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## **Windsor Salt Strike**

# **Workers to Consider Second Tentative Agreement**

*– Empower Yourself Now –*



- **Mariners Refuse to Cross Picket Line and Other Important Acts of Solidarity with Striking Salt Workers**
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On August 24, the bargaining committees for Unifor Locals 240 and 1959 announced that they had reached a second tentative agreement with the owners of Windsor Salt, Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. (SCIH), after in-person meetings with representatives of the company in Toronto. The workers have been on strike since February 17. This agreement comes after miners at the Ojibway Mine rejected a tentative agreement on July 21 because it contained unacceptable union-busting provisions.[1] Workers at the evaporation plant and clerical workers at both the mine and evaporation plant have not voted on the first tentative agreement as they paused their votes when the miners rejected the agreement. Meetings for each bargaining unit to consider the new tentative agreements are taking place on Sunday, August 27.

Empower Yourself Now is confident that, just as they did with the previous tentative agreement, the salt workers in Windsor, Ontario will work out together how to vote in a manner that upholds their unity and the dignity of labour, as they have done since Day 1 of the strike.

## Note

1. "Stand as One with Windsor Salt Workers! Negotiate Don't Dictate!," *Empower Yourself Now*.



# Mariners Refuse to Cross Picket Line and Other Important Acts of Solidarity with Striking Salt Workers



Windsor Salt and other striking workers recognized at Unifor's National Council Meeting, Halifax, August 19, 2023.

In the past two weeks of the strike, workers report that a second Canada Steamship Lines crew rose to the occasion and refused to cross the water picket lines established by the Windsor Salt workers. This support is greatly appreciated as a concrete expression of solidarity, which means that now the crews of two ships are joining the salt workers in their fight on their own terms to uphold their own dignity and the dignity of labour as a whole.[1]



At Unifor's Canadian Council held in Halifax August 18-20, representatives of Unifor from across Canada rose in support of the striking salt workers in Windsor, Ontario. The council was addressed by representatives of the workers who updated council members on the strike and what they were fighting for and thanked locals from across the country for their ongoing financial support. At the meeting, more financial contributions were announced to sustain the workers' strike.

In addition, from August 18-22 during the annual meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Federation incoming and outgoing governors of the Federation once again raised their concerns both publicly and in private about the investments of the Ontario Teachers Pension Plan with the directors of the Plan that it has appointed who were present at the meetings. A report from a Governor from the

Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association about his visit to the picket line in Windsor and the reasons workers he met with gave for rejecting the first tentative agreement they were presented with was a highlight keeping all Governors abreast of the developments in the strike.

## Note

1. "Dirty Activity of Canada Steamship Lines in Salt Strike," *Empower Yourself Now*.



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## Pathetic Attempt by Legacy Media to Incite Opinion Against Salt Workers

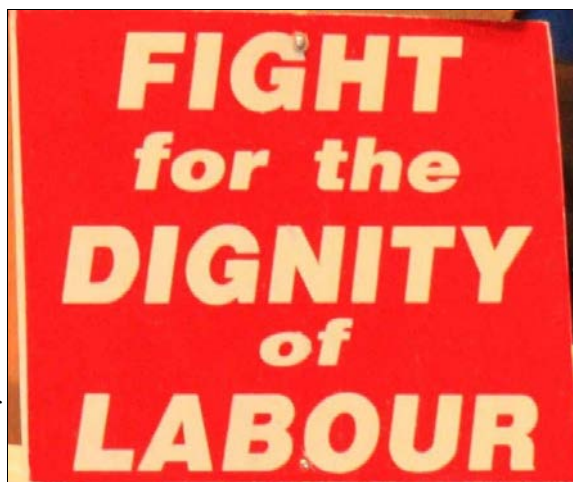
Workers continue to oppose cowardly attempts by the legacy media to disinform Canadians and blame the salt workers for damaging the economy so as to justify some form of government intervention to end the strike.

One report in the *Calgary Herald* titled, "Inside the worker strike that has left Calgarians with a shortage of salt" gave no information as to what was at stake in the fight for the control of Canadian salt and salt workers, and instead whipped up fear that the strike was harming small businesses.[1]

The report quotes the director of the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources at the University of Toronto saying the dispute has reached a point where "it is no longer rational." This is as irrational a statement as can be made given that the reasons for the strike are well known and the position of the workers is considered very dignified and courageous by fellow workers across the country who provide them with concrete moral and financial support to sustain the strike. "It's become very ingrained and bitter," the director said. "[Its effects] are rippling through the Canadian economy." He said: "[W]hat's unique about the dispute is the importance of the product."

Instead of saying that the importance of the product means the workers should be treated with respect, the director uses his credentials as "director of the Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources at the University of Toronto" to say that a third party should step in and resolve the issue. "When something gets dysfunctional, maybe it's time for some outside help," he said.

A reader of *Workers' Forum* noted that the Director of Industrial Relations and Human Resources at the U of T, one of the main centres of irrationalism and reaction in Canada, gets a salary of close to \$190,000 per year to produce this sort of drivel. Who, one might legitimately ask, is harming the economy? Not the workers, that is for sure.



It shows what the workers face when academics use their positions to push stands which are clearly biased against the workers to tell us what is good for the economy. The fact is that treating the workers with respect is fundamental. Talk about what is good for the economy which does not put the well-being of the workers in first place, no matter if the times be good or bad, is not trustworthy. It is self-serving and to be held in contempt.

The article also quotes the director of the Agri-Food Analytics Lab at Dalhousie University who

said "independent shops would be the most affected, while giants such as Walmart have the ability to choose from a wider selection of vendors." The example is given of Sucre Patisserie & Cafe that apparently experienced a shortage of salt a few months ago and had to shift to use stored salt from its salt shakers for its baking. It is pathetic. In fact the article also notes that other businesses were able to source salt from other suppliers inside and outside of Canada.

The strike of the Windsor salt workers shows that, in fact, damage to the Canadian economy is posed by its not being under the control of Canadian workers but instead important commodities like salt are in the hands of a U.S. union-busting company such as Stone Canyon (SCIH) that is intent on manipulating the supply of salt in Canada to favour its own narrow interests.

For example, despite being published by the *Calgary Herald* about the effects of the strike in Alberta, the article does not even mention the closure of commercial salt production in Lindbergh, Alberta by SCIH in 2021. No rational person would conclude that this closure is irrelevant to the shortages taking place in Alberta at this time! Of course, the article is par for the course when it comes to the role of the legacy media in hiding relevant information and especially on remaining silent about the role workers play in the process of production without which talk of an economy is meaningless.

The article is also a feeble last-ditch attempt to show loyalty to the likes of Stone Canyon which has thus far failed to win any support for its strike breaking endeavours. Governments are always happy to intervene in labour disputes on the side of capital against labour when they can provide an argument that it is good for the economy but this attempt by "directors" of centres at prominent universities is too paltry by far.

Windsor salt workers have not held the line all these months to get rattled by such spurious arguments as the ones published by the *Calgary Herald*. For upholding the dignity of labour, they continue to gain more and more support from their community and workers across the country.

## Note

1. "Inside the worker strike that has left Calgarians with a shortage of salt," *Calgary Herald*, August 17, 2023



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