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U.S. Cartel Steps Up Union-Busting at Windsor Salt
May Day Rally at Windsor Salt Picket Line



Support rally for Windsor Salt workers, April 4, 2023

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As a show of support from the labour movement of Windsor and Essex County, on April 11 delegates at the monthly membership meeting of the Windsor and District Labour Council unanimously adopted a motion to mark May Day 2023 with a rally at the Windsor Salt picket line.

As soon as the business of the meeting was over, many of the delegates went straight to the picket line at the evaporation plant to show their support for the striking workers in response to the call from their unions to bolster the lines. The call was issued after the company's announcement that it would not negotiate the following week as it is training managers in mine rescue so as to continue mining salt while the strike is taking place.



Windsor and District Labour Council visits Windsor Salt picket line, April 11, 2023

(Empoweryourselfnow.ca. Photo: EYN)



Canada's Future Lies in the Fight for the Rights of All! All Out to Stand with the Salt Workers and Their Just Cause!



Rally in support of Windsor Salt workers, April 4, 2023

The strike at Windsor Salt in Windsor, Ontario has now entered its eighth week. While negotiations have taken place, the company's attempts to break the strike are becoming ever more arrogant and, as expected, the courts and governments which claim to be "neutral," have put their full weight behind the company to crush the strike.

The workers are fighting back. It is clear that what is called the "rule of law" does not favour their interests but they are fighting for a just cause and their cause favours the interests of the society at large and the well-being of the social and natural environment. What is called rule of law takes the side of narrow private interests. It tramples underfoot the interests of the working people and their communities and sacrifices the social and natural environment. With the courts and governments on the side of these narrow private interests, it is up to the working people to fight for what is right.

On one side is the power of money, privilege and the state which, as is to be expected, do not defend what the workers consider to be fair, just, moral, ethical behaviour. The workers decried the argument the company gave to the court when it sought the injunction. The company said it wanted to enter the mine to save the environment and maintain machines, both of which are necessary, but their deeds reveal an intention to move product, get production going with scabs and management and break the strike by convincing the workers that they are impotent to do anything about it. This is how power and privilege are used as an instrument of "negotiation" to get the workers to accept the company's demands for concessions about contracting out and perhaps other things. Once that is accomplished, they achieve the aim to break the union.

To its shame the court, whose role is admittedly to defend capital against labour, is playing along to the detriment of not only the workers and their families who depend on their work for their living, but also of their community and Canada itself. Canada has been put at the disposal of supranational narrow private interests which don't care one whit about human beings or their natural and social environment. This makes the fight at Windsor Salt the fight of all Canadians.

Recent Developments

At the request of the salt workers' union, Unifor, negotiations with the cartel Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. that owns Windsor Salt took place from April 3 until April 7 and then started up again on Monday, April 10 and are continuing this week. On April 10 however the company began blasting in the rock salt mine for the first time since the strike began. Ontario Mine Rescue has returned its equipment to the mine after it was removed when the company did not have enough of its managers trained in mine rescue for it to be permitted to operate. The company has since had more of its managers trained in mine rescue so that Ontario Mine Rescue did not have a justification to keep its equipment out of the mine.

On April 11, the lawyer for Stone Canyon refused to schedule negotiations the following week because the company will be training more of its managers in mine rescue at that time so that they can continue to run production during the strike. In response to the provocation, the union called a rally at the evaporation plant and refused to permit any movement in or out of the plant for four hours. A heavy police presence was brought in to get the workers to end their blockade, which they agreed to do voluntarily.



Prior to the February 28 injunction picketers were blocking removal of salt by rail from Windsor Salt facilities.

The Ontario Superior Court has given Stone Canyon an indefinite extension of the injunction limiting picketing first given on February 28. This despite the fact that when it applied for the injunction it did so under the guise of preventing damage to machines and to ensure there are no leaks from the salt brine wells that would damage the environment. But, in fact, CP Rail is transporting salt out by rail. The company is storing salt from the Windsor facilities, and possibly its U.S. operations, at Charron Transport in Chatham, Ontario from which it is filling orders with its customers.

The bargaining unit's work is all being done by managers from each facility. With summer on the horizon, normally the evaporation plant would also be processing salt into pellets for

chlorination of swimming pools. The build-up of pellets for the summer season has not been done

as a result of the company provoking the strike. The company may well try to use pellets from their U.S. operations to fill orders as they have been unable to restart production at the evaporation plant.

Undaunted, the striking workers have stepped up their efforts to inform other workers about their cause. They set-up a secondary information picket at the offices of CP Rail in Windsor and at Charron Transport in Chatham to inform those who work there and the community about their cause and to appeal for support. They received expressions of support from truckers who move salt in and out of the Chatham facility and honks of support outside the offices of CP Rail.



Only the workers and their union are attempting to bring about a negotiated settlement. Their actions are proof of their intentions. The actions of Stone Canyon Industries Holding Inc. show one intention and one intention only – to break the union and force acceptance of the demands they are dictating for the new contract.

Let us together inform all the communities affected by the strike-breaking which is going on and go all out to support the workers. Their cause is our cause! Support the striking salt workers by condemning what the company, courts and governments are doing, and by helping them hold the line!

***Our Future Lies in the Fight for the Rights of All!
All Out to Support the Striking Salt Workers in Windsor, Ontario!***

(Empoweryourselfnow.ca. Photos: EYN, Unifor)



Charron Group's Operations in Chatham, Ontario



Charron Group is a "family-owned" logistics operation in Chatham, Ontario. It operates a transport and warehousing operation with two entities: Charron Transport and Charron Warehousing. Charron Transport's office staff, drivers, dockmen, maintenance workers, brokers and mechanics are represented by Teamsters Canada Local 879. The union is based in Hamilton, Ontario. The collective agreement between Local 879 and Charron Transport expired on March 31.

Charron Warehousing operates a 550,000 sq ft. food grade warehouse that has CN Rail access. This makes it an important hub for the movement of food-related goods to and from Windsor, Ontario. Charron Transport also operates a fleet of trucks that are primarily used for moving food-related materials.

Showing the important role the operation plays for the distribution of Windsor Salt, in 2020 they received an industry award for their storage and distribution of both Morton Salt and Windsor Salt, both of which are now owned by Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. Hundreds of skids of yellow Windsor Salt bags are often seen in Charron Transport's yard. The warehouse also plays an important role in the shipment of field tomatoes and sauces produced in Essex and Kent Counties.



Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan Annual Meeting

On April 13, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) will hold its Annual General Meeting (AGM) from 5:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Toronto Reference Library, in the Bram and Bluma Appel Salon on the second floor. During the meeting, pension fund executives Steve McGirr, Chair; Jo Taylor, President & CEO; Charley Butler, Chief Pension Officer; and Ziad Hindo, Chief Investment Officer will "highlight [the plan's] investment performance, member services and the plan's funding status."

The AGM is for the fund's shareholders, who are every teacher in the publicly funded education system in Ontario who pays into the fund. A major concern at this time is how the retirement savings of teachers and education workers in Ontario are invested. The OTTP's investment in Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc., is a serious concern. This is a U.S. holding company that forced concessions onto salt miners in Pugwash, Nova Scotia in 2021 after engaging in a series of dirty tricks in lieu of good faith negotiations. It is now engaged in amoral activities which show an intention to break the union of the salt workers in Windsor, Ontario. The company hired a notorious U.S. union-busting law firm named Jackson Lewis and their Canadian counterpart, Filion Wakely Thorup Angeletti LLP, to represent their interests in what are supposed to be negotiations for a new contract. But Stone Canyon is refusing to negotiate anything and instead is using the power of money, the state and privilege to impose contracting out of union work and elimination of union time release.

The OTTP AGM is an opportunity for plan members to ask questions about the OTTP's investments and to raise the values the pension fund should base its decisions on when considering its investments. Demands to divest from unethical or morally ambiguous projects, such in fossil fuel projects, are not uncommon. Divestment is the opposite of an investment -- it simply means getting rid of stocks, bonds, or investment funds that are unethical or morally ambiguous or unacceptable.

To attend in-person, members had to have signed up in advance. There is currently a waiting list to attend in-person, however the AGM is also being streamed for those who register to attend virtually and those who register can also submit questions. For more information, [click here](#).

