March 29, 2018

Carleton Education Workers Continue Battle to Defend Defined Benefit Pensions

Fight for Canadian Standard Pensions for All!

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Eight hundred administrative, technical, and library staff at Carleton University in Ottawa are continuing their strike to defend their defined benefit pension plans. Their pension plan has endured cut after cut in recent years to the point its quality as a pension plan is threatened. They launched their strike action on March 5 to stop the university administration from doing additional harm to their defined benefit pension plan.

Similar to other workplaces, Carleton University workers are confronted with administrative actions to eliminate their guaranteed defined benefit pension plan and force them to switch to a savings plan. The regressive change also includes the fraud of linking pension plans to deductions from wages.

The present direction of the economy is leaving many workers without security in retirement. The basic Canada Pension Plan is wholly inadequate to guarantee a retirement at a standard that most in society would find acceptable.

Pensions are under attack throughout the imperialist system of states. The oligarchs and their representatives in government who control the socialized economy are increasing their attacks to expropriate for themselves the value workers need to retire at a standard required by the society they live in. In response to the anti-social offensive on pensions, the working class is engaged in actions to defend the pensions it has and fight for Canadian standard pensions for all.

Stand with Carleton Workers in Their Just Struggle to Defend Their Defined Benefit Pensions!

Fight for Canadian Standard Pensions for All!
University Lecturers in Britain Face Similar Situation

Similarly, university lecturers in Britain, members of the University and College Union (UCU) are engaged in a strike struggle to defend their pensions. Lecturers are confronting proposed changes to their pensions, which they say could leave them up to $18,000 a year worse off in retirement. A report in Workers’ Weekly writes, “The employers, Universities UK, want to change the Universities Superannuation Scheme from a defined benefit scheme -- giving a guaranteed retirement income -- to a defined contribution scheme, where their pensions would be subject to changes in the stock market. Younger lecturers would be worst affected, says the union, with some losing up to half their pensions. As a result, lecturers at 64 universities struck work over pensions.”

Workers’ Weekly also cites another example of the growing assault on the right to defined benefit pensions. The BT Group plc, formerly British Telecom, is an investment cartel that owns British Telecommunications plc with over 106,000 workers. The paper writes, “BT launched a formal 60-day consultation on proposed changes to the company pension scheme on November 15 last year. The Communication Workers’ Union (CWU) has not reached agreement on any of the proposals. BT’s proposals could radically change pension provision across the company with pension scheme members affected by proposals that the union believes fail to provide decent pension provision in retirement. The CWU is urging members to firmly say No to all of BT’s proposals for both schemes.”

Theft of What Belongs to Workers by Right

Many companies use bankruptcy protection or insolvency to destroy and expropriate defined benefit pension plans and other post-employment benefits. In some cases, the bankruptcy/insolvency may be totally lacking in legitimacy. The list of such companies is long and growing with one of the most recent egregious examples being the Sears Canada bankruptcy that recently left longtime Sears workers without jobs and severance pay, many suppliers and contractors without payment, and retirees and those eligible for retirement benefits in a state of insecurity and worry over their pensions.
Throughout the imperialist system of states, company bankruptcies are a source of great danger for the economy and workers’ current employment and pensions. Global investment cartels and consortiums commonly control even the largest companies through a combination of ownership of equity and debt. Using their control, an investment cartel can drain a company it controls of social wealth by paying dividends to the ownership cartel and suffocating the company in secured debt to itself, which during bankruptcy are given a higher priority than other claims. When a default is triggered, the added bonus for the oligarchs is the elimination of responsibility towards pensions, environmental remediation and even much of the payments due to suppliers, contractors and unsecured debt.

Stelco steelworkers are familiar with this scenario. First there was 2004 CCAA fraud where Stelco was stripped of its assets and the bankruptcy vultures made a big score by selling to U.S. Steel. Then, U.S. Steel followed the playbook with additional features of turning Stelco operating investments into debt to itself, making off with Stelco’s most lucrative steel customers, and destroying the defined benefit pension plan for new hires. The investment cartel that seized control from U.S. Steel through the Companies’ Creditors Arrangement Act (CCAA) also rid itself of much of Stelco’s legacy responsibilities toward pensions, other post-employment benefits and environmental remediation.

The oligarchs who control the socialized economy consider benefit promises owed to workers through pension plans and other arrangements not to be inalienable rights but company liabilities that can be eliminated through legal manoeuvres. This anti-social outlook in control of the economy does not recognize workers’ claims on the social wealth they produce as legitimate and inviolable. The anti-social view considers pensions and post-employment benefits as fair game to be destroyed as collateral damage when a business goes bankrupt using the existing legal means such as the CCAA in Canada and Chapter 11 bankruptcy in the United States.

Workers in response declare their claims come legitimately through their work in producing all the value society needs for its existence and should be inviolable and not subject to legal elimination. Workers’ capacity to work is sold within the socialized economy with the expectation that the exchange will guarantee workers’ security and well-being from birth to passing away. Without a guarantee of this from those who purchase their capacity to work the exchange becomes a criminal fraud requiring a new arrangement.

With the refusal of the ruling oligarchs to recognize the claims of the working people as legitimate and inviolable, the outlook of the ruling elite exposes itself as a slave-owning mentality. The dominant outlook regards workers’ capacity to work and the social value it creates as the private property of those who bought the capacity to work and control the socialized economy. In their mind they separate the capacity to work from the human person doing the work. They own the capacity to work and the social product it produces while the human persons doing the work have no rights either to control their work or the social wealth they produce.

In words, the worker has no rights but is not a slave; while in deeds, the worker has no rights just like a slave. Those who own and control the productive forces including the capacity to work of those who do the work and the labour market from which they sell themselves, in practical terms, own and control the workers themselves, their fate and the social product they produce. Such is the contemporary form of human slavery and the legal system that protects it.
Presently the claim on social wealth promised to workers in return for their capacity to work is subject to the laws of private ownership and control of the socialized productive forces of industrial mass production. Those laws serve the ruling elite and their class privilege, their continuing control, and their domination within the social relation with the working class. Those laws and property arrangements do not serve the workers who produce the value through their work on the socialized means of production. These outmoded arrangements and social relation are from an earlier era and are now in antagonistic contradiction with those who do the work and the modern productive forces, which are completely socialized.

Much of the value workers create and put into pension plans in one form or another, no longer exists in any tangible way upon retirement. The social value has already been realized and consumed in multiple transactions within the economy. When it comes to realizing the value promised as a pension benefit, the value must be created anew by current workers active in the economy. And that is the rub. The rich oligarchs in control are loathe to part with any part of the new value workers produce, even that saved in pension plans, which may still exist. Their aim is to expropriate as much of the new value as possible to serve their own private interests. They do everything to deny workers their right to a society standard pension because such a pension requires new value, which the oligarchs want to expropriate for themselves. They unleash corporate bankruptcies, company flipping and legalized police powers of the state to prevent workers from organizing and waging an effective struggle for their rights including their right to security in retirement.

The Trudeau Liberal government, for example, is not likely to permit the adoption of the private member’s bill tabled in the House of Commons by Hamilton federal MP Scott Duvall. The bill moves workers' claims to the top of the pack when settling corporate bankruptcies under the CCAA. The Trudeau Liberals say putting workers' pension claims on bankrupt corporate assets ahead of owners of secured debt would inhibit the global investment cartels from investing in Canada. This reveals the slave mindset of the Liberals who are opposed to having the human factor/social consciousness recognized as the fundamental basis for modern social relations even though the economy and its productive forces are completely socialized. For the Liberals and others of their ilk, property rights trump human rights.

**Corporate Bankruptcies**

Bankruptcies are a common occurrence disrupting the economy and workers' lives and rights. Overall corporate bankruptcies in the United States increased to 23,157 companies in the fourth quarter of 2017 alone from 23,109 companies in the third quarter of 2017. Many of these bankruptcies are companies controlled within a much larger investment cartel or consortium.

Toys "R" Us with 64,000 workers is controlled by a consortium of Bain Capital Partners LLC, Kohlberg Kravis Roberts (KKR) and Vornado Realty Trust. Remington Outdoor with 3,000 workers is controlled by Cerberus Management. They are but two of the latest bankrupt companies with tens of thousands of retirees.
Sears Canada declared bankruptcy while under the control of an investment cartel in the United States. Prior to bankruptcy, the controlling U.S. cartel drained Sears Canada of social value through well documented dividend payments. The social wealth that Sears workers generated prior to bankruptcy did not go towards topping up the pension fund and for necessary investments to renew the Sears retail operation in Canada, but was siphoned off as dividend payments in a completely legal manner according to the state-imposed laws of private ownership of socialized property.

The slave outlook of the oligarchs refuses to change the laws governing private ownership of socialized property because they are the owners of the economy and those laws and police powers and the social relation they sustain guarantee their class privilege and control. This raises the issue of the necessity for the working people to organize to bring about a change in the direction of the economy that puts themselves, the actual producers who do the work, in control so that their lives, security and well-being are guaranteed from birth to passing away.

The present system of private ownership of parts of the socialized economy is a contradiction crying out for resolution. The contradiction is unstable and wrought with danger not only for the actual producers but for the extended reproduction of the economy itself. Socialized productive forces need social relations and ownership and control in conformity with their socialized nature. The working people who do the work and produce the social product should control the socialized productive forces for the common good of all, with all the many parts of the economy working cooperatively without rancour and crises.

To allow the economy to run amuck as it now does with recurring crises, bankruptcies and denial of rights causes hardship amongst the working people and destruction of the productive forces. The direction is unacceptable and working people are charged with the responsibility to change it. The working people themselves must bring the economy under conscious pro-social control to serve the people. The contradiction between the socialized productive forces of industrial mass production and the outmoded social relations dominated by the rich and their class privilege must be resolved for the good of all humanity.

Lockout at Aluminerie de Bécancour in Quebec

Strong Support from Metallurgical Workers

Actions in support of the workers currently locked out at the Aluminerie de Bécancour (ABI) are stepping up, especially since the company liquidated the mediated bargaining on March 8, and withdrew their January 10 offer. The arbitrary actions of the company have further convinced workers, not only at ABI but elsewhere across Quebec and Canada, that the Alcoa-Rio Tinto cartel has a hidden agenda behind its refusal to negotiate, one which is detrimental to the workers, the population of Mauricie-Centre-du-Québec and the society as a whole. The workers demand that ABI sit down with them to negotiate a collective agreement that they would consider acceptable.
March 23, 2018 contingents from many union locals visited the locked-out workers in Bécancour, bringing their solidarity and financial support.

Last week, workers in metallurgy and other sectors went to the ABI picket lines to support the locked out workers. Workers also provided financial support ranging from lump sums to weekly or monthly donations that will be given until the end of the conflict to support the fight of the ABI workers against the intransigence of the Alcoa-Rio Tinto cartel. Amongst the metallurgical workers who came from Montérégie (on Montreal’s south shore) were the ArcelorMittal workers of Contrecoeur-East, Contrecoeur-Ouest and Longueuil, workers from Rio Tinto Metal Powders and Iron and Titanium plants in Sorel-Tracy, and many others. Many of them are members of the Inter-Union Committee of Sorel-Tracy that is made up of Steelworkers and CSN unions that was founded in October 2016 by industrial unions to work together on issues that affect workers across the region and to provide all possible support when the workers undertake actions in defence of their rights and against attacks from the employers. When the workers visited the locked out ABI workers, they made brief speeches in which they highlighted that the fight of the ABI workers against the attacks of the Alcoa-Rio Tinto cartel is the fight of the working class.
"With this financial support we are bringing to you, our members wanted to demonstrate that your cause is shared by all other workers who fight against the intransigence of the multinational corporations that have decided to ignore our concerns," said François Nadeau, President of the Union of Iron and Titanium Workers (CSN).

"We have been closely following your dispute. This is an issue that affects everyone, the whole working class actually. Your fight makes a big difference for everyone," said Jean-François Gilbert, President of the Alstom Workers' Union, Renewable Energy (CSN).

"We have decided to come to support your fight, because no matter the flag, whether it be Steelworkers, CSN, Unifor, no matter the region, when there is a group that is involved in a fight, it becomes everyone's fight," said Steve Galibois, President of United Steelworkers Local 6586, representing the workers at ArcelorMittal, Contrecoeur-East.

Alain Croteau, Director of the Quebec district of the United Steelworkers (Syndicat des Métallos) also went to Bécancour to announce that the union is renting a bus to go to Pittsburgh on May 9 to denounce Alcoa's actions at the Alcoa shareholders' meeting. The Steelworkers will also tour the Alcoa factories in the United States and are establishing links with unions in various countries to hold Alcoa and Rio Tinto accountable for their attacks on the workers of Bécancour and workers across the world.

Croteau also mentioned that the Syndicat des Métallos had posted a clock on their website showing the amount of money that Hydro-Québec is losing because of the lockout. "On our website, we have put the number which shows how much money Québécois people have lost due to the lockout by
Alcoa-Rio Tinto. Second by second, we can follow the huge loss that Hydro-Québec is incurring as the Aluminerie de Bécancour does not have to pay for the energy that is put aside for the company.

"The meter is running and now is up to $45 million and the company is not being forced to pay since the lockout is considered a 'force majeure' according to the agreement which binds the government, Hydro-Québec and the company," Croteau said.

(Photos: Métallos)

Iron Ore Company Workers on Strike in Labrador

Workers Demand End to Two-Tier Conditions

Around 3:00 am on March 27, the close to 1,400 workers of Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOC) in Labrador City went on strike. They walked out mainly to oppose IOC employing a "temporary workforce" side-by-side with permanent workers doing the same work under drastically inferior working conditions. The workers do not accept that a mining giant such as IOC should force a section of workers to labour under substandard conditions. The strike vote took place Monday, March 26 in two membership meetings of United Steelworkers Local 5795, one in the morning and one in the evening, in which workers voted on the latest company offer.

"We had 92.5 per cent of the workers voting, which is a huge turnout, and we had 91.1 per cent voting for a strike," Local 5795 President Ron Thomas told Workers' Forum. "Our members are upset. The company never sat down and negotiated with us and they never took us seriously. The biggest issue right now is the temporary workforce. Our members do not want it. They do not want to have workers coming in and doing the exact same job working side-by-side but with no benefits. This is a step backwards. We agreed to a temporary workforce in a very specific period when times were rough. Right now times are better and we feel that everybody that works at IOC should be getting the same treatment."

Thomas informed Workers' Forum that the company dropped its demand to impose a defined contribution plan for new hires instead of having them on the same defined benefits plan that workers currently have. "The smartest thing for the company to do is to get back to negotiations soon so we can put this behind us and go back to producing. If not we are willing to stay out as long
Workers who form the "temporary workforce" do not work regular schedules. The company moves them around at whim to different shifts and production areas in a way that is detrimental to their health and safety. They have fewer benefits than the other workers. They have no guarantee of being called back by the company once they finish the job. IOC presents this temporary work as an exciting opportunity to work under non-standard conditions. This temporary precarious work force is hired within a work environment that is already marked by workers' extreme fatigue and by hazardous conditions. According to IOC, the creation of a temporary work force is an "effort to increase workplace flexibility and meet the needs of the business." Temporary workers become a "readily available workforce who are highly motivated, adaptable to changing situations and priorities, can interact well with others and demonstrate both the ability to work independently and to contribute effectively within a team." In other words, a disposable and precarious workforce for whom all rights are negated.

The IOC workers in Quebec, in Sept-Îles on the North Shore, are voting on the same offer on Wednesday, March 28 and Thursday, March 29.

At IOC's complex in Labrador, workers mine iron ore which is then concentrated and pelletized and prepared for transport by rail 418 kilometres to the port of Sept-Îles for shipping to steel plants worldwide. IOC is operated by Rio Tinto Ore Group and is a joint venture among Rio Tinto (58.7
per cent), Mitsubishi Corporation (26.2 per cent) and Labrador Iron Ore Royalty Income Corporation (15.1 per cent).

(Photos: USWA 5795, J. Brideau, D. Matthews)

Drug Testing of Workers at Suncor in Alberta

Court of Appeal Upholds Injunction Against Random Drug and Alcohol Testing

-Peggy Askin-

Workers represented by Unifor Local 707A at Suncor in the Alberta oil sands, have once more succeeded in blocking random drug and alcohol testing by their employer.

Ken Smith, President of Unifor Local 707A said, "We're talking about a person's dignity and their personal rights. It's intrusive, and we haven't seen any proof that this would make a safer work environment. It would be a strike against human rights for workers across Canada for sure to say you must open yourself up for random testing."

The company has been trying to impose random testing since 2012. Local 707A won an arbitration blocking random testing, but Suncor challenged the ruling and the court ordered a new arbitration. The union then obtained an injunction against testing until a new arbitration is held, and Suncor challenged the injunction. In the latest development, on February 28 the Alberta Court of Appeal upheld the injunction. The union has also sought leave to appeal to the Supreme Court.

In Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada, Local 30 v. Irving Pulp & Paper Ltd., 2013 the Supreme Court ruled that random testing is warranted only if the employer establishes there is a "general problem" with drug or alcohol use in the workplace.

Suncor says there is a "general problem" based on evidence regarding all workers on the site, including those working for contractors mainly during construction, and in the camps where these workers live. At the time of the initial grievance, there were approximately 10,000 workers on the Suncor site, 3,383 of whom were permanent employees represented by Local 707A. Local 707A has argued that Suncor has failed to provide evidence that there is a problem with the workers it represents.

Suncor already conducts pre-employment, post-incident and reasonable cause testing. It argues that an infringement on the right to privacy and dignity is necessary in order to balance safety and rights. This argument is absurd because it is the workers and their union who are defending the right to a safe workplace and the right to privacy and dignity for the human person.

Suncor also states that it is not trying to regulate what workers do when not at work, but only whether they are "Fit for Duty." Yet it is leaving no stone unturned in its demand that workers submit to testing which has no relevance to that issue. All the expert witnesses involved in the dispute have agreed that a "non-negative" drug test provides no evidence of whether a person is
impaired, and in particular that indications of cannabis use can be present for several days and sometimes longer. Despite this, workers who have had a "non-negative" post-incident test have been forced to declare they have a "drug problem" and go into rehabilitation in order to keep their jobs.

Suncor's argument is based on its records of incidents involving both permanent Suncor employees -- union and non-union -- and workers employed by contractors including construction and periodic maintenance (turnarounds). Incidents include both the worksite and the camps where the non-permanent workforce live. Alcohol and drugs are prohibited in Suncor's camps, with sniffer dogs and handlers used to search for prohibited substances, a practice later extended to the work sites. Thus an "incident" could be as trivial as a bottle of beer in a worker's room, or could pertain to the use of cannabis or alcohol during time off work.

Twenty fatalities have taken place at Suncor. The deaths of three workers, none of whom were Suncor employees, were associated with the use of drugs or alcohol. Only one of these workers was actually working when he died. One was in the work camp, and another was on site without authorization and not at work.

Over the nine-year period for which Suncor offered statistics, there were an average of 24 non-negative tests per year involving workers represented by Local 707A, or slightly more than 0.5 percent of the workers. More than half of all non-negative tests involved cannabis, which means they have no relevance to whether a worker was impaired. A non-negative test could also indicate a blood alcohol level significantly below a legal impairment level.

Why is Suncor intent on this crusade instead of dealing with the real causes of accidents and deaths at its work sites, especially in light of the terrible fact that twenty workers have died on the Suncor site? Blaming workers for safety violations is part of the arsenal of the monopolies to divert attention and evade responsibility for the injury and death of workers. Suncor must be held accountable for the conditions at its work sites. Using safety as a pretext to violate the right to privacy and dignity must not be permitted.

(With files from the Edmonton Journal)

The Need to Speak Out Against Trudeau Government's Transportation Reforms

Nation-Wrecking to Serve Global Cartels

The necessity for democratic renewal of the political process

Slogan painted on the side of the rail car reads "Producer cars forever"
As a consequence of the Harper government’s destruction of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) in 2012, the global agricultural and railway cartels have strengthened their grip over Prairie farming. Now, with the Trudeau government’s Bill C-49, the Transportation Modernization Act, to further deregulate the railways, the situation for small and medium-sized farmers and transportation workers is becoming even more untenable.

The political actions of Canada’s governments reflect the private interests, outlook and aim of a privileged few who control the socialized economy. The global cartels of the rich oligarchs dominate the economy in all the basic sectors including food production and distribution. Politics is the concentrated expression of the economic base in society and its social relations. The oligarchs in control of the economy and who dominate the social relation, quite naturally in their view, expect that government policies serve their class privilege, aim and outlook, and not any aim or outlook of the working people and nation-building that would challenge or restrict the control of the oligarchs.

How else to explain such irrational anti-national actions as letting the sole rail line to Churchill in Northern Manitoba fall into such disrepair that it no longer functions while the U.S. company in control refuses to repair it. The same U.S. company also controls the Port of Churchill and summarily closed it when it no longer served its private interests. The port and rail line, among other things, were viable options for Prairie grain farmers to ship their social product. How can a U.S. company abuse Canadians and their economy in such a blatant manner unless of course it is comfortably in control and unafraid of being held to account?

Farmers Speak Out

To further illustrate how the decisions taken by governments affect the lives of prairie farmers, in this issue Workers’ Forum is publishing an op-ed by Ken Larsen who is a member of the National Farmers Union Region 7 (Alberta). The op-ed is titled "Helping the Railways Farm the Farmers," and was posted on the National Farmers Union website on March 13, 2018. Larsen farms with his family west of Red Deer, Alberta and also edits the Canadian Wheat Board Alliance website.

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Here we go again! Some prairie farmers cannot ship their grain. Grain companies and their friends are blaming the railways for not getting the grain to port. After months of being lobbied, the federal government is pushing new transportation legislation, claiming Bill C-49 will punish the railways for neglecting grain shipments. Yet this legislation effectively deregulates those same railways. The railways are quiet and the grain companies are happy. Anyone paying attention should notice a lot wrong with this picture.

Is it really true that prairie grain is not moving to port? If you believe the grain companies and their friends in the Ag Transport Coalition, the railways are ignoring their rail car orders. Yet, the more grain the railways haul, the more money they make, so this claim does not meet the smell test.

Measuring grain movement is a fairly simple task. The Canadian Transportation Agency (CTA) and the independent grain monitor, Quorum Corp. are objective sources of information. Every December the CTA audits the railways and looks at how much export grain they move annually. As of December 31, 2017 the railways moved 43.2 million tonnes of grain to port, up 6.9 per cent
compared to 2016 -- more grain than ever. Not bad for a fall and early winter with record rain and snow in the six mountain ranges between the prairies and the west coast!

On March 6, 2018 Quorum reported, "Year to date Western Canadian shipments from port terminal elevators at Week 30 are 5 per cent lower than the same period last year and one per cent lower than the 5-year average." While almost rounding errors, one per cent less is still a lot of tonnage, however, remembering India imposed high tariffs on Canadian pulse exports, it is no surprise overall shipments are slightly lower.

The numbers show the railways are doing a good job of moving grain to port. That has not changed in the last three months, let alone the past year. Is the constant buzz from some farm groups that should know better simply a reaction to individuals who can't deliver to their local elevator? Since the system is delivering enough grain to port, we must conclude that grain companies are ordering cars based on priorities other than meeting local farmers' requirements.

Why? Grain companies can use local car shortages as an excuse to pay farmers less for their grain. They get away with it because almost two-thirds of prairie delivery points are served by just one grain company, making farmers captive to the company at the closest delivery point.

More than one farmer has heard something like the following from an elevator agent shedding crocodile tears: "We’re so sorry the price is down and you’ve heard how the railways are not moving the grain, but I’ve got a little space in my elevator if you need the money and can live with the higher basis." Dazzled by the pseudo-economic term "basis," the farmer sells for less and the grain company pockets the difference.

When the farmer-controlled Canadian Wheat Board (CWB) was responsible for selling grain it optimized the system to return the maximum amount of money to farmers and organized grain shipments to maximize the shipping capacity of the overall system. The extra money was passed back to farmers. In the last nine years of the CWB-controlled system, demurrage charges were near zero and usually offset by despatch earnings for getting ships loaded ahead of time.[1]

Without the CWB, the grain companies are in a "no lose" game with prairie farmers captive to their delivery points. They use their local monopolies to maximize their own profits while blaming the railways and charging farmers basis for any extra costs they might incur.

By accepting the blame for plugged elevators, railways position themselves to lobby for further deregulation. Thanks to Ottawa, they may well be successful. With Bill C-49's amendments to the Transportation Act creating mile-wide loopholes for the railways, the idea any grain company is going to offend the railways with a reciprocal penalty or court case when they can just take it out of the farmer's grain cheque is beyond stupid -- especially when 90 per cent of prairie delivery points are serviced by just one railway.

Instead of deregulating the railways via Bill C-49, the government should be clipping the grain companies' market power over farmers through regulation. Bill C-49’s amendments to the Transportation Act do nothing but add the railways to the list of businesses “farming the farmers.” Since the CWB was killed, the grain companies are smiling all the way to the bank and the amended Transportation Act will soon let the railways join them -- unless the Senate provides sober second thought.
Note

1. **demurrage**: a rate or amount payable to a shipowner by a charterer for failure to load or discharge a ship within the time agreed. b a charge for a similar detention of railway cars or other goods. *(Oxford Dictionary of Canadian English)*