

March 30, 2023 - No. 17

**Windsor Salt Workers Hold the Line!**  
**Workers Across the Country Provide  
Invaluable Support**



From the east coast, Windsor Salt miners from Pugwash, Nova Scotia who have been closely following what is happening in Windsor, got together after a shift at the mine to express their support for their comrades in Windsor. The Pugwash workers point out that the unity and resistance of the workers in Windsor makes them proud and helps them overcome the divisions the company sowed in their ranks using dirty tricks and threats. They see the fight in Windsor as also being their fight with the company and they are joining in give support however they can.

- **Support the Salt Workers!**
- **Strike Enters Its Seventh Week**

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**Workers Across the Country Provide  
Invaluable Support**



**Unifor Locals from London, Ontario show their support, March 28, 2023.**

The salt workers on strike in Windsor, Ontario, are receiving important expressions of support from far and wide. The more workers across the country become aware of the salt workers' valiant stand against the company's plans to contract out their jobs, which amounts to union-busting, and their determination to engage in negotiations for wages and working conditions which meet their just claims, the more they identify with the salt workers and express their support.

The support of the workers from Pugwash, Nova Scotia who have fought the same company's methods which use the power of money and support from the state to sow divisions in their ranks and dictate outcomes, as well as the immediate support from Rio Tinto workers in Alma, Quebec represent the profound solidarity which marks the workers' movement in this country. The letter that accompanied the donation from the Alma workers reads:

Brothers and Sisters,

We are writing to express our support for you during the current strike. We believe strongly that we must stand together to see this struggle through to the end. Indeed, we remember that in 2012 we were in a similar situation with our employer, Rio Tinto. Our struggle was also against subcontracting and we won, after six months, with the support of dozens of unions.

Our solidarity is crucial because we know that subcontracting weakens us all. It is therefore important that we fight together against these global giants.

Today we took a decision to support you in this fight for your working conditions and the preservation of union protections in the workplace.

We are enclosing a cheque to assist you to continue the struggle until victory.

In solidarity,



*Sylvain Maltais*

*President*

*Syndicat des travailleurs de l'aluminium d'Alma, United Steelworkers Local 9490*

They also enjoy the support of the thousands of Ontario teachers who do not agree with the Teachers' Pension Fund, one of the largest in the world, being invested in a union-busting enterprise. So too educators and other public sector workers across the country identify with them because they also do not want their pension funds invested in anti-social ventures, or war production or any ventures which harm the social and natural environment.

Many contingents of workers are visiting the picket line, providing financial support and food to feed the workers' families every day. Messages of support are coming from all over the United States as well where the experience against so-called right to work states and union-busting is extensive, significant and courageous. The Windsor Salt owners should be very clear that the Windsor Salt workers can hold the line. They should stop playing dirty, dictating, stalling and start negotiating properly because labour is an organized force which defends families, a modern standard of living, their own health and safety and that of the social and natural environment.



**Windsor municipal workers (left) and teachers and education workers visit the picket line.**

From Ontario, Unifor members from London as well as representatives of the Carpenters' District Council of Ontario came to visit the picket lines, as have miners from Goderich's salt mine operations. A delegation of retired steelworkers from USW Local 1005 in Hamilton have also visited the line.

Unions and community members in Windsor-Essex are also stepping up their support for the workers as the strike enters its seventh week. Many unions are organizing to bring in food on a regular basis, either as full meals for the workers or in care packages. The local Unemployed Help Centre donated large food baskets which were all sorted and delivered to the line within an hour by fellow Unifor members. They are also receiving support in the form of donations from local businesses and many continue to visit the lines.



Local education unions have made financial contributions to the strike fund and are encouraging their members to visit the lines to show support. They are considering what more they can do to support especially given the revelation about their pension fund's substantial investment in the hedge fund owners of Windsor Salt. The support makes all the difference given the large number of workers with one income and young

families at Windsor Salt.

All of it shows that the strength of the workers lies in their numbers and organization and it can be deployed in a manner that speaks out to make sure the current crises, union-busting, anti-social offensive and nation-wrecking are resolved in a manner that favours the workers, not the rich and their appeasers. The narrow private interests, most of them supranational, intent on integrating Canada into the U.S. war machine, must be held to account.

### **Letter from a Salt Miner's Wife in Goderich, Ontario**

Mine workers in Windsor keep salt on the roads so that children and educators can get to school safely, so that essential service providers like those who work in healthcare, education, long term care, grocery stores, emergency services, etc. can get their jobs done!

Right now these workers are standing up for job security and safety on the job. Permanent workers in their mine have the expertise to get their jobs done efficiently and safely. They are experts in the underground environment, with their own tactically trained team of first responders should something go wrong.

K+S workers show up, hundreds of feet underground, prepared to work safely and efficiently so that other workers across this province, this country and this continent can get to work and get their jobs done.

They also keep salt in our pantries and on our tables.

Let's take a minute to remind these workers of their community. Let's take a minute to send a message of solidarity and spread awareness about what they are fighting for.

Salt on our tables and on our roads should come from local workers so that they can continue to put food on theirs... So that they can continue to show up in the community as volunteers in our local schools, churches and community groups.

These workers work hard at work and in their respective communities. It's time to show up for them, the way they have shown up for us!

*Sincerely,*

*A salt miner's wife from Goderich, Ontario*

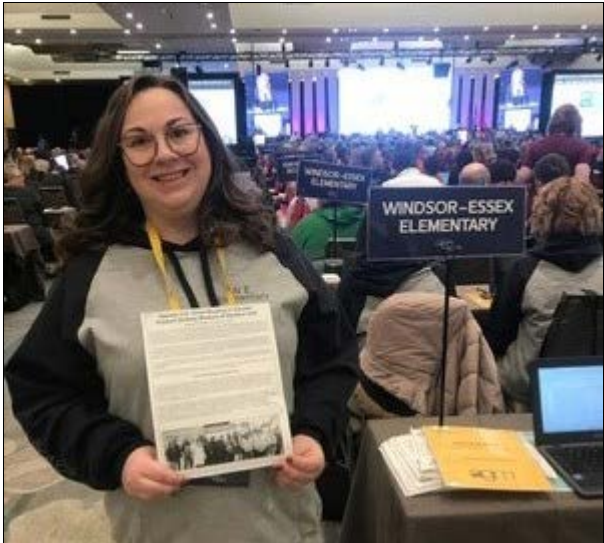


**Rally at Windsor city hall March 16, 2023 in support of striking salt workers.**





United Steelworkers Local 1005 retirees and EmpowerYourselfNow.ca join rally at Windsor Salt picket line, International Women's Day.



Leaflets distributed in support of Windsor Salt workers at provincial teacher and education worker meetings in Toronto (left) and local meeting of elementary teachers in Windsor.





Laura Chesnik from EmpowerYourselfNow.ca interviews worker on Windsor Salt picketline.



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## Support the Salt Workers!



Everyone is encouraged to send letters of support, motions and financial donations to Unifor Locals 1959 and 240 using the addresses below:

Unifor Local 240  
3400 Somme Ave.  
Windsor, Ontario  
N8W 1V4

Send copies via email to [Jodi@uniforlocal240.ca](mailto:Jodi@uniforlocal240.ca)

For donations, put Local 240 and 1959 Strike in the memo line so that the funds are disbursed between the two locals. Local 1959 represents workers in production while Local 240 represents clerical workers.



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## Strike Enters Its Seventh Week

The salt workers in Windsor Ontario have entered their seventh week on strike. Their union Unifor informs that the union and employer met during March 22 and 23 to seek a resolution to the dispute, which began on February 17, 2023 when the two locals began legal job action. Unifor Local 1959 represents production workers and Unifor Local 240 represents clerical workers. "There has been some progress but contracting out and job security remain a major concern," Unifor informs. After only two days of bargaining the company said it would once again make itself available to meet with the bargaining committee for Unifor Locals 1959 and 240 at Windsor Salt for four days as of April 3.

Other developments also reveal the company's tactics to prolong the strike which it thinks it can get away with. While the courts gave the company an extended injunction limiting picketing, on the day negotiations restarted, the company removed a shipload of stored rock salt. In addition, that same day, a large number of trucks were brought in to pick up salt from the evaporation facility. Since that time, two ships have removed more rock salt from the company's stores.



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**Website: [www.cpcml.ca](http://www.cpcml.ca) Email: [editor@cpcml.ca](mailto:editor@cpcml.ca)**