

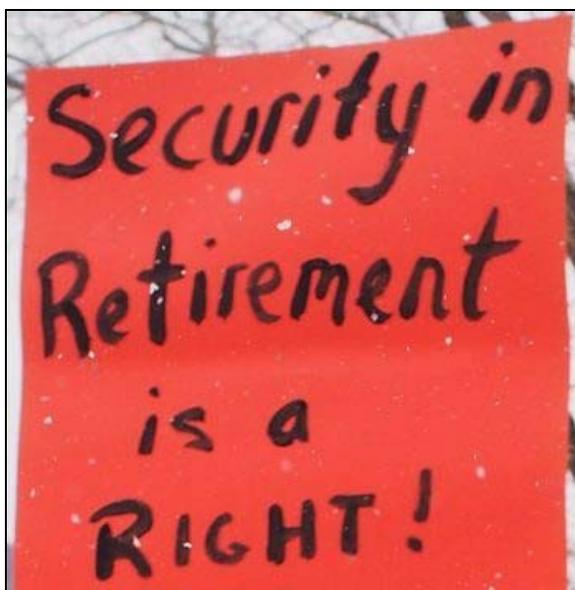
Letter to the Editor

Right of Seniors to a Dignified Life

"The social wealth workers produce is a continuum in the modern socialized economy that goes towards individual well-being and the collective well-being of all members of society. Working people obviously fulfil their duty to work or the economy would have totally collapsed. By fulfilling that duty, they have the right to live in dignity from birth to passing away." (*Renewal Update* No. 33, October 13, 2019)

I wanted to thank *Renewal Update* for raising a very serious question which is completely off the radar during these elections and that is the rights of the elderly to retire in security and dignity. The plight of the elderly is multifaceted mainly because of the fact that basic human rights with regards to health services, to housing and to financial security are trampled in the mud by those who claim to "represent" us, much in the way a lawyer represents someone and the person "represented" no longer has a word to say on the matter at hand.

At retirement, we quickly discover that nothing is made easy for someone who has fulfilled one's duty to work a great part of one's life. It's up to that person to defend his or her dignity on an almost daily basis. Often it is presented that retirees who find part-time jobs after a lifetime of being part of the workforce do it as leisure, but for many, this is far from being the case. It is a necessity. Among other things, why should a worker's income from his retirement pension and other pension plans be taxed? Another problem is the price of housing. In the Outaouais region, the housing crisis is partly due to the fact that apartments and houses are not affordable, and that is especially true for someone living alone. As for residences, they are also, for the most part, incredibly unaffordable, especially for someone living solely on the Canada and



Quebec pension plan. It is interesting to note that one of the bigger companies providing residence services, Chartwell Retirement Residences, was formally called Chartwell Seniors Housing Real Estate Investment Trust. This says a lot about the state of the economy today where everything is run through investment conglomerates, the likes of which consider workers as costs, the elderly purely and simply as a source of revenue and the social wealth the workers produce as something put at their disposal to run away with. Another difficulty, of course, is access to health care. The elderly are often the most vulnerable in a context of emergency wait times, lack of hospital beds, etc. As for those who want to resort to alternative medicines, these are not covered.

What I appreciate above all in the way *Renewal Update* raises the issue is the call to organize, because as for all other members of society, the only way to defend our dignity and our right to security in retirement is to continue taking up the banner of the struggle in defence of the rights of all.

A reader in Gatineau

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