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# STOP THE BIGOTS

## FIGHT ISLAMOPHOBIA

"We are a community under siege", said Samer Majzoub of the Canadian Muslim Forum. "The climate that the Conservatives have brought up... has created waves of Islamophobia all over the country."

On January 29, a white supremacist opened fire in a mosque in Quebec City, killing six people. On February 3, vandals smashed windows and spray painted the Khadijah Islamic Centre in Montreal. On February 14, a group of racists yelled slurs at a Muslim doctor in Hamilton. On February 17, a gang of racists surrounded a downtown Toronto mosque, spewing hate. In February, a Muslim woman was physically assaulted in Mississauga. On February 21, a man

scrawled hate speech outside the Red Deer Islamic Centre in Alberta.

When Mississauga MP Iqra Khalid introduced Motion 103 to "condemn Islamophobia and all forms of systemic racism and religious discrimination", she received tens of thousands of hateful e-mails.

### Home-grown racists

Racists are clearly feeling emboldened by Donald Trump's bigotry and travel ban. But the spike in Islamophobia springs from home-grown racism. For years, the Harper government fanned the flames of hatred—from Harper declaring "the major threat is Islamism", to launching racist wars, to curtailing civil liberties in the name

of "anti-terrorism." Conservative MP Kellie Leitch proposed a tip line against "barbaric cultural practices", while Chris Alexander showed a callous disregard for Syrian refugees.

These Tory leadership hopefuls are continuing Harper's hateful legacy. Opposing Motion 103, Leitch has called for people to "fight back against all of this politically correct nonsense," and the Tories tried to counter the motion with one that condemned all racism except for Islamophobia.

As Liberal MP Chandra Arya said, "Fear is a dangerous thing. Once it is sanctioned by the state, there's no telling where it might lead."

But the Liberals have a shame-

ful track record when it comes to state-sanctioned Islamophobia. It was the Liberals of Jean Chrétien who passed "anti-terror" legislation after 9/11, which paved the way for Bill C-51. Justin Trudeau is continuing Harper's legislation and his racist wars. Other than tweet against Trump's travel ban, Trudeau has done nothing to open the borders.

### Solidarity

Fortunately, there has been an outpouring of solidarity for the Muslim community. Within 24 hours of the terrorist attack on the mosque in Quebec, there were vigils of thousands in Montreal and Ottawa. The following week-end there were solidarity rallies across

the country. There was spontaneous solidarity for the mosque in Toronto, and there are upcoming rallies against racism and Islamophobia, along with a campaign to push Trudeau to accept refugees from the US.

Shamefully, the NDP sided with the Tories by supporting their "counter-motion" which clearly aimed to delegitimize Motion 103.

At a time when Trump and the Tories are encouraging waves of Islamophobia from coast to coast, and the Liberals are offering only lip service in response, we need a voice in Parliament to echo solidarity for Muslims—to say: Fight the hate, stop racism and Islamophobia, end the attacks on civil liberties, and open the borders.



# Court victory for First Nations ‘Sixties Scoop’ survivors

by **Valerie Lannon**

On February 14, after eight years of court battles, First Nations plaintiffs in Ontario won a big court victory over the federal government. Ontario Superior Court Justice Belobaba sided with the survivors of the “60s Scoop” who argued that the government-sanctioned wholesale adoption into non-Indigenous families led to the trauma associated with loss of language, culture, family and community.

As Belobaba said, “The uncontroverted evidence of the plaintiff’s experts is that the loss of their Aboriginal identity left the children fundamentally disoriented, with a reduced ability to lead healthy and fulfilling lives.”

Their removals, which happened between 1965 and 1984, were “justified” by child welfare agencies that judged First Nations’ ways of parenting as not up to the “standard” of white, Eurocentric society. This was combined with a refusal to alleviate the harsh conditions caused by colonially enforced poverty that made families vulnerable.

In Ontario alone, over 16,000 children were removed. The effects were devastating for the parents whose children were taken away. And those who were removed, like virtually all adoptees, ultimately wanted to come home.

If they were allowed to find out where home was and if they were able to get there, they often felt they did not fit in because they had no knowledge of the community’s language or traditions.

## Fighting back

But the spirit of resistance was never far away and today in every province Indigenous peoples are fighting back through lawsuits against either the federal or provincial governments responsible. In Ontario, the fight was led by Beaver House Chief Marcia Brown Martel. Adopted out at age nine, she later discovered the Canadian government had declared her original identity dead. After the judge’s decision, she told the CBC “Our voices were finally heard and listened to.”

The survivors are asking for \$85,000 each in damages, for a total of \$1.3 billion, arguing that the federal government breached part of the agreement that requires consultation with First Nations bands about the federally funded child welfare program.

## Pressure on Liberals

The main reason the court battle went on so long was the disgusting practice of both the Harper and Trudeau governments to have the case delayed or dismissed. As recently

as early February, the government tried to block Belobaba from handing down his ruling, saying that Indigenous Affairs Minister Carolyn Bennett wanted to “negotiate” with survivors.

And on February 2, government lawyers said that “the government did not have a legal obligation to concern itself with the cultural identity of Indigenous people” according to the plaintiff’s lawyer Jeffery Wilson.

But this is the same Trudeau government that has totally refused to negotiate with First Nations child welfare agencies across Canada to provide the equitable funding declared required by the Canadian Human Rights tribunal. That tribunal case also took almost ten years due to government efforts to hijack proceedings. The tribunal will meet again in March to decide what more can be done to bring the government into compliance.

No doubt the resilience of the Sixties Scoop survivors will mean they will refuse to be seduced by the government’s so-called “offer to negotiate”. Indeed, one survivor – William Campbell, who now lives in Thunder Bay – told CBC: “Even today, there are more First Nations kids in care than ever before. Obviously, the problem is still there.”

Still, the court decision is a great victory for First Nations survivors.

# Tory leadership race... to the bottom

by **Valerie Lannon**

Just when you thought the Tory scumbags couldn’t reach any lower, you witness four so-called “leadership” candidates denouncing Islam at the February 15 “emergency rally” called by extreme right-wingers. The event was a cesspool of racism, Islamophobia and hatred of immigrants who aren’t white.

Two of the candidates in attendance, Kellie Leitch and Chris Alexander, were the main promoters of Harper’s “Zero tolerance for Barbaric Cultural Practices” proposed legislation, now in the trash where it belongs.

On the same day, we saw Tory MPs scrambling to oppose Liberal MP Iqra Khalid’s motion to denounce racism and Islamophobia, insisting that the word Islamophobia be removed from the motion.

## Leitch

At least leeches once served a medicinal purpose. Now MP Leitch personifies the soul-destroying animosity towards all things Islamic, including her Trumpish proposal to screen immigrants for “Canadian values”.

Thanks to the renewed spirit of resistance triggered by the election of Donald Trump, her constituency office was draped with a banner containing the names of all six Muslims murdered in the Quebec mosque on January 29.

## O’Leary

While O’Leary avoids some of the caustic racism of Leitch and Alexander, he prides himself on the same supposed “anti-politics” and blow-hard love of laissez-faire capitalism that Trump espouses. And let’s face it, this form of capitalism has never really existed. It’s always been capitalism for the poor and socialism for the rich, which means subsidies for corporations and austerity for the rest of us.

The race to the bottom affects other candidates too, including those not previously known for being more bigoted than your average Tory. Candidate Maxime Bernier has denounced a transgender rights bill he previously supported, saying it poses a threat to free speech in Canada. Bill C-16, which amends the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code to include the terms “gender identity” and “gender expression” is supported by human rights groups as a means of protecting transgender people.

## Solidarity

Those in the Conservative party left over from the early days of the Reform Party now have the confidence to come out of their caves of bigotry. But we have also seen immediate acts of solidarity with Muslims and refugees on a pan-Canadian basis, whether in response to the murders at the Quebec City mosque, white supremacist and anti-Islam flyers in New Westminster and Toronto, or the February 17 counter-rally in front of the Masjid Toronto mosque.

These acts of support are essential and will need to be timely and large if we are to beat back the hatred unleashed by Trump and now provided by Tory leadership candidates.

And we cannot let the Liberals off the hook either. While their rhetoric in support of refugees and Indigenous peoples sounds positive, their support for military actions in the Middle East, their refusal to respect Indigenous sovereignty, and their continued disregard for civil liberties (via backing Bill C51) shows their true blue colours.

You can show solidarity with those oppressed through government action and right-wing bigotry by joining the many acts of support coming up in the next few months. March 11 will see International Women’s Day marches, March 21 will see anti-racism events and on April 29 the streets will be filled with those wanting an end to the climate war.

# Trudeau: we’re watching you

by **Kevin Taghabon**

Canadian Journalists for Free Expression (CJFE) held a public rally on February 25 in Toronto. The coordinated events happening in cities coast to coast were billed as “Trudeau: We’re Watching You”, in keeping with the theme of omnipresent surveillance.

The large group that gathered was protesting the national security apparatus’ creeping hostility towards the press and free expression. This includes the bipartisan (Harper-Trudeau) embrace of the draconian national security Bill C-51.

Additionally, CJFE is calling on citizens to voice their support for Bill S-231, the Journalistic Sources Protection Act, advanced by Senator Claude Carignan. During his speech, CJFE Executive Director Tom Henheffer described the decade of Stephen Harper’s rule as a “dark age” for the press. He added that unfortunately, Trudeau’s actions are closer to Harper’s than many had hoped for.

## Trudeau’s broken promises

During the 2015 election campaign, Trudeau pledged to amend Bill C-51 after having voted for it in Parliament. His majority government has taken no action to amend the law in the 16 months they have held power. At the rally, every person conversing about C-51 was calling for a repeal of the law entirely.

Meanwhile, activists with FairVote.ca circulated leaflets in support of MP Nathan Cullen’s record-breaking Parliamentary petition (e-616) urging the Liberals to enact electoral reform, another high-profile election promise Trudeau has broken.

Gerald Parker, Executive Director of the Institute of Canadian Justice, contends that the Trump administration’s demonization of the press was learned by watching Stephen Harper’s administration. According to Parker, the ‘anti-press’ climate in the US “was very much trial ballooned in Canada under the Harper regime. Let’s not kid ourselves.”

## Mass surveillance

Canada’s press freedoms are not strongly enshrined in law. Bill S-231 seeks, in part, to remedy this. Parker stated, “We’re the only



Toronto rally organized by Canadian Journalists for Free Expression Photo: Kevin Taghabon

developed country in the world that doesn’t have a press shield law.” Because of this, the state can go after journalists directly. For example, the RCMP has taken VICE journalist Ben Makuch to court in an attempt to force him to hand over chat logs between him and a source. Last year it was revealed that that six reporters in Quebec were under surveillance during their attempts to uncover police malfeasance.

The Canadian citizenry has not escaped the government’s mass dragnets either. One known program was CSIS’ warrantless bulk collection of Canadian citizens’ communications from 2006-2016. When it came to light last November, Federal Court Justice Simon Noël struck down the program as unconstitutional. Noël rebuked CSIS for using technology as an excuse to “flout or stretch legal parameters.”

## Repeal C-51

- C-51 increases the power of government agencies to share information, without implementing safeguards that two public inquiries recommended after analysing the cases of Maher Arar and others who were deported to torture based on information shared by the Canadian government.

- According to CJFE, under C-51 “[s]tanding up to protect Aboriginal lands, protesting oil sands or pipelines, and being involved in RCMP-targeted environmental groups could lead to you being placed under increased surveillance or arrest if any of your activities are deemed “unlawful”

- a term that could include not securing the appropriate noise by-law exemption for loud megaphone use after 7pm.”

- Lawyers Clayton Ruby and Nader Hasan describe the impact of C-51: “Six Muslim young adults stand in front of a mosque late at night in heated discussion in some foreign language... They may be talking about video games, or sports, or girls... But the new standard for arrest and detention—reason to suspect that they may commit an act—is so low that an officer may be inclined to arrest and detain them in order to investigate further... Yesterday, the Muslim men were freely exercising constitutional rights to freedom of expression and assembly. Today they are arrestable.”





## Liberals rebrand Tory deal

by **Gabriel Newman Hogan**

Two days into his European goodwill tour, Justin Trudeau spoke at a black-tie banquet in Hamburg. To the astonishment of the world press, Trudeau blamed corporate elites for the growing discord and anger in western liberal politics, saying “It’s time to pay a living wage, to pay your taxes, and to give your workers the benefits – and peace of mind – that come with stable, full-time contracts.”

So impressed was Germany’s Die Welt newspaper, they branded Trudeau the “anti-Trump”.

It’s a scorching indictment of the current state of bourgeois politics that Trudeau, recipient of millions through cash-for-access fundraisers, defender of Canada’s criminally low corporate tax rate, and enthusiastic pipeline booster, appears as a progressive amidst the growing wave of xenophobic right-nationalism sweeping the Western world.

Trudeau is a gifted student of the old Liberal technique of saying the right things while pulling the rug out from under Canadian workers. If you were to compare the agenda of the Trudeau government with its public stances, you might come to the conclusion that the two originate from entirely different places.

Clearly Trudeau sees that there is political currency in defining himself in opposition to Donald Trump. This technique has been put to pernicious use in defending Trudeau’s free-trade policies. In the wake of Donald Trump’s election the Trudeau Liberals have rushed to construct their support for globalization as a defense of inclusivity, tolerance, and multiculturalism. This brings us back to Hamburg.

Justin Trudeau was in Europe to sign the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement, known as CETA. CETA will mandate the removal of tariffs between Canada and the European Union, allowing the Canadian market to be further integrated with the European one.

CETA, like all free trade deals, will benefit a tiny minority of capitalist elites, not the working people of Canada and Europe. A new report in the International Journal of Political Economy predicts that CETA will lead to the loss of 207,000 jobs in Europe and some 23,000 in Canada. These job losses will drive down wages in both Canada and Europe, causing the average Canadian to lose \$2,460 per year in foregone earnings, say report authors Pierre Kohler and Servaas Storm. The trade deal was engineered by the Harper government, and is now championed by the Liberals.

The Conservatives invented CETA, but it never occurred to them to defend it in the terms Justin Trudeau is now using. On the official website of the Prime Minister’s Office, CETA is characterized as a “modern, progressive agreement”. Trudeau has claimed that CETA will enhance international cooperation in “environment and climate change, migration, and peaceful pluralism”.

His government has worked to associate Donald Trump’s protectionism with his xenophobic attacks on Muslims, Hispanic Americans, and other immigrants. Bundling these together allows Trudeau to cover his support for economic globalization with a thin veneer of anti-racism.

The false equation of anti-racism and economic globalization is dangerous, and we must resist it. Free trade deals allow for the free movement of money, not people. Those of us who genuinely oppose racism and exclusivity must avoid being drawn in to defending the globe-plundering of a tiny capitalist elite.

Deals like CETA strengthen capitalists at the expense of workers everywhere. Real multiculturalism fights for open borders for people, not for capital. We must not trust bourgeois politicians like Mr. Trudeau to lead the fight against racism. Trudeau’s vision is one in which migration is contingent on wealth, and money flows freely while the movement of people is brutally curtailed. As socialists, we must oppose both racist attacks on immigrants, and economic globalization that lines the pockets of the capitalist elite. Free people, not trade.

# Trumping Trudeau

## It isn’t hard for Trudeau to look better than Trump

by **John Bell**

In the dreary year since his election, Justin Trudeau has seen the popularity of his government and his personal “brand” sink slowly but surely.

At first it was enough to say nice things, take selfies and be not Stephen Harper. Then one by one his happy promises were broken leaving no one happy. Well, maybe not no one. The Saudis were happy with their tanks, and the pipeline and tar sands companies were happy not to face new scrutiny of their developments.

Vows—electoral reform, legalization of marijuana, rolling back C-51 (the Secret Policemen’s Law), the promise to get fully informed consent from First Nations before economic development on their territories—were tossed aside like so many losing roll-up-the-rim Tim’s cups. Brief hope dashed, people were left with nothing but the same old shitty coffee.

### Fresh batch of words

So Trudeau and his handlers decided it was time to go out among the people with a fresh batch of words. Tie loosened, top button undone, sleeves rolled up, Trudeau went on tour. Things did not go well. “Deeds, not words,” the people said. Some of them said it respectfully, some tearfully, some angrily. Some said it with a selfie. But they kept saying it.

His betrayal of First Nations people and of the environment kept him in the hot seat. He explained again and again how pumping and piping more tar sands bitumen would save the environment and the economy, but the more often he said it the less sense it made. He ended his tour more unpopular than when he began.

But Trudeau has one thing going for him: Donald Trump.

### The Trump effect

Unlike Trudeau, the one thing Trump cannot be accused of is breaking his campaign promises. He has acted quickly to implement the Islamophobic travel ban, then when the judiciary declared his ban illegal he declared that the courts were a threat to national security. He scuttled the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade deal (his only good decision), scrapped the regulations

placed on banks and financial institutions after the 2014 financial crisis, and began to dismantle the Affordable Care Act. He populated his administration with homophobes, big business privatizers, anti-Semites and white-power advocates, and chose shameless liars as his spokespeople.

Polls suggest that Trump’s support is in decline as the extremity and irrationality of his administration becomes clearer. On this side of the border he is viewed with fear and disgust—with the exception of a handful to Tory leadership hopefuls. So Trudeau’s handlers reasoned, probably correctly, that the Prime Minister would look positively majestic standing next to Trump.

### PET and Tricky Dick

Pierre Trudeau was able to accomplish this in his time because he was trickier than Richard Nixon. In public, the two expressed dislike for each other. In private, they laid the groundwork for the neo-liberal free-trade deals of today. Thanks to Nixon’s penchant for taping all his meetings we know exactly what Trudeau the elder had to say: “If you’re going to be protectionist, let’s be in it together. I am not a nationalist, I am not a protectionist – if you were going to take a very protectionist trend, our whole economy is so importantly tied to yours, we’d have to make some very fundamental decisions.” Nixon and Kissinger assured him that Canada was on the inside.

Trudeau fils hoped negative power of Trump would do for him what it was able to do for NAFTA. The 24-year old trade deal has been a major factor in the decline of manufacturing jobs, and has made environmental regulations subservient to corporate profits. In a June poll only 25 per cent said NAFTA had benefitted the economy. But in February, after Trump’s promises to scrap it, support for NAFTA surged to 44 per cent. If Trump is against it we must be for it, right?

Trudeau’s objective for his Washington visit was to appear to resist Trump while protecting the corporate interests on both sides of the border, which have thrived under NAFTA just as much as workers have suffered.

Superficial domestic media coverage was an

accomplice in Trudeau’s game. After all, when it comes to topping Trump in style and statesmanship, the bar is set mighty low. There was endless coverage and commentary about handshakes and hugs. Look, a leader who speaks in complete sentences; who cares what he’s saying.

So Trudeau used his self-declared “feminist” credentials to score points by initiating the “United States Canada Council for the Advancement of Women Business Leaders—Female Entrepreneurs”. And Trump used the event to deflect charges of misogyny and sexual abuse, and advance his daughter Ivanka. The roundtable was notable for its diversity, not all of the women CEOs in attendance were blonde—at least one was a redhead.

### The 1% united

Behind closed door, the two got down to what really unites them: “We have built the world’s largest energy trading relationship. We share the goals of energy security, a robust and secure energy grid, and a strong and resilient energy infrastructure that contributes to energy efficiency in both countries.” Whether the Keystone XL or the Kinder-Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline, both have committed to moving their climate killing petro-projects forward by any means necessary.

The other priority where they diverge in style but not substance is militarism and national security: “We demonstrate daily that security and efficiency go hand-in-hand, and we are building a 21st century border through initiatives such as pre-clearance of people and integrated cross-border law enforcement operations.” In blunt language, this means empowering US law enforcement to operate in Canada.

In words, Trudeau tries to separate himself from Trump. In deeds there isn’t much that separates them. No doubt Trudeau would prefer to be collaborating with a president who had a more conventional approach to the neo-liberal austerity agenda, but he will do what he must do to make do.

Despite Trudeau’s reassurances, when Trump announces that the US and Canadian economies are “completely and totally integrated”, we all have reason to worry.





Women's March on Washington on January 21, 2017. Photo: Kevin Taghabon

by **Faline Bobier**

After the huge turnout for the Women's Marches on January 21, in the US and internationally, and in response to the election of the misogynist and racist Donald Trump, eight prominent feminist scholars and activists in the US have called for a women's strike on March 8, International Women's Day (IWD).

In doing so they were inspired by recent events in Poland where women went on a one-day strike against the proposed abortion ban in that country, as well as women's marches and strikes in South Korea, Ireland and Latin America to defend women's reproductive rights and to protest violence against women.

The March 8 action is supported by close to 30 other feminist organizations around the world. The prime goal of the day in the US, called Day Without a Woman, is to create "a grassroots, anti-capitalist feminism—a feminism in solidarity with working women, their families and their allies throughout the world."

**Toronto International Women's Day** In Toronto, where the IWD March has traditionally been one of the largest in North America, the themes for this year's march are "Stop the hate! Unite the fight! Build the resistance!" This

could not be more timely, given the election of Trump, the alarming rise of racist incidents both in the US and here, and the threat of our own home-grown racists inside the Tory Party.

#### **Working class feminism**

The call to action in the US is a direct challenge to the so-called "lean-in" feminism best represented by Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton. The term comes from a 2013 book called *Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead*, written by Sheryl Sandberg, the chief operating officer of Facebook, and Nell Scovell, TV and magazine writer.

This lean-in feminism is available only to wealthy women, whose fight for equality is for an equality with their male counterparts in the corporate world, leaving most of the rest of us, both men and women, at the bottom of society. It espouses the same ideology as that of the so-called American Dream. If you're not wealthy, if you're not able to lift yourself out of a situation of poverty wages, bad housing, and lack of access to education, then it's your fault. You're not trying hard enough. It has nothing to do with systemic sexism, racism, discrimination and everything to do with individual drive and determination.

Of course, this mythology aims to divide

**'Stop the hate!  
Unite the  
fight! Build the  
resistance!'**

us from each other, to turn to self-blame or blaming the "other", whether that be women, Blacks, the poor, people with disabilities, for the faults of a system that places profit for the few above all else, namely decent healthcare and reproductive rights, living wages and dignity at work, the freedom to love when and whom we choose.

#### **#BeBoldforChange**

Some are denigrating the call for a women's strike on March 8, arguing that it's not "realistic" and that not all women will be in a position to refuse to work on that day. That may well be true. We do not all have the ability to refuse to work without risking our jobs and our ability to feed ourselves and our children.

However, in these times we need a bold feminism, as in the slogan this year for international IWD actions: #BeBoldforChange. The call for the March 8 action deliberately includes a variety of tactics since not all of us will be in a position to withdraw our labour. It is an inclusive call: "The idea is to mobilize women, including trans women, and all who support them in an international day of struggle—a day of striking, marching, blocking roads, bridges, and squares, abstaining from domestic, care and sex work, boycotting, calling out misogynistic pol-

# THE RADICAL ROOTS OF INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY



Bold action is needed to confront untrammelled capitalism.

iticians and companies, striking in educational institutions."

#### **Resisting Trump**

And as has been amply demonstrated, since the election of Trump and before, women and others are more and more willing to take up the bold action that is needed to confront the monsters that 40 years of neoliberalism and untrammelled capitalism have brought us.

Tens of thousands took part in A Day Without Immigrants strikes and protests across the US on February 17. People marched in Charlotte, Austin, Chicago and Detroit. Some schools were shut down in Los Angeles.

The thousands who flooded airports protesting Trump's racist ban on Muslims, the high school students who came out after his election to proclaim "Not my president" and "Refugees are welcome here", the ordinary Americans who have been holding their representatives to account at town hall meetings where they are demanding politicians stand up to the racism and sexism of the bigot who is now the leader of their country – all of these struggles and more speak to the willingness among broad swathes of the population to take bold action.

And it is often women—in Black Lives Matter, in the Fight for 15, in the organizing to defend choice and reproductive rights—who are at the forefront of these struggles.

2017 is shaping up to be the year to take on Trump, both inside the US and internationally, as well as challenging other manifestations of the same sickness: the Kelly Leitchs, Marine LePens and other world leaders who are turning to racism, sexism, Islamophobia and homophobia to divide and conquer the 99%.

#### **Women's resistance: 1917 to 2017**

2017 is also the 100th anniversary of the Russian Revolution. We can and should look to the incredible struggles of that period for inspiration in the fight today.

It was a celebration of International Women's Day in February 1917 that was the spark



Black Lives Matter at the 2017 Toronto Pride March. Photo: Urrananebi Agbeyegbe

that ignited the Russian Revolution. A group of women textile workers in St. Petersburg had asked the Bolshevik central committee what to do on that day. They were told not to strike and to await instructions.

But when no instructions came the women took matters into their own hands and took to the streets. Soon thousands were leaving the factories and the bread lines, filling the city with banners demanding "Bread—our children are starving!"

They were eventually joined by other women, by male workers, peasants and soldiers. Only a week after these events the Tsar, Russia's absolute monarch, abdicated. This moment led to the taking of power by the whole of the Russian working class in October of that year.

It's in that spirit that we should celebrate and organize for IWD this year. Women in Tsarist Russia were among the most down-trodden and oppressed but by taking collective action they inspired not only themselves, but also other sections of the oppressed within Russian society.

As the organizers of this year's Women's March wrote in their call for a Day Without a Woman, "We saw what happened when millions of us stood together in January, and now we know that our army of love greatly outnumbered the army of fear, greed and hatred."

## Build the power to fight and win



Thousands of women struck mill owners in Lowell and Lawrence, Mass. in 1912.

by **Carolyn Egan**

Washington, DC is still reverberating from the Women's March that took place on January 21, 2017. It was an extraordinary event on inauguration weekend, and one of the largest demonstrations in decades. The mobilization was part of building a mass movement against the policies of Donald Trump and the interests he represents. Rallies and protests at airports, on campuses, and in the streets of cities and towns across the US have been almost daily occurrences.

In Canada, and around the world, there were marches in solidarity denouncing the attacks that every oppressed minority in the United States was being subjected to. Millions mobilized saying no to Islamophobia, anti-Black racism, attacks on undocumented peoples and the misogyny which has been a mark of the Trump administration. The executive orders have been fast and furious.

One of the hallmarks of the demonstration that took place on the January 21 in Toronto was the emphasis on the situation we are facing here. The horror of the murders at the mosque in Quebec City showed clearly that we are up against those same forces. Bigotry knows no borders, and politicians such as Leitch and O'Leary are fanning the flames – setting people against each other, emulating the politics of the Republicans south of the border.

The National Front in France, the Golden Dawn in Greece, the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) are all part of this same phenomenon. We have seen fire bombings and protests at mosques in Ontario. At the same time, in downtown Toronto as bigots chanted outside a local

mosque, passersby stopped and stood in solidarity with the Muslim community that had come to pray.

International Women's Day (IWD) which has long been a highlight of progressive politics in Toronto has chosen a timely theme this year: STOP THE HATE – UNITE THE FIGHT – BUILD THE RESISTANCE – UNITY IS POWER. This is meant to continue and broaden the fightback against the politics of division and hate that we are seeing worldwide. This is a call for all progressive people to come out and concretely show that the forces that are trying to intimidate the Muslim community, and all others that are being targeted by the politics of reaction, have no support in this city.

In the early 20th century in New York City, immigrant women garment workers walked off the job for decent wages and working conditions, demanding that they be treated with the respect that they deserve.

In 1910, a socialist women's conference in Copenhagen declared International Women's Day in recognition of their fight. A few years later, thousands of women speaking twenty-two different languages struck against mill owners in Lawrence and Lowell, Massachusetts, fighting for union recognition. With strong solidarity from the broader working class, they won that fight which has been commemorated in the women's movement anthem "Bread and Roses".

There has been a long history of the women's movement fighting back against bigotry and misogyny. We are seeing those attacks today, and it is critically important that we build the unity that is so critical to a resistance that has the collective power to fight back and win.



## Where we stand

### The dead-end of capitalism

The capitalist system is based on violence, oppression and brutal exploitation. It creates hunger beside plenty, it threatens our sustenance through unsafe and unsustainable farming, and kills the earth itself with pollution and unsustainable extraction of oil, minerals, animals, trees, and water. Capitalism leads to imperialism and war. Saving ourselves and the planet depends on finding an alternative.

### A system that is killing the planet

Capitalist profits depend on extracting the world's blood and bone. The devastating impact of capital's assault on the planet affect the world's most vulnerable populations and threaten the long-term meaningful existence of humanity. Capitalism cannot regulate the catastrophic effects of climate change. We stand for climate justice, including the concept of "just transition" for affected workers.

### Socialism and workers' power

Any alternative to capitalism must involve replacing the system from the bottom up through radical collective action. Central to that struggle is the workplace, where capitalism reaps its profits off our backs.

Capitalist monopolies control the earth's resources, but workers everywhere actually create the wealth. A new socialist society can only be constructed when workers collectively seize control of that wealth and plan its production and distribution to satisfy human needs, not corporate profits—to respect the environment, not pollute and destroy it.

### Oppression

Within capitalist society different groups suffer from specific forms of oppression. Attacks on oppressed groups are used to divide workers and weaken solidarity. We oppose racism and imperialism. We oppose all immigration controls. We support the right of people of colour and other oppressed groups to organize in their own defence. We are for real, social, economic and political equality for women. We are for an end to all forms of discrimination and homophobia against lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgender people.

We oppose environmental racism. We oppose discrimination on the basis of religion, ability and age.

### Canada, Quebec, Indigenous Peoples

Canada is not a "colony" of the United States, but an imperialist country in its own right that participates in the exploitation of much of the world. The Canadian state was founded through the repression of Indigenous peoples and the people of Quebec.

We support the struggles for self-determination of Quebec and Indigenous peoples up to and including the right to independence. In particular, we recognize Indigenous peoples' original and primary right to decide their fate and that of their lands, heritage, and traditions. Socialists in Quebec, and in all oppressed nations, work to give the struggle against national oppression an internationalist and working class content.

### Internationalism

The struggle for socialism is part of a worldwide struggle. We campaign for solidarity with workers in other countries. We oppose everything that turns workers from one country against those from other countries. We support all genuine national liberation movements.

The 1917 revolution in Russia was an inspiration for the oppressed everywhere. But it was defeated when workers' revolutions elsewhere were defeated. A Stalinist counter-revolution, which killed millions, created a new form of capitalist exploitation based on state ownership and control. In Eastern Europe, China and other countries, a similar system was later established by Stalinist, not socialist, parties. We support the struggle of workers in these countries against both private and state capitalism.

### Elections and democracy

Elections can be an opportunity to give voice to the struggle for social change. But under capitalism, they can't change the system. The structures of the present parliament, army, police and judiciary protect the ruling class against the workers. These structures cannot be simply taken over and used by the working class. The working class needs real democracy, and that requires an entirely different kind of state—a workers' state based upon councils of workers' delegates.

### Reform and revolution

Every day, there are battles between exploiter and exploited, oppressor and oppressed, to reform the system—to improve living conditions. These struggles are crucial in the fight for a new world. To further these struggles, we work within the trade unions and orient to building a rank and file movement that strengthens workers' unity and solidarity.

But the fight for reforms will not, in itself, bring about fundamental social change. The present system cannot be fixed or reformed as the NDP and many trade union leaders say. Nor can the system regulate itself to prevent environmental destruction and climate injustice. It has to be overthrown. That will require the mass action of workers themselves.

### The revolutionary party

To achieve socialism the leading activists in the working class have to be organized into a revolutionary socialist party. The party must be a party of action, and it must be democratic. We are an organization of activists committed to helping in the construction of such a party through ongoing activity in the mass organizations of the working class and in the daily struggles of workers and the oppressed.

If these ideas make sense to you, help us in this project, and join the International Socialists.

# Who is Frederick Douglass?

by Brian Champ

The period since Donald Trump took office has been accompanied by a dramatic increase in hate crimes across the board. The connection to the far right through Steve Bannon is very worrying, as is the reluctance of Trump to denounce racist attacks. But the pressure on the president to at least pay lip service to fighting racism has also produced some bizarre moments.

To mark Black History Month, Trump held a "little breakfast" media event where he delivered a speech which revealed the President's ignorance about the history of the struggle for black liberation in America.

Name dropping Dr. King, Rosa Parks, Harriet Tubman and Frederick Douglass, nowhere did Trump mention the history of slavery or show any knowledge of what their struggles were and, weirdly, commented that "Frederick Douglass is an example of somebody who's done an amazing job and is being recognized more and more, I noticed."

Neither he nor press secretary Sean Spicer seemed to be aware that Douglass died over 120 years ago.

### A monumental figure

The importance of Frederick Douglass's leadership in the movement to abolish slavery cannot be overstated. Born into slavery, he escaped to the north to become a leader of the abolitionist movement.

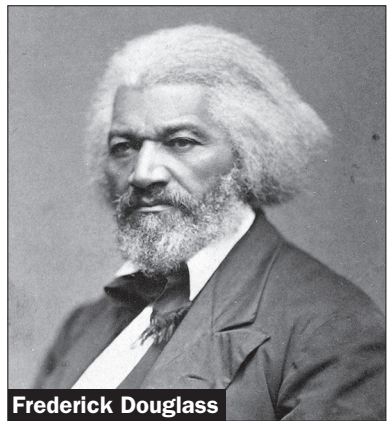
He was well known for his fiery oratory in the cause of liberation and social justice and argued powerfully that slavery could not be defeated by moral force alone but would require physical force to defeat the plantation owners. He famously argued: "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will."

During the Civil War, he recruited escaped slaves into the union army. He was at the same time a powerful critic of Lincoln's half-hearted early prosecution of the war. At one point, he made clear his intention to stop recruiting former slaves to fight for the union army, and President Lincoln thought it was important enough to meet with him and hear his council about the fight to end slavery.

Born a slave in the Maryland countryside in 1817-18, he was separated from his mother shortly after his birth, which was one of the inhumane practices that was common at the time. He used whatever resources were available

to teach himself to read and write, including engaging the local neighbourhood school boys as tutors.

Later he ended up in a horrible situation with an owner determined to crush his will. In September 1838, when he was 20-21 years old, he fled to freedom in New York City where he first encountered the abolitionist paper, *The Liberator*, edited by William Lloyd Garrison. He subscribed and became involved in abolitionist activities, and by the early 1840s had become an influential and inspiring speaker.



### Abolitionist

Afraid of being recaptured, Douglass moved to the UK for two years, delivering anti-slavery speeches to great acclaim. Supporters in Britain raised 150 pounds sterling so that Douglass could buy his freedom and on December 12, 1846 he became a free man.

He began publishing his own paper, *The North Star*, in Rochester, New York and became influenced by John Brown and his insistence that slavery cannot be ended without violence. This became a point of division between him and William Lloyd Garrison, who saw the struggle as a moral one to embarrass slaveholders into renouncing slavery. He attended the first Women's Rights Convention at Seneca Falls, New York and remained a fighter for women's voting rights throughout his life.

### Underground Railroad

He helped many fugitive slaves escape through the northern US to Canada as a participator in the Underground Railroad.

But probably the most important role that Douglass played from a revolutionary standpoint was as a recruiter of ex-slaves to fight for their freedom in the union army. Hundreds of thousands of highly motivated freedom fighters were

inspired to join, many by a Douglass article or speech. He travelled around the north delivering speeches and published articles exhorting men of colour to fight to secure their freedom, and that they were the most effective fighters against slavery.

An article called "Men of Color to Arms", published in March of 1863 made the case for action:

"[W]ith every reverse to the national arms, with every exulting shout of victory raised by the slaveholding rebels, I have implored the imperiled nation to unchain against her foes, her powerful black hand. Slowly and reluctantly that appeal is beginning to be heeded. Stop not now to complain that it was not heeded sooner. ... This is not the time to discuss that question. Leave it to the future. When the war is over, the country is saved, peace is established, and the black man's rights are secured, as they will be, history with an impartial hand will dispose of that and sundry other questions.

"Action! Action! not criticism, is the plain duty of this hour. Words are now useful only as they stimulate to blows. The office of speech now is only to point out when, where, and how to strike to the best advantage. There is no time to delay. The tide is at its flood that leads on to fortune. From East to West, from North to South, the sky is written all over, 'Now or never. Liberty won by white men would lose half its luster. 'Who would be free themselves must strike the blow.' 'Better even die free, than to live slaves.' This is the sentiment of every brave colored man amongst us."

This remarkable man never stopped fighting in the service of human liberation until his death in 1895, remaining a staunch defender of the gains won in the civil war and fighting against Jim Crow in the last years of his life.

And now, over 120 years after his death, his spirit lives in the rising movements that are resisting the far right that have been encouraged by Trump's racist, misogynistic agenda.

His spirit lives on in Black Lives Matter, drawing attention to the targeting and killing of black men by police across the US. His spirit lives on with the millions who participated in the women's march to affirm a different America from that represented by Trump and his cronies. We need to follow the example of Douglass, and forge a path to liberation with vigorous resistance: "Action! Action! ... There is no time to delay."



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Toronto Disability Pride March

# Trudeau’s accessible Canada includes unpaid work

by **Melissa Graham**

Back in 2015, before the Canadian federal election, a movement of disabled people was building across the country. The call for a barrier-free Canada was built in that time by a small, dedicated group of people who reinforced their message daily through social media and on the ground action. Their methods were so effective, that what began as a grassroots call for national solidarity grew into a campaign promise by Trudeau.

What was mandated was more conversation, in the form of a seven month long cross-country consultation process with Canadians with disabilities. Consultations like these are a favoured trend in the current federal government. Perhaps this is because they act as public evidence of some kind of action, regardless of how effective it is.

As expected, these events were heavily managed, giving the appearance of consent rather than providing opportunities for consensus and moving forward. At the public consultations, participants given time to speak were restricted to a two-minute limit, a method that was inaccessible for many participants. There was the impression that the people who spoke were expected to be grateful for the opportunity to share their perspective, even when it’s only taken in limited amounts.

There were impressions that a lot of what was being said was being filtered out, and reframed to fit an agenda. Any comments referring to issues of discrimination in immigration, affordable housing, poverty, or anything involving active redistribution was notably left out. There was some potential raised for amending some existing regulations, but little else. The focus was clearly centered on employment, while carefully avoiding much of what keeps most disabled people in poverty.

As confirmed by a volunteer, this was a pattern across the country, but what was more surprising was the treatment of the volunteers themselves. Disabled people were brought in as volunteers to act as champions, panels and facilitators, and provide unpaid consultation. According to one such volunteer, what was expected of them could have amounted to a part-time job over a period of four months, including training, preparation and debriefing, all without paid compensation. Many people became reluctant to continue. Some of these volunteers continue to be contacted for ongoing unpaid sharing of their knowledge and expertise.

This is a significant problem, and one that many disabled people are familiar with: recognition of expertise without status or compensation. Volunteers were put in a position of either feeling exploited or declining their knowledge, while government representatives proclaimed the need for more jobs for disabled people within the consultations.

Instead of reaching out to offer paid work to disabled people, they paid consulting firms to find disabled people to consult with. They are doing market research rather than accepting the expertise of disabled people in designing policies or programs.

If the Trudeau government wanted to take a stand on something more effective for disabled people, they might start by taking a lead and offering meaningful skilled employment, but no one is calling them out.

If we want to see real change, we need to go back to where we started, back to the grassroots approach, and hold our representatives accountable for their ableist biases and charity model approach to accessibility. The consultations closed on February 28th, but the notes will be made public. It’s on us to make them count.

## REVIEWS

### Review of *The Founder*

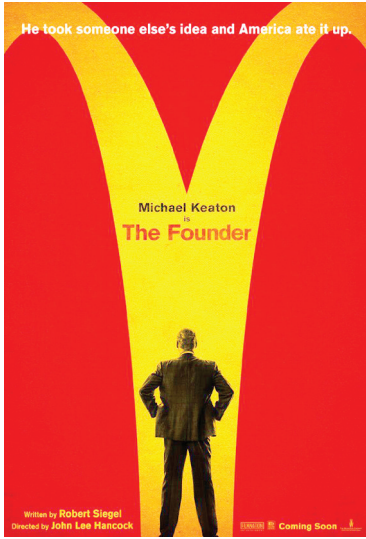
# Fast-food Manifest Destiny

by **Aaron S. Bayley**

One of the great ironies of director John Lee Hancock’s *The Founder*, about the founding of McDonald’s restaurant, is the portrayal of brothers Dick and Mac McDonald as guardians of integrity resisting the crass commercialism symbolized by businessman Ray Kroc, played masterfully by Michael Keaton.

*The Founder*, which opened earlier this month, tells the story of how Kroc went from a likeable loser hawking milkshake mixers to jukebox diners in small-town 1950s America, to becoming the face of perhaps the most iconic American brand to date. But it’s also a metaphor for the American Dream (though the film isn’t quite sure whether that dream is myth or reality). One thing that’s certain, however, is that despite the deliberate dichotomy between the brothers McDonald and Kroc, the film endorses only a tepid condemnation of capitalist exploitation.

In his book *Throwing Rocks At the Google Bus*, a critique of the modern digital economy, Douglass Rushkoff contrasts the values of peer-to-peer artisanal economics with those of industrial economics. This contrast is embodied by the McDonald brothers and Kroc, respectively. For instance, Ray and Mac, played sympathetically by Nick Offerman and John Carrol Lynch, are honest and resourceful, treating the family business like a fragile egg to be



handled with care. Kroc, on the other hand, has visions of monopoly and corporation dancing in his head, and pleads with the reluctant brothers to franchise their business.

When it comes to production, the McDonalds are content selling their fifteen-cent hamburgers at their flagship store in San Bernardino, California, where they can oversee the process and guarantee quality and quick service. Keaton’s Kroc, transfixed by the assembly line efficiency of the McDonald’s kitchen and obsessed with the potential profits of mass production, hastily opens stores in Detroit, Chicago, Minnesota, and soon across the country, quality control be damned. Where the brothers aim toward pleasing

their customers and putting a human face to their business, Kroc, bedazzled by a photograph in the brothers’ office of a McDonald’s restaurant with golden arches, dreams of the Golden Arches as the quintessential all-American brand icon.

Soon Kroc is selling powdered milkshakes without the brothers’ consent, lying about his role in the company and comparing hearts to contracts (“They’re made to be broken.”). In a chilling scene where the relationship between the three has deteriorated past the point of reconciliation and the brothers threaten litigation, Kroc scoffs, “I’m national. You’re fucking local.”

### Fast-food manifest destiny

And yet, as Kroc morphs from a likeable loser with a pocketful of payphone coins to a ruthless, backstabbing capitalist, *The Founder* both vilifies and deifies him. As he sticks thumbtacks on a map of America like a colonist searching for new land to exploit, it seems the perfect picture of imperialist expansion: fast-food manifest destiny. Keaton plays an arched-eyebrow villain who is celebrated for his visionary concept and system. The McDonald brothers come across as naïve simpletons who got hoodwinked—outhustled by a fast-talking huckster lacking a moral compass, but shrewd enough to understand that in America, wealth is built on the extraction of value.

Sound familiar?

### Review of *I Am Not Your Negro*

# A nation of moral monsters

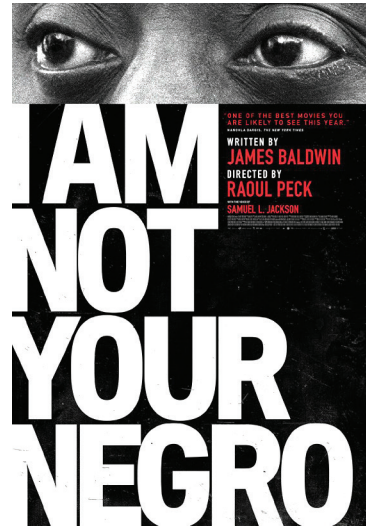
by **Michelle Robidoux**

This powerful documentary, directed by Raoul Peck, is a remarkable and devastating examination of the struggle for Black liberation in the United States.

The spine of the film is an unfinished manuscript by the great African-American writer James Baldwin, titled *Remember This House*. The 30 page text brings together three giants of the struggle for Black liberation – Medgar Evers, Malcolm X and Martin Luther King. These three very different men – all of them murdered before the age of 40 – “took on the crimes and lies of a nation”.

The film recounts Baldwin’s encounter with each of these men, and with the events that shaped – and were shaped by – them. In 1957, Baldwin was living in France. He recalls seeing the image of 15-year old Dorothy Counts, attempting to integrate a whites-only school in Charlotte, North Carolina, with “history jeering at her back”.

This young black woman, surrounded by a seething white mob, prompted his return to the U.S. “Everybody was paying their dues,



and it was time I went home and paid mine,” he says.

The film blends footage of Baldwin speaking, images of key moments of the Civil Rights struggle, the names Trayvon Martin, Tamir Rice, Amir Brooks and Aiyana Stanley-Jones, and footage of the 2014 uprising in Ferguson, Missouri.

This film is not about history. It is a scorching critique of a system

that today, as then, produces what Baldwin calls “a nation of moral monsters”.

One of the film’s outstanding achievements is that throughout, Baldwin alone speaks – directly or through the voice of Samuel L. Jackson. As Peck told the CBC, “I almost had to invent a new form of filmmaking, of documentary to tell a story solely and uniquely through Baldwin’s words.”

Baldwin’s rich and profound prose rips away the pretense of ‘progress’ to reveal the ugly truth of a society founded on slavery and colonization. This truth rings out long after the film ends.

As Peck told Rolling Stone, “Each moment in the film, you turn the mirror to yourself... it’s impossible not to be totally involved and to question your own thoughts and prejudice. You are confronted by who you are and what you are in your society.”

James Baldwin died in 1987, at age 63. This film brings his ideas and his clarity to new generations confronting the “sinister results of racism”. Go see it right away, it is a weapon in our struggle against an inhuman system.



# Tell Trudeau: let the refugees in

by Bradley Hughes

Trump's racist travel ban was challenged in the airports, in the streets, and in the courts. In Canada, people across the country have taken to the streets to show solidarity with Muslims in Canada after the terror attack on a mosque in Quebec, and to protest the racism of Trump and his like that inspire such attacks.

Trump's racist travel ban, issued on January 27, bans people from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen and all refugees from entering the United States. It was eventually overturned by US courts. Since then, Trump has announced he will issue a new travel ban.

Despite this opposition to Trump and his racism, Prime Minister Trudeau has done nothing. Despite letter writing campaigns, petitions and other pleas from tens of thousands, he has steadfastly refused to take action. While Trudeau is often accused of leading with words instead of action, he even failed at this: when asked about the travel ban while he stood next to Trump during his visit to the US, he claimed "the last thing Canadians expect is for me to come down and lecture another country on how they chose to govern themselves." He effectively sided with Trump against the movement in solidarity with refugees.

## Words and actions

There are a number of things Trudeau could do, if he opposes Trump's actions and wants to help those effected by the ban. First and foremost, he could publicly denounce Trump. This would show solidarity with Muslims in



Thousands protested against Trump's Muslim ban in Toronto. Photo: Gustavo Monteiro

Canada and around the world who are targeted by Trump's racism. It would also show solidarity with the protesters in the US.

Our government could also end the Canada-US Safe Third Country Agreement that was put in place by the Harper government to prevent refugees who arrived in the US from continuing on to Canada. If the US was ever safe for refugees, it certainly isn't now. This

agreement means that refugees in the US will be turned away if they try to cross the border legally. So of course, refugees are hiking for hours in sub-zero temperatures to cross the border outside of the border crossing. Will it take deaths in the snow before Trudeau opens our borders to refugees who cannot find sanctuary in the US?

Trudeau could raise the number of refugees

we are accepting from the countries targeted by Trump. As the majority of these are countries that Canada has invaded and/or bombed alongside the US in recent history, helping to cause the current refugee crisis, Trudeau could also end Canada's participation in the wars that drive people from their homes.

There are many things Trudeau could say and do. Or he could just tweet about it.

# Support grows for university food service workers

by Kevin Taghabon

On February 17, York University food service workers in UNITE HERE local 75 went on strike to protest unfair wages and working conditions. The food service jobs at York University are contracted out by the administration to Aramark, a private corporation.

## Racism and harassment

Joanna, one of the workers on strike outside the Keele Street entrance to York University, said: "We need to fight for fairness. We need respect, and a stop to the racism on campus. We've heard certain managers say they don't want Black workers, and that no Muslims can get promoted. I don't think that's fair. We're all human."

These complaints echo the words of another Aramark employee and organizer, Melissa, at a Fight for 15 and Fairness meeting weeks earlier: "There's instances that managers go around saying, 'we're going to stop hiring black people.' Telling workers, one worker in particular who applied for a promotion, that she was not going to get that promotion because she's Muslim. Workers being discriminated against when they're pregnant. Certain Black workers being

told that they're not allowed to sit together during break because they are too loud."

The low wages are not related to seniority. One woman who has been employed by Aramark for 28 years is making just over \$14 an hour.

Aramark's profits have reached over \$90 million a year. However, they have not yet met the workers' demands for a \$15 an hour minimum wage, paid sick time, a safe and healthy workplace, and an end to racism and Islamophobia. Aramark did seem to find money in their budgets to pay four people to sit in their vehicles all day surveilling workers during the strike.

When asked what his role was, one of these four individuals said, "I don't know... I know, but I'm not supposed to discuss it." Another said, "I'm not in charge of safety but I'm covering it with video just in case something happens, you might have a car that goes through the crowd... I work for a company that's subcontracted... we're a PR company."

York University President Shoukri has dodged attempts to meet with him. Melissa said that when a delegation of students and workers together went to his offices, "he never showed up. He knew we were coming, his people called him and then he just never came

back to his office."

Various workers have said the strikes are going over well and the attitude from students and staff is one of support. Alec, a young recent hire working at an Aramark-contracted coffee shop told me about his experiences at another Aramark strike: "Definitely positive. Exciting... Everything was collaborative and it was fun... it was my first strike and it was a good experience."

The York Faculty Association has endorsed the campaign as well. At the picket line on the 17th Joanna similarly described "overwhelming" support on campus from students coming out and cheering them on in the cold at an earlier strike. Joanna had brought her young daughter, perhaps six years old, to join her at the strike as there was no school. Her daughter happily carried a megaphone and led energetic "mighty, mighty union" songs on the picket line.

On February 21, striking cafeteria workers from York joined those from University of

Toronto Scarborough campus in delivering 5,000 signed petitions to Queen's Park, calling on the universities and government to support decent work.

"It's outrageous that any worker on a university campus should be making \$11.50 an hour, and hiding behind a subcontractor is no excuse," said UNITE HERE 75 president Lis Pimentel.

## Show your support

Visit the site <http://york15.ca> and send a direct message to President Shoukri.

The text includes a call to recognize and respect the food service workers that help the University community function: "All of us meet and interact with food service workers every single day: they prepare our meals, they serve us coffee, they keep the food courts running smoothly. Their hard work makes it possible for literally tens of thousands of students, staff and faculty to spend long days on campus—to study, to learn, to teach and to work."

