



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CUPW 730 / DECEMBER 2023

# INSIDE OUT



**INSIDE OUT** is the monthly publication of the Edmonton Local of CUPW.

This newsletter aspires to educate and inform members and affiliates about our union’s activities, opportunities, and challenges, as well as to raise awareness regarding all things labour.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily the official views of the Local.

The Communications Committee (responsible for this publication) is always interested in submissions of original articles, photographs, or illustrations. Prospective material must always concern CUPW or the labour movement, but submissions of general interest to the membership will also be considered.

All submissions for publication are subject to the approval of the Local President, and may be edited for brevity, clarity, etc.

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**F**riends and Comrades,

The Local has been very busy. This time of year is always hectic, and this year Canada Post seems to be making it more so. My calendar is filled with consultations for every facility and shift in the Local. These meetings can range from something as simple as a schedule change to eliminating an entire work centre.

Adding to the plethora of consults with Canada Post, we have been preparing and holding ratification votes for the program of demands that National is proposing for our upcoming negotiations. This program of demands is our opportunity to let Canada Post know that we demand change. There are a number of demands that apply to all postal workers, like a significant wage increase, job security, fixes to staffing. But each of the groups have their own specific demands. In the plant we are looking for greater protections from job killing automation. The RSMCs have a list of rights and protections they are seeking to come into line with the Urban bargaining unit, as well as corporate vehicles for the RSMCs. The letter carriers' number one demand is to kill SSD.

Postal workers deserve these demands. We are the ones moving the

mail, we are the ones breaking our bodies to keep the economic machine moving in this country. Just like many of the other workers across North America. It's encouraging to see that many of the workers that are unionized have recently achieved significant wins at the bargaining table.

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**“ Let me be clear. National is not going to kill SSD. The Local isn't going to stop the bleeding of permanent full time positions in the plant. And I'm not going to get RSMCs paid for all the work they do: You are. ”**

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But those wins came at a cost. The cost? Participation. Across the board, when workers organize they win. That organizing takes many forms from gathering for a beer to talk shop, to holding a “practice picket” to let the employer know they are ready to fight.

Let me be clear. National is not going to kill SSD. The Local isn't going to stop the bleeding of permanent full time positions in the plant. And I'm not going to get RSMCs paid for all the work they do: You are.

The only thing that is going to get us these wins is if you and your coworkers step up. Based on the turnout for the ratification votes, we are not ready. However, you and your coworkers across this country have six months to prepare. There will be plenty of opportunities in those six months to figure this out. We will be stretching our organizing muscles and seeing how engaged our members are between now and then. How you and your fellow postal workers respond will tell us and the employer just how serious you are to fight for these demands.

The ball is in your court. 



# ORGANIZING REPORT

By James Ball, 1st Vice-President/Organizing Officer

## 2023 has been an eventful year for organizing in the Edmonton Local.

Here are some of the key events.

**Make them Pay.** With gasoline prices at record levels, RSMCs were suffering dearly and something needed to be done. Our National office approached both Canada Post and the federal government for relief, but neither offered a solution. With nothing moving, our Local chose to start a postcard campaign to deliver a message to the minister that CPC should be responsible for the cost of delivering the mail.

As my first significant campaign, it was a challenge to get it moving, but it did move. We've delivered well over 2,000 postcards to Parliament. More importantly, it got representatives from our union out to RSMC offices and got us in touch with members we hadn't seen since before the pandemic. The plan took longer than anticipated, but hopefully with these new connections we can perform campaigns like this in a shorter timeframe in the future. Special thanks to Elizabeth Smallwood, Karry Biri, Lennard Vis, and Renée Black for their work and counsel during the project.

**Solidarity Info Picket.** The proper thing for management to do when people use their Right to Complain (Article 9.07 of the Urban Collective Agreement) would be to listen for a couple of minutes. What happened at the EMPP in February has become infamous across the country. What I'd like to focus on, however, is the work that was done to make sure CPC understands that suspending almost an entire section of workers is not the proper response.

An info picket was arranged and it happened on the sidewalk of the Edmonton Mail Processing Plant. Solidarity petitions were sent through the budding Building Worker Power network, and solidarity photos came from many locals across the country. The info picket had a great turnout and I hear that it had far reaching effects through the CPC management structure.


A GoFundMe was launched to help ease the burden for the suspended members. Many thanks to all the Locals who participated and sent pictures. A special thanks to Robert and his team at the EMPP for the work they did, as well as to Dave Lambert for all his help from the Regional office.

**Threat of Separate Sort and Delivery in St. Albert.** When CPC informed our office that the restructure at the St. Albert Depot was going to be SSD, we challenged them immediately. They said they needed space, yet the depot was not sharing cases for letter carriers despite having two waves. Floor talks and petitions were arranged.

Ultimately, the RSMC members chose to make a sacrifice to help out the letter carriers by agreeing to a two wave system and case sharing to reduce the space taken up by sortation cases. In exchange, RSMCs received pay for all hours worked through a Memorandum of Agreement. The sacrifice from the RSMCs shows an amazing level of solidarity.

**Wallet Card Campaign.** This one is hot off the presses. The Organizing Committee created a series of business card-sized information cards to highlight some key rights for members. The Right to Refuse, the Right to Representation, the Right to Complain, and a Social Steward information card. They all contain the basic information and also a QR code that will direct your browser to additional information.

A very special thank you to the Communications Committee whose work has been essential in these campaigns. The team has been tireless in the work they have done – the artwork, layout, design, and more. Thank you for putting up with us. I can't thank you enough.

There will be more campaigns coming after the holiday season and Christmas rush. More information on that soon. 



# AN OPEN LETTER TO CANADA POST CORPORATION

## CANADA LABOUR CODE REGULATIONS ON THE AVAILABILITY OF MENSTRUAL PRODUCTS IN THE WORKPLACE

**T**he Women's Committee of CUPW Local 730 writes to you today to make you aware that on December 15, 2023 section 9.17 of the Canada Labour Code comes into effect. It reads as below:

9.17 (1) The employer shall provide menstrual products, including clean and hygienic tampons and menstrual pads, in each toilet room.

(2) If it is not feasible to provide menstrual products in a toilet room, the employer shall provide them in another location in the same work place that is controlled by the employer, accessible by employees at all times and offers a reasonable amount of privacy.

(3) The employer shall provide a covered container for the disposal of menstrual products

(a) in any toilet room that has only one toilet; and

(b) in each toilet compartment of any toilet room that has more than one toilet.

We are pleased with these incoming amendments to the Canada Labour Code and believe that the provision of menstrual products can have far reaching benefits including the reduction of 'period poverty' exacerbated by sky-rocketing costs of living; the normalization of women's health and health related needs and the impact of such on their working conditions; as well as the provision of access to health and hygiene related products to the entire workforce resulting in increased discretion, privacy, and non judgement.

We have included the link below to the regulation as well as additional articles regarding period poverty in Canada and around the globe and a short video from CBC's Marketplace on the concept of the 'pink tax' whereby products geared towards women are often priced higher than the non gendered or male gendered equivalent. We look forward to the implementation of Section 9.17 and invite you to contact the Local should you have any questions. We would be pleased also to engage with the Canada Post Corporation on the specifics of the products to be offered to ensure the needs of our workforce are best met.

Regards,

The Women's Committee of CUPW Local 730

Links:

<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/regulations/sor-86-304/nifnev.html>

<https://www.cpha.ca/period-poverty-canada-and-around-globe>

<https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2185995843729>



## WORKER SOLIDARITY


### LABOUR VICTORY AND STRUGGLE, AT HOME AND ABROAD



**ATU Local 107** - On November 9th, workers at Hamilton Street Railway represented by ATU Local 107 went on strike. One of their main demands is a living wage that keeps up with inflation.

**SAG-AFTRA** - The SAG-AFTRA strike ended on November 9th after a tentative agreement was approved. This new agreement includes minimum compensation increases; streaming bonuses; disclosure of viewership statistics so actors can determine if they're being fairly compensated; limits on the use of artificial intelligence; minimum number of background actors; and an increase in relocation bonuses.

**Unifor** - St. Lawrence Seaway workers represented by Unifor locals 4211, 4212, 4323, 4319, and 4320 in Ontario and Quebec went on strike for the first time in 55-years for a week in October. The new agreement includes raises of 5%, 4%, and 4% retroactive to April 1st, 2023, as well as a \$2,000 signing bonus.

**CUPW** - In the last month, CUPW has welcomed two new bargaining units. Employees of Mantair Aviation Services Ltd. working at the Thunder Bay International Airport in ground handling services became members in November. Employees of Ebus in Kamloops and Vancouver joined our union in late October. 

# NO WAR BUT CLASS WAR: THE ANTI-UNIONISM OF ANTI-SOGI PROTESTS

By Kyle Turner

**Content Warning:** This article contains discussion of child abuse, pedophilia, homophobia, transphobia, and anti-Semitism

**Recent protests about Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) curriculum in schools are veiled anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ movements that serve to work against unions. Because of this, it is important that organized labour opposes these protests.**

## Introduction

This past Fall in Edmonton, organized labour responded to a veiled anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ protest that occurred outside of the Alberta Teacher's Association (ATA). Similar groups were holding protests across the country. These groups, of course, don't present themselves as such and they take the angle of being concerned with "saving the children" and "parental rights."

It might be confusing as to why labour must take a stand against these groups, but it is my argument that these groups are anti-union and work to weaken our cause. To show this, I will go over their influences in contemporary reactionary, far-right politics. Second, I'll discuss the anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ beliefs of these groups and the false narrative they promote. Finally, I'll discuss how these groups fail to identify the actual problem and, in doing so, are working against us.

## Origins and Context

These anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ groups that have come together to protest not only outside of the ATA but across the country have their origins in few main areas of contemporary reactionary, far-right politics. One of the main influences from the United States is Q Anon. Q Anon has its origins in Pizzagate, a conspiracy that culminated in 2016 with a man with an assault rifle entering a pizza shop in order to investigate the pedophile ring that was believed to be operating out of the basement with the help of politicians Bill and Hillary Clinton.[1]

Q Anon, which popped up the following year through cryptic posts on an

anonymous image board, expands on this. The premise behind Q Anon is that there is a high ranking government official who is sharing secret information. At its core, it's about how the Donald Trump administration was working to fight a cabal of satanic child abusers who are operating a global sex trafficking ring that involves the Democratic Party. This led to the offshoot known as Save the Children in 2020, which continues to this day.[2]

In Canada, there are two movements that led to convoys across the country. In 2018, there was the yellow vest protests that professed to be about protecting jobs and building oil pipelines. This led to the United We Roll convoy to Parliament Hill. The second movement comes from the so-called freedom protests that formed in response to how the government dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. From this, we had the Freedom Convoy, which claimed to be about supporting truckers who would have difficulties crossing the border because of the vaccine mandates. This convoy travelled across Canada and occupied Ottawa for a few weeks before Prime Minister Justin Trudeau used the Emergency Measures Act to forcefully end it.

## Anti-LGBTQ2SIA+

Let's return to the protest outside of the ATA and how it's a part of and builds on the above context. These protests are focused on the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) curriculum in schools. The core of SOGI is that everyone has a sexual orientation and gender identity and that it's important for schools to be safe places for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities.

The groups protesting this use slogans like, "Stop the War on Children," "Protect All Children," and "Leave Our Children Alone." These slogans about children are paired with calls to protect the rights of parents. Protecting the rights of parents, it seems, is just a way to prevent discussions of sexuality and gender.[3]

The language these groups are using to protest SOGI shows the influence of Q Anon. These groups have been claiming that schools and LGBTQ2SIA+ groups are promoting pedophilia; they are comparing gender-affirming care to Nazi experimentation; and that LGBTQ2SI+ people are trying to "groom" children – meaning taking actions to make children susceptible to abuse.[4]

In the US, the Press Secretary for Governor Ron DeSantis said that the proposed Parental Rights in Education Bill should be considered an "anti-grooming" Bill. Because, the Press Secretary continued, if you were against it you were probably a groomer.[5] In Saskatchewan, the government recently passed a bill that would require parental permission for a student to use a different name or different pronouns at school if they were under the age of 16. According to the Premier, this isn't targeting anyone but giving parents the opportunity to support their children.[6]

## What's the Point?

Finally, I would like to discuss how these groups are anti-union and work against our interests. First, these groups are peddling falsehoods. According to the Anti-Defamation League, in or around 2021, far-right and extremist voices started falsely accusing LGBTQ2SIA+ people of being pedophiles and groomers.[7] In addition, the above accusations are untrue: LGBTQ2SIA+ groups are not working to normalize pedophilia as an accepted sexuality;[8] children are not having surgery;[9] gay men aren't more likely to be pedophiles;[10] and, flying in the face of suggestions about a shadowy cabal, perpetrators of sexual violence are generally known by victims and survivors.[11]

We could debunk these claims until we're blue in the face and counter with how protecting children – and people in general – can be done through using the proper pronouns,[12] using chosen names,[13] and providing gender-affirming care, as this leads to a significant decrease in depression and suicide.[14] But these groups that are spreading this information are not concerned with being truthful.

As I racked my brain while talking to a friend, they said to me, "The cruelty is the point." This is also the title of a book by Adam Serwer, in which he argues that the structure of American politics is cruel and that the Republican Party in particular incentivizes cruelty.[15] An interview with Matt Christman, co-host of the podcast Chapo Trap House, helped this click for me: "Am I getting to watch someone I hate hurt more? Am I going to get to watch the state do a ritual of violence on them, like it makes me feel empowered?"[16]



Unionism asks us to imagine a better world and to work together to achieve it. It provides a clear path that involves confronting power and capital and demanding better. The Preamble to the Constitution of the Industrial Workers of the World, for example, makes it clear: the working class and the employing class have nothing in common and that, by organizing industrially, they are working to form the new society within the shell of the old.[17] We also have sayings like "an injury to one is an injury to all"; as well as calls for the unity of all workers, who will have "nothing to lose but their chains." [18]

These anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ groups are not working toward any sort of unity. It seems they are working under the impression that violence and oppression are inevitable and they are looking to offer a sacrifice to act as a buffer between themselves and the next round of pain and suffering. It would be hard to accuse them of lacking an imagination, based on the conspiracy theories that have influenced them.

But what is this analysis rooted in? Whatever it is, it doesn't seek to improve our material conditions in any way. It cleaves off our members and co-workers and makes us weaker by telling them they are unacceptable, forcing them to shut up or go into hiding. The yellow vests quickly became anti-Muslim and anti-immigration.[19] The United We Roll convoy eventually went on to confront Unifor members who were picketing after being locked out by their employer in Saskatchewan.[20] There is currently a Save the Children convoy camped somewhere outside of Ottawa that apparently has as one of its steps to arrest the police and confront the Freemasons in Tofino, B.C. – influenced by the anti-Semitic belief that secret pedophile rituals take place at Masonic lodges.[21]

## Conclusion


In conclusion, while it might seem strange for organized labour to counter-protest these anti-SOGI protests, it is ultimately important that we do. These groups are anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ and are mired in conspiracy theories that promote false narratives that are really just used to justify violence against a marginalized group of people.

The anti-SOGI protests work to divide and make us suspicious of our coworkers, friends, and family members, whether or not we know they are members of the LGBTQ2SIA+ community. It makes it harder to work together because it muddies the waters about who our struggle is against. The brief context I provided here shows that these movements quickly become anti-Muslim, anti-immigration, and anti-LGBTQ2SIA+ among other things.

Of course, it would be the understatement of the century to say that unions still have work to do when it comes to making its marginalized members feel comfortable and truly represented. But we do have the history, the language, and the framework and I'm optimistic that we can make it work.

Luckily, unionism has some clear guidelines for who is working against us and why. Our fight is a class war and it is the employer and capitalists who are trying to get more out of us and provide us with less in return. That's putting it simply, of course, but it's easy enough to see every day on the work floor and with every denied grievance that is a clear violation.

There also aren't any mental gymnastics needed. What would you change about your job if you could? Why? Can you do it on your own? The answer to that last question is no. Making these changes

requires that we can imagine something better and that we come together to achieve it. 



## Resources

Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton (SACE) - a not-for-profit charitable organization that supports children, youth, and adults who have experienced sexual abuse or assault, and educates the public about sexual violence. (www.sace.ca / 780-423-4102)

The Queer & Trans Health Collective (QTHC) - a grassroots health organization run by and for queer and trans community members. (www.ourhealthyege.ca)

# FIGHTING FAR-RIGHT EXTREMISM IN YOUR UNION

By Tim Nault

*(The content of this article was gathered from a webinar presented by Nora Loreto for the CALM/ILCA joint mini conference September 2022)*

**When we talk about right-wing extremism**, what do we mean? It is an anti-social, individualized ideology that blames social problems on the other while seeking its salvation through a strong-man leader. It can appear as explicitly racist, bigoted, and hateful attitudes toward others.


While white supremacist beliefs are often coded as being “extremist,” they are also baked into all of our social structures, including our unions. Racial capitalism – the kind that Canada and the United States have been built on – is justified through the same principles as far-right extremism. Unions often have a stake in racial capitalism because they represent workers whose livelihoods depend on it.

What we’re calling extremism today is an intensified, individualized ideology that many Americans and Canadians have lived under for generations. As it relates to individual union members who might express ideology consistent with: angry hatred, such as racist, antisemitic, sexist, homophobic, and bigoted views; and problems identified by conspiracies, such as Q Anon, Pizzagate, and Black Lives Matter being a Marxist plot.

Why is this a threat to labour? It is anti-social and anti-solidarity, and the existence of the far-right stands in direct contrast to the principles of union organizing. In our union, it might manifest as angry comments, flyers, and social media posts; campaigns against human rights; organizing to run for positions within the union; and acute acts of violence or harassment among workers.

What might attract someone to the far-right? When it comes to the individual: loneliness, isolation, easy answers, radicalization through online platforms, family members or friends, and a need for belonging or to justify hateful opinions. It is also systemic: crumbling social conditions and lack of services.

How do we confront the far-right? By building community and bringing people together, through popular education, and supports for worried family members and friends, as well as forums on the process of radicalization. For systemic causes, through fighting for social justice through collective bargaining and in the community, by advocating for service improvements and by considering the union as a location where services could be delivered, by fighting for livable communities, better working conditions, and real-life community building.

History shows that the only ideology that can meaningfully fight the far-right is the far-left. Labour in and of itself is not a far-left institution, but elements within labour can be and labour must understand itself as a bulwark against fascism. 

No War But Class War, further reading;

- [1] <https://time.com/4590255/pizzagate-fake-news-what-to-know/>
- [2] <https://www.npr.org/2020/10/12/923019289/how-conspiracy-theorists-are-disrupting-efforts-to-fight-human-trafficking>
- [3] <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/parental-rights-movement-in-canada-1.6976230>
- [4] [https://www.antihate.ca/1\\_million\\_march\\_4\\_children](https://www.antihate.ca/1_million_march_4_children)
- [5] <https://www.vox.com/culture/23025505/leftist-groomers-homophobia-satanic-panic-explained>
- [6] <https://regina.ctvnews.ca/final-reading-of-sask-government-s-parents-bill-of-rights-expected-in-legislature-1.6609978>
- [7] <https://www.adl.org/resources/blog/what-grooming-truth-behind-dangerous-bigoted-lie-targeting-lgbtq-community>
- [8] <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-factcheck-lgbtq-community-p-acronym-idUSKBN2352J8>
- [9] <https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/debunking-common-myths-about-gender-affirming-care-for-youth>
- [10] [https://lgbpsychology.org/html/facts\\_molestation.html](https://lgbpsychology.org/html/facts_molestation.html)
- [11] <https://www.rainn.org/statistics/perpetrators-sexual-violence>
- [12] <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/suicide/documents/pronounsuicideprev.pdf>
- [13] <https://news.utexas.edu/2018/03/30/name-use-matters-for-transgender-youths-mental-health/>
- [14] <https://www.columbiapsychiatry.org/news/gender-affirming-care-saves-lives>
- [15] <https://www.vox.com/vox-conversations-podcast/22637762/vox-conversations-adam-serwer-the-cruelty-is-the-point>
- [16] [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clnCGGUSmxQ&ab\\_channel=BreakThroughNews](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=clnCGGUSmxQ&ab_channel=BreakThroughNews)
- [17] <https://www.iwww.org/preamble/>
- [18] <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/ch04.htm>
- [19] <https://geramilaw.com/blog/yellow-vests-and-convoys-scapegoating-immigration.html>
- [20] <https://www.rankandfile.ca/uwr-pensions/>
- [21] <https://pressprogress.ca/what-is-the-save-the-children-convoy-and-what-do-they-really-believe/>

# RATIFICATION VOTE AND REFERENDUM OUTCOME

**Between September 24th and November 5th**, our union held votes to ratify two Program of Demands for our upcoming contract negotiations for Urban and RSMC members. The results are in: Urban members voted 93.95% in favour and RSMC members voted 92.51% in favour.

At the same time, we held a referendum on whether one of our demands should be the merger of the RSMC and Urban bargaining units. Urban voted 66.37% in favour and RSMC voted 64.98% in favour, which means this will become one of our demands.

On Thursday, November 9th, CUPW served notice to CPC to begin bargaining. 



# CHILD CARE FUND AND THE SPECIAL NEEDS PROJECT

By Jenn Reimer

**Being a parent is hard enough** nowadays with the increased cost of living, keeping children engaged/active in extra-curricular activities and helping them with their studies. But what if you were faced with the additional stress and work of not only providing their basic needs, but having to work and deal with the additional issues of them having a disability? This is where the CUPW Child Care Fund comes into play.

A special need for a child under 18 can be defined as a delay or health disorder that requires ongoing assistance or a child that requires different help or support from other children of the same age. For an adult child a disability refers to a long-lasting physical, mental, emotional or health condition that requires ongoing assistance from a caregiver.

In 1991, CUPW negotiated the Child Care Fund to help assist families who were experiencing difficulties and challenges with their children who had special needs. The moneys for this fund come from Canada Post. Some of these challenges are, but not limited to, exhaustion, financial concerns, isolation and lack of support from personal and working relationships.

Through the Special Needs Project for Children 0-18 years and the Moving On Project for Children 18+ years, CUPW has been able to partner up with non-profit child care providers across the country to help families with the additional struggles of caring for children with special needs. Families are given ongoing support from an advisor specific to your child's needs; some families have had the same advisor for over 20 years. Financial assistance is given to help with additional child care, transportation, uninsured medical expenses, etc. and a newsletter is mailed out quarterly with

additional resources, articles and stories submitted by members to share both their own challenges and victories.

211 is Canada's primary source for online information relating to government and community-based health and social services. In 2017, the CUPW Child Care Fund and their members partnered up with 211 Ontario and 211 Nova Scotia to develop the CUPW Disability portal <https://www.disability-supports.ca/> to help make searching for services and supports easier for families to find.

Any member of CUPW who have a child/adult child with special needs or disabilities is eligible to sign up for the program. Members are encouraged to reach out via phone at 1-800-840-5465 or email at [info@specialneedsproject.ca](mailto:info@specialneedsproject.ca). Interviews will be conducted over the phone to determine if members qualify.



# SSD: THE FAILURE THUS FAR

By Jenn Reimer,  
Route Verification Officer

**We have been hearing about** Separate Sort and Delivery (SSD) for the last 6 years when it was first brought up to the work-floors across the country. After the trial run in Laval, Quebec, which resulted in routes only being built to a 6 hour shift, it was deemed a huge success. However, the SSD restructure in Fraser Valley in 2018 and the more recent restructures in Medicine Hat and Winnipeg are painting a much different story. As a member of the Regional Work Measurement committee, we had the chance to have a Zoom meeting with the First Vice-President of the Vancouver local, Jamie McCurrach, to find out more about the impact of SSD on the Fraser Valley Depot.

In case you’re not aware of the proposed SSD model, the basic premise is that “routers” come in and sort/pull/bundle ONLY the manual mail for the letter carriers; then, when the letter carriers come in, they go to their cart for that presorted manual mail, as well as sequenced mail, mark their parcels and packets, load up and hit the streets for 7-7 ½ hours of delivery. The loss of time for the letter carriers to sort and prepare their own mail will now amount to even more time on the street leading to increased steps, stairs, forced 2-bundle system and extra volume on already grossly large and overburdening walks, while the routers themselves also face challenges of overburdening, seniority violations, uncertainty of daily duties and repetitive strain.

When SSD was originally proposed the corporation told the workers that routers would still be letter carriers with structured work and when their structured 8-hour day was complete they, like a letter carrier, would be free to go home for the day. This has since changed, taking away any incentive for an early day or volunteering for overtime as laid out in article 17.04. Routers are now tasked with assisting other routers that may be overburdened that day, handing out or prepping flyers for letter carriers, helping out the DRS clerk with handing out COAN and hold cards, all the way up to being instructed to deliver a portion on a route, customer pickups or RPO clearances. Basically, any duties of a group 2 employee could be assigned to a router that still has time in their 8-hour day to fill. Many people who had originally used a router position as a way to self-accommodate are now being forced to provide documentation to avoid being sent out onto the street.

There is also the problem of the routers not having a structured day. As routes are currently structured now, each part of our daily inside/outside duties are broken down and given a time value based off of volumes, physical characteristics, and hard timings such as RPO clearances, customer pickups and loading/unloading of your vehicle; these values show up on a form called the 075. When the letter carrier is no longer responsible for the inside preparation and sortation of the manual mail, columns 7 (obtain and prep), 9 (preparation) and 10 (sortation) are removed from the 075. However, these values are not transferred onto a structured form for the routers. Instead, the corporation has gotten rid of these values completely and base the day of a router and number of router positions off of how many pieces of mail came into the depot. In the case of Medicine Hat, routers are given 7 routes to sort, each route has approximately 1300 POC. The amount of sortation is unrealistic and staffing is currently using a spare relief to fill the hours of another full-time position that they are refusing to create.

A typical day starts with LCA’s arriving and distributing parcels in the AM: Wave 1 starts at approximately 8:40 AM, Wave 2 at 9:30 AM and routers would come in at 10:00 AM. Because the routers start after all letter carriers have left for the day, it is almost impossible to have discussions about any issues the letter carrier is experiencing on the street. And because the letter carrier has no ready access to their case strips, issues are not resolved and are ongoing. There is also an increased concern with the letter carriers not handling their own warning cards, especially for relief carriers that may be unfamiliar with the route. The potential for dog bites, Problem Delivery Reports and other hazards on the route may go unnoticed and most likely result in an increase in injuries. Another issue with the routers starting later on in the day is mail is always going to be delayed at least one day, and in the experience of Medicine Hat case strips were not provided for several routes for 10 days.

All three depots have reported concerns with the impossible way of redirecting parcels and packets and specifically the registered letters. As per the SSD training video seen here: <https://youtu.be/uErnOZM-LGk> routers are supposed to have access to packets to verify them against the COAN cards and mark them with a check mark after they have been verified. As we can see from the above start times though this is impossible when the letter carriers have been into the building and left even

before the routers have shown up for the day. The solution to have a binder provided at the consolidation cart with all the COAN and hold cards is unrealistic when some routes are receiving 4 tubs of packets and may have over 100 COAN cards for the letter carrier to verify against. This is resulting in registered letters, packets and parcels not being redirected; the corporation’s response is that these items are not guaranteed as part of the cost from the customer.

Because router positions are not structured properly under the LCRMS system, you will have no way of actually knowing what you are bidding on after a restructure or as part of the monthly bidding procedure. In Medicine Hat routers are given a list at the start of their shift which is always subject to change, leaving the letter carriers in the dark to even develop a working relationship with their router. The lack of structure and elimination of time values in router positions also leads to questions on how overtime is incurred in the depot and offers uncertainty on what would constitute routers being given outside work such as portions, clearances and pickups instead of using the process of 17.04.

Overall, the implementation of SSD will be detrimental to both inside and outside workers. In Fraser Valley there was a mass exodus resulting with more than half the work floor only having 5 years of seniority or under. New hires struggle to the point of not even being able to stick it through to see permanency despite management frequently assigning 2 carriers to the same walk/ router position.

National CUPW has been fighting this for years and even though we recently lost the arbitrators decision to put a stop to this they are still pushing it through as a judicial review through the court system. Unfortunately, all these processes take time, which we are quickly running out of. In the next year CPC is planning on doing over 100 SSD restructures across the country. Three of them, Fort Saskatchewan (April 2024), Wetaskiwin (May 2024) and Camrose (Aug 2024) will be the first in our Local to be subjected to this process. National has done all they can for right now, the rest will be up to us in these upcoming rounds of negotiations. We can not let this process be implemented, and must take a hard stance on our future of no SSD!



# NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN



**O**n December 6, 1989, a lone gunman entered the Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal, separated the women from the men, then opened fire. Fourteen young women died because they were women. This violent act of misogyny shook our country, and led Parliament to designate December 6 as the National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

As we mourn their loss and remember their lives, we reaffirm our commitment to fight the hatred that led to this tragedy, and the misogyny that still exists today. In Canada and around the world, women, girls, 2SLGBTQIA+ (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual, plus) and gender diverse individuals face unacceptable violence and discrimination. Gender-based violence in Canada has been magnified and amplified by the COVID-19 pandemic; a surge in conservative reactionary policies, influenced by American culture wars, threatens to roll back gains in equity, healthcare, and equal rights protections.

The National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women is about remembering those who have experienced gender-based violence and those who we have lost to it. It is also a time to take action. Achieving a Canada free from gender-based violence requires everyone living in this country to educate themselves and their families and communities on gender-based violence, centre the voices of survivors in our actions and speak up against harmful behaviours.

On December 6, we remember:

- Geneviève Bergeron
- Hélène Colgan
- Nathalie Croteau
- Barbara Daigneault
- Anne-Marie Edward
- Maud Haviernick
- Maryse Laganière
- Maryse Leclair
- Anne-Marie Lemay
- Sonia Pelletier
- Michèle Richard
- Annie St-Arneault
- Annie Turcotte
- Barbara Klucznik-Widajewicz

Some support resources for those experiencing gender-based violence:

If you are in immediate danger call 911.

For non-emergency assistance call 310-1818 (Family Violence Information Line) or 211 (Alberta Information and Referrals).

Alberta One-Line (for sexual violence): 1-866-403 8000.

Alberta Provincial Abuse Helpline: 1-855-4HELPAB (1-855-443-5722)

<https://women-gender-equality.canada.ca/en/gender-based-violence/additional-support-services.html>

# SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE: WORKERS MUST MOBILIZE!



By FADI HAIDAR - NOVEMBER 8, 2023

**T**he Palestinian General Federation of Trade Unions appealed to workers all over the world to stop Israel's ongoing ethnic cleansing, in an open letter published Oct. 16.

Signed by 18 trade unions and professional associations, the statement calls for unions around the world to escalate strike action against imperialism.

This means work stoppages and other actions to "take action against complicit companies involved in Israel's brutal and illegal siege." It also calls on workers across the world to "refuse to build weapons destined for Israel" and "refuse to transport weapons to Israel."

Such an appeal is of the utmost importance and urgency. To stop Israel's ongoing ethnic cleansing campaign, we need a mass international movement of working-class solidarity, where workers have real power—in the workplace.

The history of the working class is full of examples of class solidarity with the oppressed against imperialism. In the past century, workers mobilized to thwart Mussolini's invasion of Ethiopia, to stop arms shipments to Pinochet's dictatorship in Chile and, in 2021, workers in South Africa refused

to ship war materials to Israel in solidarity with their fellow workers abroad.

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We need to revive these traditions of internationalist workers' solidarity now more than ever. It is a literal question of life or death. The international working class is the only force that has the power to truly free Palestine.

The Canadian ruling class, like its American and British allies, is covered in Palestinian blood.

More than a dozen Canadian companies are involved in the arming of Israel, supported by arms export permits from the Trudeau government. The Canadian government has also enabled Israel's attack on Gaza with complete diplomatic support and a secret deployment of Canadian commandos.

Canada's imperialist ruling class has made its support for that of Israel very clear. Both must be fought.

**Canadian unions need to pick up the call of Palestinian workers**

Already, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, Unifor, PSAC, and others have issued statements opposing Israel's siege. In some cities, they've mobilized protests and "days of action" in support of Gaza.

The Hamilton and District Labour Council demanded Canada stop arming the Israeli government.

At CUPE's October national convention in Quebec City, an emergency resolution in support of Palestine was also passed by a two-thirds majority. It demanded, among other things, an "end to Israel's blockade of Gaza and the restoration

of aid and the basic necessities of life". It also resolved to "conduct member education about the history of Israel's occupation and colonization of Palestine, Canada's complicity, and what trade unions can do to support a just peace."

PSAC too has called for an immediate "end to the blockade of Gaza."

These are important expressions of solidarity. But more must be done.

These messages and protests need to be coupled with real action to stop Israel's siege. This will mean, first of all, mobilizing any and all workers at companies involved in the production, transportation, and shipping of war materials to Israel to refuse work.

In Italy, CGIL metal workers in Modena organized a mass solidarity demonstration under the slogan "Free Palestine" on Nov. 4. The workers' appeal read:

"For some weeks now, in the streets of cities all around the world – from Paris to Amman, from London to Rabat and New York, and far beyond – millions of young people and workers have rightly been mobilising against the Israeli army's bombing of Gaza and in solidarity with the Palestinian people. It is necessary to also organise a mobilisation in Modena for an end to the bombings, against the invasion of Gaza and also against the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian territories."

## Labour must lead

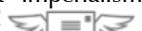
Many Canadian workers oppose Israel's siege and want to help free Palestine. But they will hesitate to take action alone. As isolated individuals, we can be disciplined for standing against our ruling class. But united, we are unbeatable. After all, the whole world can see how Israel consistently disregards international law to oppress Palestine—backed by the Canadian state. So why should we respect their laws?

We all remember how just about a year ago, the mobilization of unions in support of CUPE education workers forced Doug Ford to retreat from attacking the striking workers. Every worker ought to use that as a reference point in our common fight against oppression and exploitation, at home and abroad.

Across Canada, workers are showing their solidarity in the streets. Most workers in Canada do not support Israel's siege and want to stop it.

We're not outnumbered. We're out organized.

Let's answer the call of the Palestinian unions.

Let's halt the Israeli imperialist war machine. Let's fight imperialism at home. Free Palestine! 

Source: <https://marxist.ca/article/solidarity-with-palestine-workers-must-mobilize>



## STATEMENT CUPW CALLS ON THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO DEMAND AN IMMEDIATE CEASEFIRE IN GAZA

Friday November 10 2023


**O**ver 10,000 people - including thousands of children – have been killed since violence began in Israel and Palestine on October 7, 2023, and the death toll continues to rise as the war enters its second month. CUPW condemns the targeting, kidnapping and killing of innocent civilians and calls on the Canadian Government to demand an immediate ceasefire.

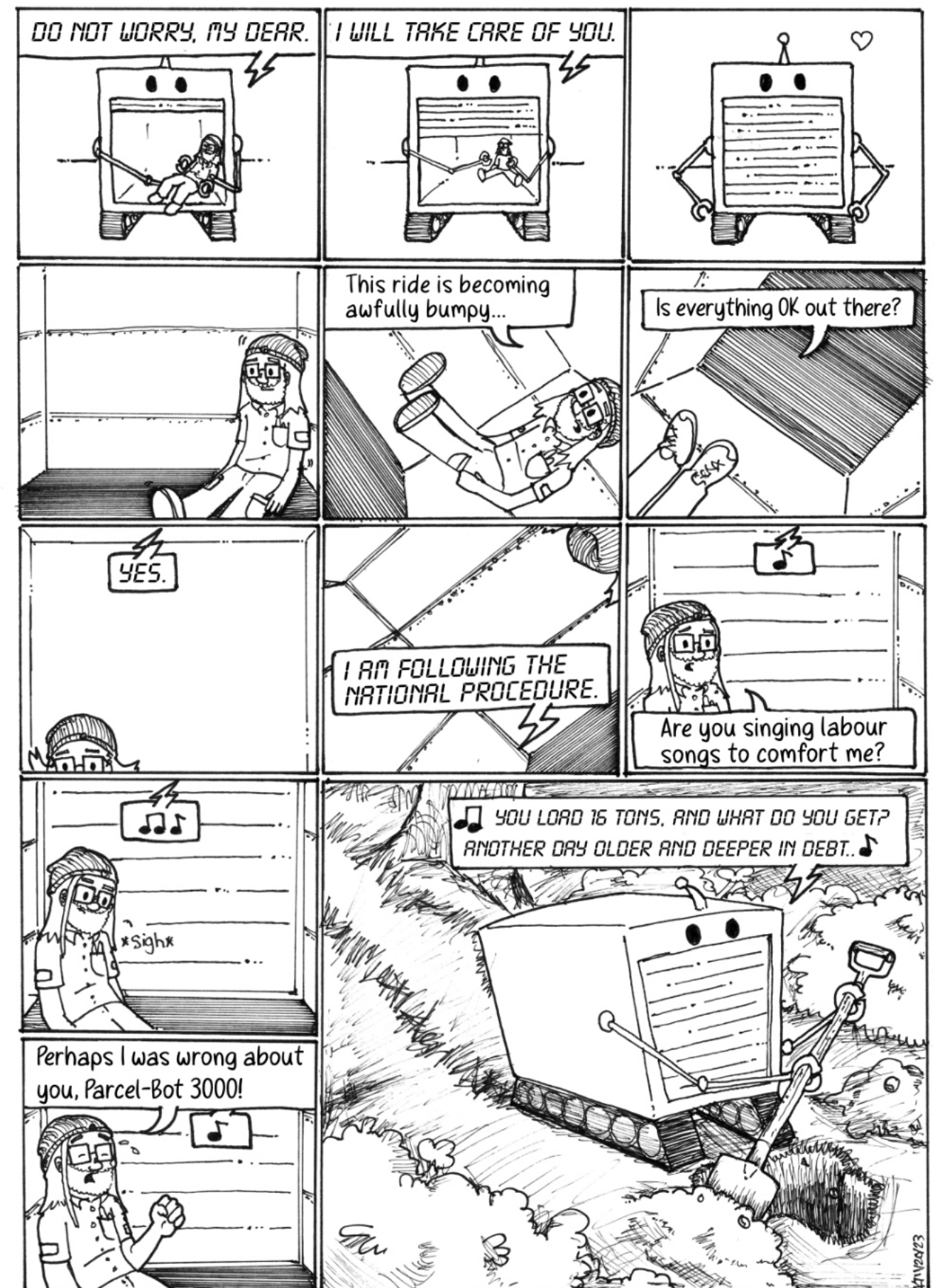
Palestinians in Gaza are being denied clean water, food, electricity, and other necessities of life. Nowhere is safe in Gaza and as over a million Palestinians have been forced from their homes. Meanwhile, Israeli airstrikes continue, and a ground invasion has begun. Israeli state officials have made clear statements that they intend to clear Gaza of its inhabitants. What is happening today in Gaza, according to international bodies and experts, constitutes a genocide.

Collective punishment of the people of Gaza is a clear violation of Article 53 of the Fourth Geneva Convention.

Israeli apartheid and its military occupation of Palestine has led to countless abuses, from daily indignities and harassment at checkpoints, housing demolitions, forced removals for illegal settlement expansion, and murder with impunity.

CUPW has a longstanding resolution and constitutional policy to support the struggle of Palestinian workers and the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions campaign until Israel recognizes the right of Palestinian people to self-determination and complies with international law – including respecting the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes in accordance with UN Resolution 194.

The path forward for a just and lasting peace is for Israel to end the occupation and adhere to international law. The first step is an immediate ceasefire to stop the killing of innocent civilians and allow humanitarian aid to enter Gaza. 



Kyle Turner & Roland "Lift With Your Heart" Schmidt, 2023.

# WORD SEARCH

\*words are hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally, forward and backward\*

T N E M E R I T E R D R T R Q V  
S L G H S T E K C A P J M W S T  
M N C X T P R I O R I T Y T C N  
T E P L N H Z L M G T S E A E E  
C I A F A Y E Q I N H E E P L M  
P O R B L S U C O I L T Y B O N  
E N C A P T S V E T H N A G C G  
R W E O C E E I O A M E N N K I  
S O L N T R S E F N N M O I D S  
O D S O S I S H A I T E I M A S  
N K B I I G R V H G C G T O O A  
A A Z T V E E C E I I A A C L G  
L E C A K R A Q W R D N T N E R  
D R S C R M E C T O R A O I S A  
A B O A K O U P C V O M R T O B  
Y L M V E K I K U S E C T I O N  
T N D B H C T A P S I D A Y L R

STEEL TOES  
LOCKER  
SECTION  
PACKETS  
PLANT  
SUPERVISOR  
OVERSIZE  
CLASSIFICATION

PARCELS  
ORIGINATING  
PRIORITY  
DOCK  
BREAKDOWN  
VACATION  
ASSIGNMENT  
INCOMING

MANAGEMENT  
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DISPATCH  
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PERSONAL DAY  
MACHINEABLE  
HYSTER



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