

# No to Austerity and Repression! No to militarism in Canada

Peace Congress condemns Quebec's anti-protest law, supports the rights of Quebec students

By [Canadian Peace Congress](#)

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The Canadian Peace Congress condemns the repressive anti-protest law of the Charest government, Bill 78, and extends its full solidarity with the Quebec student strike.

By subjecting the right to protest to police permission and control, Bill 78 attacks the main vehicle for mobilization to stop the mounting imperialist wars and military spending of the Canadian government under Stephen Harper. The same police repression which uses rubber bullets, sound bombs, and mass arrests and detention against peaceful students was also used against anti-G20 protests in Toronto in 2010, and could be used next against the peace movement and other progressive forces. The student strike in Quebec has been winning broad support, including from the labour movement, to defeat this repression and prevent it from advancing to even further stages.

Bill 78 and the accompanying police violence are part of a deliberate and accelerating growth of militarism in Canada, a policy emanating from the Harper Conservatives in Ottawa and echoed by many provincial and municipal governments.

These developments represent the interests of corporate Canada, who promote an increasingly aggressive foreign policy for Canada. The main vehicle for this international role is NATO, through which Canada participated in the wars on Afghanistan and Libya, and is driving toward new wars on Syria and Iran.

Corporate interests are also aggressively reflected in recent shifts in Canadian domestic policy. The Harper government has announced that part of its "anti-terrorism" strategy includes targetting Aboriginal and environmental groups who are opposed to the proposed Gateway and Keystone oil pipelines. Through this approach, the Conservative government intends to target and subdue those who work for environmental security, for the sovereignty of Aboriginal peoples, and for democratic control over the country's resources.

The repression of the Quebec student strike comes at the same time as the announcement

that the attacks on Libya cost at least \$350 million, seven times more than the originally stated cost. Yet when it comes to public services there is no such windfall spending. In terms of post-secondary education, the tuition rise demanded by the Charest government could be funded by reducing the order of F-35 jets by just one plane. The money and resources for a people's recovery do exist – getting it requires a rejection of the twin policies of militarism and austerity.

The issues of peace, withdrawal from Afghanistan and NATO, and slashing military spending and militarization, must be raised as part of the broader struggle against this repression. Defiance of Bill 78 is a test of strength: the movement developing around the Quebec student strike has the kind of unity and mobilization required to stop Canada's wars for imperialism. The Canadian Peace Congress calls on all peace organizations to bring attention to the dangers of Bill 78 so that it can be defeated, and to provide solidarity to the student strike in Quebec.

Canadian Peace Congress Executive Council

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