through conferences, tours, stands against the blockade and more recently against Title III of the *Helms-Burton Act*.

Title III gives U.S. citizens who previously owned property in Cuba that was nationalized after the revolution the right to sue Cuban and foreign entities, who have used these properties or who have done business with companies who have used them. Since May 2, 2019, the Trump administration has fully implemented Title III, which has not been previously applied by any U.S. president since the law was passed in 1996. This is a new attempt to seek revenge on Cuba, this time because Cuba defends Venezuela's right to self-determination, while using Act to step up its economic war against Venezuela.

On Saturday, May 11, two rallies and pickets took place in front of Complex Guy-Favreau in support of the Cuban and Venezuelan peoples. The complex houses Canadian government offices, including its passport office. The first picket was organized at 10:00 am, following the Canadian government's announcement to close, without prior notice, its Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Office at the Canadian Embassy in Cuba on May 8. The office has been closed to all Cubans regarding matters having to do with visa, work permit and marriages. The group demanded that the office be reopened.



At 1:00 pm, a militant contingent of activists and people concerned about the sanctions and coup attempts against Venezuela, led by the U.S. government with the participation of Canada, held a picket at the same location. Shouts of "Hands Off Venezuela! Hands Off Cuba! No to the *Helms-Burton Act*! No to the Dirty Role Played by Canada and the Lima Group Against Venezuela! No to the blockade!" were heard throughout the action. Two petitions were circulated on the occasion: one demanding the end of the blockade against Cuba and another the reopening of Canada's immigration office in Havana.



Protesters concluded the actions by reiterating that other actions would follow. The next, the monthly picket of the Table de concertation de solidarité avec Cuba, to demand an end to the blockade, is to be held on May 17, at the corner of Jeanne-Mance and Sainte-Catherine Street from 5:00 pm to 6:00 pm.



March of the Immortal Regiment on 74th Anniversary of the Victory Over Fascism in Europe



On the evening of May 9, close to 800 people assembled at Cabot Square in Montreal to commemorate the 74th anniversary of the victory over Nazi Germany in Europe. The event coincided with other similar events held on the same day in 110 countries and 500 cities. Since 2012, World War II veterans and their descendants have been participating in the Marches of the Immortal Regiment commemorating those who took part in the fight against fascism.

The rally was organized by the Russian community. People of all ages gathered, holding flags and pictures of Red Army veterans of World War II who contributed to the victory over Nazi fascist troops. Many families came with their young children, holding portraits of their great-grandparents who fought to liberate Soviet territories occupied by Nazi troops and to end the Hitler regime.

Before the march began, a minute of silence was held in tribute to all those who fought and made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure peace, freedom and democracy so that humanity would never again experience the scourge of fascism and war.

A plane flew overhead pulling a huge banner symbolizing the ribbon of Saint George on which was written "May 9 -- Victory Day" throughout the event. Each time it flew overhead, it was greeted with cheers and applause.

Participants then marched along Sainte-Catherine Street behind the main "Immortal Regiment -- Montreal" banner and the many flags of the former Soviet republics, Quebec and Canada leading the march. Patriotic songs dating back to the Second World War and even before were broadcast on powerful speakers during the march.

As it was a Thursday night, many shops and boutiques were still open on Sainte-Catherine Street, one of the busiest streets in the downtown, and sidewalks were crowded with pedestrians. As the procession headed east on Sainte-Catherine Street towards Canada Place, many passers-by took pictures and inquired about the purpose of the march, with the youth in particular approving once they found out what it was about.



Support for Palestinian Resistance on 71st Anniversary of the Nakba



On Sunday, May 12 in Montreal, on Mother's Day, around 150 people gathered outside of Mount Royal metro station for a commemoration march on the occasion of the 71st anniversary of the Nakba. Al Nakba in Arabic means "catastrophe," and is used to describe the forcible expulsion by

Zionist militias of 750,000 Palestinians from their homeland, dispossessing them of 4.2 million acres of land. By 1949 the Israeli state had occupied 78 per cent of Palestinian land. Between 1948 and 1950 more than 500 Palestinian towns and villages were systematically destroyed or repopulated.

This year's commemoration was organized by a collective of groups which includes the Fédération Canado-palestinienne pour le Québec, the BDS Coalition-Quebec, the Centre international de solidarité ouvrière (CISO), Canadians for Justice and Peace in the Middle East (CJPME), Palestinian and Jewish Unity (PAJU), Solidarity for Palestinian Human Rights (SPHR) and Tadamon. The vigorous march along the streets of Montreal condemned both the Israeli government for its crimes against the Palestinian people and its cohort the U.S., and denounced Canada as an accomplice. It demanded justice for the Palestinian people, asserting that they would never stop fighting until they were free.

Today, more than half of the over 13 million-strong Palestinian people are refugees from the Nakba and subsequent forced displacement and genocide. The Zionist occupation of Palestine and continued exile of millions of Palestinians remain illegitimate. Without any legitimacy the oppression and dispossession of the Palestinian people by the Israeli state relies on U.S. imperialism and its dictum of Might Makes Right, as well as other countries that are part of the imperialist system of states including Canada.

The Palestinian people and Palestinian youth the world over are eager to return to their homeland. They are eager to return to the place from which their parents and grandparents were brutally expelled and build a bright future for themselves. Palestinians are burning to see their country free from a ruthless occupation which continues to take so many lives with impunity. They are fighting every day to make it a reality. On this anniversary, they are joined by the peoples of all countries, to solemnly commemorate the terror and suffering which continues to be inflicted and affirm their right of return.



Coming Event

National Patriots' Day

Let's Celebrate Our History and Traditions! Social, Political and Cultural Get-Together

Montreal

Monday, May 20 beginning at 4:00 pm

Songs, music, poetry, information and discussion
on the national question historically and today

At the Marxist-Leninist Party of Quebec (PMLQ)
locale
1360 Ontario Street East
(514) 522-5872



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