

# Mutiny

## National Unity is Capital's Favourite Poison

On December 16, 2024, former Liberal Finance Minister Chrystia Freedland published her resignation letter from the cabinet, citing reservations concerning the Trudeau government's approach to the crisis of living standards besetting Canadians. The letter claimed that Canada could "ill afford" dubious measures such as Trudeau's tax holiday and had to focus on the impending American tariffs on Canadian goods. This resignation was the breaking point for the already weak Trudeau government. In quick succession Liberal MPs abandoned Trudeau, forcing him to announce his plan to resign after a new leadership contest. But as a final departing act, Trudeau prorogued parliament. The parliamentary crisis was to be put on pause and the economic crisis of Trump's tariffs were to take centre stage.

Trump had framed the tariffs as leverage against Canada and Mexico, to impress upon them the urgency of border security against the flow of drugs into America. Despite legal questions about this initiative given Trump's trade agreement from his first term, he signed an executive order to take effect on February 1st, imposing a flat 25% tariff on all Canadian goods excluding energy, to be tariffed instead at 10%. At the last minute, however, Trump agreed to a stay in the effective date of the tariffs by one month, in exchange for increased border security measures by both nations - measures which despite his boasts had already been planned weeks ago without his intervention. Even after, a raft of steel and aluminum tariffs followed independent of these, which have now resumed as intended on March 4. What is the point of all these seemingly erratic gestures?

No matter what their basis in border policy may be, it's clear that Trump's various tariff policies have broader grounds. Trump plans to throw the weight of the United States around the alliance in order to deal with the crisis in the American economy. There is some logic here; leery of running a trade deficit in conjunction with a budget deficit attributed to the outflow of US dollars by consumers, tariffs would in principle impede US consumers from spending their money on imports

relative to domestic consumption, subsidizing producers of American goods while also cooling down consumption among consumers and encouraging the growth of savings, thereby discouraging inflation. In a nutshell, it offers a means to tackle the inflation issue by sidestepping the Federal Reserve, which Trump has been keen to curb following his public spats with Powell. Blaming overconsumption at the household level for continuing inflation does little in the face of the systemic crisis facing capital. Whether through interest rate hikes or tariffs, no capitalist can stave off the inherently deflationary mechanism of profit accumulation that results in crisis and destitution.

In the wake of Trump's threats, the Canadian ruling class found a second wind in igniting nationalism around the country, urging everyone to 'buy Canadian', anointing Premier Doug Ford as the paramount defender of Canadian capital. It has also granted the incumbent parliament public favour and has refocused media attention onto the leadership race, rather than the extent of Pollièvre's mandate.

Within the Liberal camp, Freedland's hopes of presenting herself as removed enough from Trudeau to qualify as the champion to overcome this crisis were apparently dashed when the most classically Canadian technocratic candidate for high office entered the ring one month later; former Bank of Canada and Bank of England Governor Mark Carney. Embodying all the standard cultural identifiers of a leader of "Canada's natural governing party," Carney allows the Liberal Party to signify a smooth change in direction from the flagging Trudeau brand of mid-2010s institutional social justice and back to their tried and true presentation as the party of rationally managed affairs of state and market without appearing to have badly misjudged. Having the pedigree to present himself as a detached, nonpartisan former Harper appointee with respect for "sensible" pre-Trump conservatism and a vocal appreciation for the neo-Keynesian trend of Modern Monetary Theory, Carney injected new viability into an ailing party at precisely the same time

Conservative party leader Pierre Pollièvre suffered the political cardinal sin of appearing too "Trumplike" in his dispute with the Canadian security administration over national intelligence. Although the Conservatives still poll ahead, Trudeau's last stand as the courageous defender of Canadian economic nationalism, defiant before the uncouth menace of Trump's tariffs, appears poised to hand the reins over to Carney on strong terms and deliver Canadian workers a dramatic decision with existential consequences as to whom they most trust to guide them into this heightened period of imperialist contest.

Regardless of who prevails, neither a conservative nor liberal victory offers any fruitful prospects for the working class. Although Trump and his economic threats are framed with historic significance, the inflationary consequences of a trade war are merely symptoms of the underlying crisis of capital. Whether tariffs or interest rate hikes are set to make the economy sweat out its problems, the outcome will be the same - further destitution imposed onto the class due to the well of profitability drying up. Trump is merely stepping on the gas in accelerating and offloading this process to the global market, but it's clear that the phenomenon is not contained to any one country due to the international nature of capital. At home, workers are already faced with the hydra of increased crackdowns on strikes by the EDSC, increased policing of immigration, and the looming housing market bubble. Whether or not there was a Trump scapegoat, these are all concrete threats facing our class which are already provocations or further attacks to come from the bosses. If anything, the nationalism ignited by the tariffs will only aid the coming parliament in cracking down by getting workers to do it themselves, to 'do their part'. It is precisely why we must combat any delusions to 'work with the Canadian state' in the context of a trade war, for as the history of our class has shown us, every such attempt results in workers leading themselves to the gallows, oftentimes literally.

### Why the working class needs a party

The working class can hold no stock in the capitalist state and its political parties. These are merely organs that manage the exploitation of our class. All capitalist parties aim to fulfill the necessary assault on workers and imperialist rivalry for capital regardless of rhetoric. The working class needs to form its own political party based on its own political program. Directed not towards the interests of any specific sector of the class, national or otherwise; but on the basis of the working class as an international historic class capable of imposing itself on history.

When we speak of a working class party, we don't mean a party in the old form of capitalists parties which claims to represent the working class.

Not another party of the parliamentary circus. Not another party which aims to take on the existing levers of state power. A communist party corresponds in essence to the historic task of the working class, the smashing of the state and the struggle to abolish class society itself. The party of the working class differs fundamentally in form and function to the parties of capital. In place of parliamentary speeches, it is a party that places its life inside the struggles of the class. It attempts in all immediate struggles to highlight the general struggle of the class as a whole and demonstrate its leadership to the class, pointing the way forward to the final goal. Rather than being a party of national-capital, it is a party of an international class. It organizes around the principles of internationalism and struggles for the world revolutionary objective.

The communist party is an indispensable weapon of the working class. Only through its force can the working class as a whole be centralized around the historic task of ridding humanity of class society beyond the specific sectoral, national or immediate demands by individual sections of the class. This is not to say all the working class needs to do is form a world communist party; the party can only be a minority of the class and cannot substitute itself for the whole. The worker's revolution is a social revolution, not merely a political one. It will be active through the mass bodies of the class, the workers councils, and its bedrock will be the mass activity and consciousness of the working class itself. The party can never substitute the class or take power for the class in its name. Its task is to fight on the front lines of the class struggle, pointing the way forward to the final aim and unifying the class to this end. It is the fundamental organ in retaining the lessons of past defeats and understanding the final victory.

Today the overall strength of our class is weak. While sections of our class have some fighting spirit, the struggles are often contained to isolated strikes dominated by the unions. Revolutionaries are low in number, scattered and disorganized. But this can be no reason to fall into despair and sit on our hands. The future world party will be based on the real work of communists today. Being present inside the struggles of workers today fighting for the right to be heard. There is always a necessity for the party, and to put off working towards it for a more favourable period in the distance would be to kick away the foundation on which it will be built - without the party, our class will go into decisive battles blind. In the last great revolutionary wave, the delay of our party's formation proved disastrous and ended in our class's defeat. One lesson above all emerges; for the class to realize their unconquerable possibilities, only a revolutionary party can give it the cohesion, direction and shape to rise to the moment.



# The 1943 Steel Strike

Workers are sent to the frontlines during imperialist wars to fight and die, promised that as soldiers, their "sacrifice" will save their respective nations. So as they sacrifice on the front, the state demands "sacrifices" in the workplace. Workers are called upon to accept skyrocketing inflation, deteriorating working conditions, low wages, and innumerable economic and personal constraints on their daily lives. The Second World War was no different; like any imperialist war, both sides demanded discipline from their workers while soldiers died on the front. In Canada the state had learned its lesson from the First World War, seeing the general strikes and worker revolt upon its conclusion, and feared their return during the Second World War; this led to the Canadian state placing heavy restrictions on all aspects of workers' lives. The state enacted endless hurdles around strike efforts such as state-supervised strike votes, and invited business leaders into government to help industry avert strikes. Finally, wage controls from December 1940 onwards

froze workers' wages at a "fair and reasonable guideline" based upon the 1926-29 wage scale; this scale allowed capitalists to interpret their idea of what was "fair" based on wages from 14 years prior, allowing them legal room to keep wages low with government support. Wage controls and restrictions on workers' lives instigated friction early in the war, but by the middle of the war, low-paid steel workers who were vital to the war effort decided to strike despite their union's efforts to respect legal boundaries, opening the 1943 steel strike.

The steel strike of 1943 was one of the notable class confrontations in Canada during the Second World War. Faced with the pressure of war time conditions, the steel workers in Sault Ste Marie walked off the job January 1st. The union opposed this initiative but was forced to organize mass meetings to save face in front of their membership. Despite all efforts by the union, company and state labour boards to avert the strike, it formally began on January 12th. To capital's dismay the

workers in two steel towns 2000 km away in Nova Scotia, Trenton and Sydney, joined them on strike in solidarity, responding to the same conditions. In spite of this class unity amongst the steel workers, the union managed to channel the struggle back into the legal confines of the capitalist state, of backroom negotiations and parliamentary appointed commissions. National unity at the expense of the working class was the watchword of the day; the union and commissions would continuously kick the can of addressing workers' demands down the road. Ultimately, the event merely granted the commissions more legal power in settling labour disputes. On the workers side, minor wage increases below the workers demands were awarded - with the exception of the workers in Trenton who were completely cut out! It is a clear demonstration that our class cannot fight on the terrain of the capitalists, terrain into which the unions have been integrated. We must fight on the basis of our own class' solidarity and unity and active self-organization.

With the threat of a new generalised imperialist war, the strikes during the last generalised war can serve as a lesson for the workers. Workers can end wars, as seen with the October Revolution in Russia and the German Revolution at the closure of the First World War. It was workers not only striking for economic demands, but also engaging in political strikes that openly call into question the war and the functions of the capitalist state. The 1943 steel strike is an example of a union suffocating the strike in legalistic fetters. The history of the class struggle in Canada is one that is still being written, a struggle that faces many of the same challenges today as it did 80 years ago. It is only through learning the lessons of the past we today begin to understand the struggle, within Canada and globally. We need to advance orientations that won't trap the working class with any of the obstacles of the past.

## International Working Woman's Day 2025

Another International Working Women's Day, another appeal for the class war! 108 years on from women proletarians launching the 1917 Revolution in Russia, we find the fundamental issues unresolved.

As a way of example, let's call to your attention two key struggles in women-dominated sectors: In New York City, homecare workers for the ill and elderly face grueling conditions, working sometimes up to 24-hour shifts due to legal loopholes. As a response, many workers held a hunger strike to City Hall and the SEIU union's deaf ears. In Québec, daycare workers are set to go on strike this year against peanuts-for-wages, in a sector already seeing degraded conditions, as a rematch to their 2022 strike. This time, they will almost certainly be met by the government's response that "there is no money for you" — perhaps it had to be allocated to the all-time high military budget.

Proletarian women across the board are facing great attacks by the capitalist class. Being part of that class which is ruthlessly exploited for profit, proletarian women also encounter the designation of women as "secondary" wage-earners, meaning degraded wages and viewed as "superfluous" (often taking on the most brutal poverty). In addition to being expected to work for less pay, harassment and other attacks must be endured. All gains are in reverse and recent events have revealed the rottenness of the capitalist system. From the Andrew Tate scum to the demonization of trans people, open chauvinism is on the rise. Even #MeToo, from the outset a reformist outcry against sexual assault in Hollywood, was crushed, with the Democrats landing the killing blow after the Cuomo scandal and Biden's presidency. Let alone the 38% (at least) of proletarian women who have faced sexual harassment in the workplace!

The attacks on women proletarians are just one part of the greater assault on the working class. The fundamental crisis of capitalism, i.e. the tendency for profit rates to plummet as more and more capital is accumulated, results in both the extreme squeezing of the working class and the drive for imperialist world war. It's no coincidence that as workers across North America are facing a decades-long decline in



living standards, vicious chauvinism and world conflict proliferate. As Trump threatens annexations of the Panama Canal and Greenland due to "Chinese influence" and the widespread kidnapping of our migrant class brothers and sisters, as misogyny and transphobia become openly asserted, the working class as a whole is being told to pay for the capitalist crisis. Between inflation and bullets, evictions and sexual violence, work speed-ups and missiles, precarity and mass slaughter, the entire working class must fight back.

There's no way around it— for us to put away for good misogyny, transphobia, poverty, predation, slaughter, the proletariat must unite in a single class movement to seize power and rid the world of the capitalist system. An attack on one part of our class is an attack on it as a whole. Not only do proletarian women have to unite with their class brethren in the class war against the bourgeoisie, but our class must be and is able to combat oppression as well as any chauvinism within its ranks (whether gendered, sexual, or other).

It's through our fight as a single class of wage-workers that we can pose the question of the revolutionary transformation of society into a classless

future, one where the family can no longer be an economic unit and where imperialist war will be a footnote in prehistory. We have a fundamentally different perspective from the feminists who want more women in positions of bourgeois power. It was not as women that the starving female proletarians of 1917's St. Petersburg toppled the Russian Czar, but as members of the only revolutionary class, the proletariat. Today, we find the working class in a perilously weak position. We advocate everywhere we can for the self-

organization of our class, which has been for too long dominated by capitalist "reformers" and the trade unions. Meanwhile, the highest tool available to it is notably absent— the revolutionary party. It's the party that can unite workers from all different sectors and pose its historic mission of revolution. The creation of such a party is the goal set out for us in the ICT. If you broadly agree with what you've read, consider joining us.

### What Does Klasbatalo Fight For?

We fight for the political independence of the working class, which means we reject all cross-class alliances with the capitalist class, including its left-wing. We believe the working class must fight on its own terrain: first, to defend itself against the bosses' attacks; and, second, to achieve its ultimate task, that of establishing the world communist future which will rid the planet of exploitation, oppression, and war. It is towards this goal that we fight for the creation of the world communist party, whose purpose is to clarify the confusions among the class and to unify it towards its ultimate end; we believe this party to be the most potent weapon of our class. While we are for the party, we do not believe ourselves to be the party, nor do we believe that our organization alone will become it; rather, we see it as the product of both the wider class struggle, and of the real work of revolutionaries, of which we see ourselves as only one of many elements. We do not see this party as a government-in-waiting, for the emancipation of humanity depends on the active struggle of the whole working class, and this struggle cannot be replaced by the dictates of a minority.

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