

January 17, 2019

## Join the Work of *Workers' Forum* in 2019 to Build the Independent Voice of the Working Class!



With deep respect, *Workers' Forum* sends militant greetings to all Canadian workers on the occasion of the New Year. All sectors of the working class were in action throughout the past year to defend their rights and fight for living and working conditions acceptable to themselves. Industrial workers in the aluminum sector, iron ore workers, forestry workers, postal workers, construction workers, power workers, other goods and services-producing workers throughout the country, injured and unemployed workers stood up militantly to defend their rights and what belongs to them as the social class that produces all social wealth. The photo review in *TML Daily* of the events in 2018 shows the extraordinary breadth and potential of the resistance which the working people and Indigenous peoples are waging.

The technical and editorial staff of *Workers' Forum* are greatly encouraged with the active resistance and confirm their determination to make this tribune a well-known and leading voice for the working class in defending its rights and fighting for a new pro-social direction for the economy and politics of the country. *Workers' Forum* is determined to play a greater role in opening a path to the emancipation of the working class and society from the clutches of the global financial oligarchy and their warmongering agenda.

Developing the independent voice and politics of the working class is crucial to building the New. *Workers' Forum* is a central element in creating and expanding this movement. *Workers' Forum* depends on workers reporting their news, giving their views, disseminating the paper in written and electronic form, gathering subscriptions and funds, and discussing the content amongst one another. In this manner, workers can concretely and consciously participate in building the New, and develop and advance the working class movement. In the world of today, no condescending saviours from the ruling elite will either change their backward ways or lend a helping hand; it is up to workers themselves to build the New through their own organized efforts!

**2018**



**Protest outside Hydro-Québec's offices in Montreal, November 28, 2018, in support of ABI aluminum smelter workers locked out by the Alcoa/Rio Tinto cartel.**

The actions of the past year challenge the working class to mobilize the full force of the class to defend itself and the rights of all and prepare for a pro-social new direction under the control of the working people.

The socialized conditions arising out of industrial mass production require modern definitions of rights and new arrangements that put authorities in place that the working people control. Arrangements in conformity with industrial mass production must be introduced that strive to bring new human relations into being at the workplace and elsewhere based on the human factor/social consciousness.

Contrary to the demands of the modern conditions, the Trudeau government refused to get its Crown corporation Canada Post to negotiate a new collective agreement with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and instead through an Act of Parliament criminalized postal workers denying them their rights.



**Picket in Edmonton, November 22, 2018, one of many actions denouncing back-to-work legislation against postal workers.**

Actions of those in authority to deprive the working class of its rights have been repeated across the country with prolonged lockouts at the ABI aluminum smelter in Quebec, the MANA steel mill in Hamilton, the D-J Composites plant in Gander and elsewhere. The authorities in control through their private power of ownership and control of the socialized economy and social wealth, and publicly using the state are in practice outlawing resistance to attacks on workers' rights. A grievous example of anti-worker legislation inhibiting union activity occurred in the construction sector in Quebec while in Ontario the Ford government, with Bill 66, is bluntly declaring municipalities, school boards, hospitals, colleges, universities and public bodies to be non-construction employers, and that trade unions that represent employees of these employers in the construction industry no longer represent them. These construction workers are *de facto* being deunionized.



**Workers from across the country join locked out workers at D-J Composites in Gander rally, September 29, 2018. Workers took actions to stop scabs entering the plant and force negotiations.**

As 2018 came to an end we also saw an alarming increase in blatant violations of the human rights of the most oppressed sections of the working class, including the increasing number of the category called temporary foreign workers brought in by contractors of human labour sent out into countries of Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, as well as Europe, to recruit cheap labour.



In 2019 we will pay specific attention to the plight of migrant workers which are at the mercy of human traffickers while the government is either behind it or turns a blind eye. The workers without employment, especially seasonal workers, are also subjected to poverty conditions and they are forced to fend for themselves, as is also the case for injured workers. While this is the reality, it is all cloaked in talk about rights and mandates and improving the lot of the middle class.



In 2019, we also have to keep uppermost on our minds the treatment of welfare recipients, where the most questionable practices have been taking place ever since the Harris government introduced a policy of paying benefits directly to landlords. The Ontario Human Rights Commission back in the day said that this violated the right of welfare recipients to spend their money as they see fit, but it did not deny the fact that the level of benefits given to them is inhuman, that social housing is far from adequate, that working conditions of the unorganized workers are inhuman.

No person is treated with dignity where they can contribute meaningfully as members of their community. On the contrary, a great deal of

legislation has been passed which violates basic human rights, as the anti-social offensive has continued unabated and the rights of minorities are not upheld.

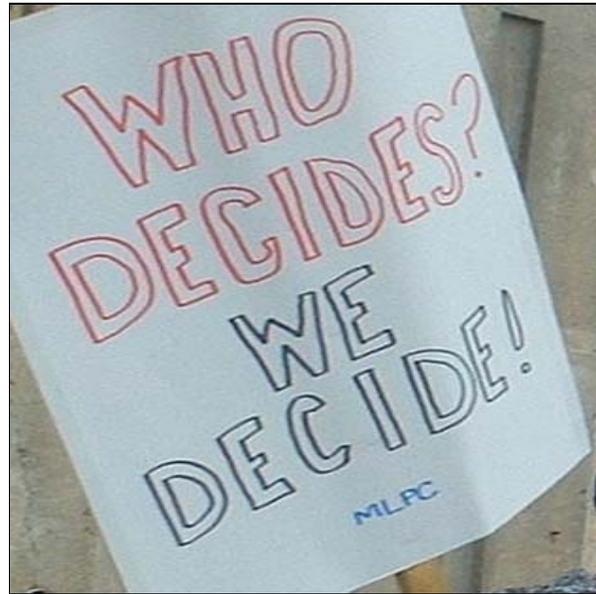
The anti-social offensive is taking the society in the opposite direction to that required for the realization of a society which recognizes the rights of all people, and is establishing as a norm that only the claims of the tiny economic elite have any legitimacy.

In 2019 we also need to step up our work to integrate the claims of the Indigenous peoples, many of whom are also co-workers, into our demands to humanize the natural and social environment.

Indications point to an impending global economic and political crisis with profound implications for individual and social economic security, peace and the well-being of all. Growing disputes

within the ruling elite, both domestically and internationally, reflect the economic tensions as the global oligarchies prepare for war to control the social wealth the working people produce. Beyond the theft of what belongs to working people by right, the ruling elite are spreading disinformation and war propaganda to convince workers to line up behind certain sections of the global elite in opposition to their imperialist competitors. Workers must be extremely vigilant to think things through from the vantage point of their own pro-social outlook and not be swept up in the hysteria of the ruling elite.

The key for the working class to defend its interests, keep a clear head and turn the situation around in its favour is to step up its actions with analysis in defence of its interests and to guard its independence from the financial oligarchy on all fronts. This requires an outlook that reflects its social class position as the producer of all social wealth within the socialized economy of industrial mass production, whose own emancipation depends on the emancipation of all. As the producer of all social wealth, the working class has the social responsibility to gain control of production and distribution so that the well-being of all and the general interests of the society are met and guaranteed, and a path opened to the humanization of the social and natural environment and the elimination of exploitation of humans by humans.



A pro-social outlook worthy of the modern working class rejects the self-serving outlook of the ruling elite that considers the social wealth the working class produces as the private property of the rich, which they use for their narrow private interests. The outmoded outlook of the oligarchs collides with the reality that the modern economy and society need social responsibility and cooperation for the good of all, for extended reproduction of the economy and nation-building without crises and war.

The working class opposes, and is determined to overcome, the control of the financial oligarchy which clashes with the needs of the people, the economy and society. The modern economy cannot function without a socially responsible direction that defends the rights of all in cooperation with all sectors and humanity. The outlook of the working class declares that people have rights by virtue of being human and the working class has rights by virtue of being the producer of all social wealth.



Modern politics cannot tolerate socially irresponsible actions such as the sudden closing of GM in Oshawa, the legislated attack on the right of postal workers and others to determine their wages and working conditions including the withdrawal of their work if necessary to force negotiations and agreements, the lockout of ABI aluminum workers, the anti-social austerity offensive that deprives people of their well-being and rights, the continuous use of public funds to pay-the-rich, the refusal to solve longstanding

social and environmental problems, and the subjugation to U.S. imperialism of Canada's sovereign right to decide its future, including trade and political relations with all humanity for mutual benefit and development in opposition to the war economy.

The financial oligarchy seeks to deprive the working class of its independence and thinking and the right to solve problems and move the country forward. In 2019, the focus politically will be on the federal election where narrow private interests are already engaged in attempting to divide the working class along cartel party lines. This attempt to line the working people up behind this or that faction of the rich is to weaken the resolve of the working class for democratic renewal and development of a modern democratic personality. The time is now to begin discussion on how to respond to the 2019 election in a mature and independent way that favours the working class and general interests of society and takes a step forward on the path of democratic renewal.

To split and weaken the working class movement, the Trudeau Liberals, Conservatives and NDP along with others are trying to mobilize workers behind their brand of serving the rich. Certain leaders in the working class movement have blinders on with regards to who these politics serve and promote politics of appeasement with these politics to embroil Canadians in factional politics in Canada and the global conflicts and U.S. imperialist war economy and war preparations.



A servile outlook regarding cartel party politics is disastrous for the class and its struggle in defence of rights and to open a pro-social path forward for the country. The outlook the workers need must be discussed so as to reject the outlook of the rich which is harmful to the interests of the people. Everything should be done at this time to make the people's vote count such as by denying any of the cartel parties a majority in Parliament. How this can be achieved has to become a focus of discussion and actions of the working class across the country. Now is the time to discuss and organize what can be done to advance the cause of democratic renewal and the emergence of a modern democratic personality.

Make 2019 a year of advance for the independent politics and organized movement of the working class to defend its rights!

Join with *Workers' Forum* to break the silence on the living and working conditions of the working class and prepare workers to assume their social responsibility as leaders in control of the economic and political affairs of the country!



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