

Canadian workers declare support for International May Day Online Rally

Our reporter
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Are you a rail worker? Contact the CP Rail Workers Rank-and-File Committee at cpworkersrffc@gmail.com. If you're an educator, connect with the Cross-Canada Educators Rank-and-File Committee at cersc.cspfb@gmail.com.

Members and supporters of the Socialist Equality Party (SEP) are conducting a campaign across Canada to mobilize a large delegation of workers to attend Sunday's International May Day Online Rally. The event, which will begin at 3 p.m. Eastern, will advance an international program of struggle for the working class against imperialist war and the ruling elite's "let it rip" pandemic policy.

The campaign included a joint meeting convened April 24 by two rank-and-file committees established by educators and rail workers across Canada. Speakers from the Cross-Canada Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee and CP Rail Workers Rank-and-File Committee reviewed the struggles of education staff and railroaders over recent months, and advanced the necessity for workers in all industries to unify their struggles globally in opposition to the nationalist and corporatist trade unions.

The meeting adopted the following resolution:

This meeting of education and rail workers declares its full support for the International May Day Rally co-sponsored by the *World Socialist Web Site* and International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees on May 1. The rally will provide a political perspective to unify the struggles of the working class internationally against capitalist barbarism, the pandemic and imperialist war.

The US-NATO proxy war against Russia raises the imminent threat of a global conflagration fought with nuclear weapons. The war is producing an explosion in the cost of living for workers everywhere, further exacerbating already unprecedented levels of social inequality and making the basic necessities of life increasingly unaffordable. The ruling elites in Canada, the United States and Europe are meanwhile squandering tens of billions of dollars on weapons and

other military gear to escalate the conflict in Ukraine, bring about regime change in Moscow, and reduce Russia to the status of a semi-colony. Having sacrificed millions of lives during the pandemic to an entirely preventable disease, governments in Canada, the US, Britain, France and Germany couldn't care less if millions more are incinerated in a nuclear exchange.

Education and rail workers have sought to fight back against the brutal conditions of exploitation we confront. But our efforts have been sabotaged at every turn by the nationalist and corporatist trade unions. The education unions have forced teachers and support staff back into dangerous schools during the pandemic, and denounce any collective action by workers against the ruling class' "profits before life" policy as "illegal." The rail unions help management enforce a dictatorial regime of brutal work schedules, the cover-up of safety concerns, and a draconian disciplinary procedure aimed at intimidating and firing workers who speak up. The trade unions all back the Liberal/NDP "confidence-and-supply" agreement, which will allow the Trudeau government to wage war abroad and impose austerity on workers at home through 2025.

This is why the Cross-Canada Educators Rank-and-File Safety Committee and CP Rail Workers Rank-and-File Committee are organized entirely independently of the pro-capitalist unions. Our committees believe that a new international strategy is required for the working class, one that unifies our struggles across borders against the domination of social life by a financial oligarchy and for the reorganization of society to meet the urgent social needs of the vast majority. We issue a strong appeal to all workers across Canada and internationally to attend the May Day Rally, which will advance a socialist program to put an end to war, the sacrificing of workers' safety and very lives to boost corporate profits, and the deadly COVID-19 pandemic.

The meeting heard two reports: one from Laurent Lafrance, the national convener of the CERSC, and another from Penny

Smith, a WSWS writer who has played a leading role in establishing the CP Workers Rank-and-File Committee. The reports dealt with the terrible working conditions confronting education staff and rail workers during the pandemic as ruthless rail operators seek to boost profits.

They also addressed the role of the corporatist unions in collaborating with management to impose the ruling elite's demands, and the unions' sabotaging of every workers' struggle. "The railway unions play an ever more blatantly treacherous role as a labour police, suppressing any opposition to the dictates of corporate management," said Penny Smith. "The Teamsters, Unifor and others regularly conspire with corporate management and governments to impose concessions-laden contracts that ignore wage demands or the chronic health and safety issues that have plagued the industry for decades."

Laurent said, "Today's meeting demonstrates the willingness of diverse groups of workers to unite and speak with one voice in opposition to the attempts of union bureaucracies to divide and isolate us, a strategy which is aimed at weakening us before the state and the bosses, and ultimately preventing a revolutionary movement of the working class against capitalism. After decades of union betrayals and divisive politics, this willingness to unite has become a concrete possibility thanks to the political leadership of the WSWS and the Socialist Equality Parties from which we draw our political guidance. This initiative, it should be remembered, is part of the efforts of the International Workers Alliance of Rank-and-File Committees organized by the International Committee of the Fourth International (ICFI)."

Explaining why he plans to attend the May Day rally, Malcolm, an educator from British Columbia, stated, "This May Day highlights the need, greater than ever before, for the international working class to organize itself politically with the revolutionary socialist perspective of the SEP. In the year 2022, how could it be any clearer that capitalism is driving humanity off a cliff?

"The pandemic has demonstrated that the working class is an international class. For teachers, the conditions we face are not different from those of comrades in Toronto, Philadelphia, Miami, Paris, Tokyo, Buenos Aires or anywhere else in the world, outside of China. Everywhere it is the same social actors at work: governments driven by the need to prioritize corporate profit, political parties, at all ends of the political spectrum, from conservative to liberal to 'left,' kowtowing to the financial aristocracy and demanding that the economy trump every other social need, and trade unions that do nothing more than tell workers to shut up, keep our heads down while imposing austerity wage reductions and ignoring our right to a safe workplace.

"Governments' only answer to the class consciousness and social tensions that the pandemic has awakened in the working class is imperialist war. Everyday they, and their bootlickers in the media, scream about a Russian bogeyman who will come

for all of us once he is finished in the Ukraine. Therefore, billions of dollars that could have been used for public health measures or relieving skyrocketing gas and food prices, are immediately earmarked for weapons. How do these policies benefit the working class besides marching us closer to a nuclear holocaust? They don't!

"Instead the media and their middle-upper class enablers prattle on about democracy, human rights and the rule of law. What foul and rank hypocrisy! Workers aren't blind to the track record of Western imperialism. What concern was there for democracy when the CIA plotted and hatched coup attempts against governments in Chile, Iran, Egypt and Venezuela? What concern is there for human rights when the West supports the fundamentalist government of Saudi Arabia? What concern is there for the human rights of the Palestinian people who live under a brutal Israeli occupation, are shot at and thrown into Israeli dungeons on an almost daily basis? What concern is there for the journalists and human-rights advocates that are being murdered by the Ukrainian government as we speak, by far-right, neo-Nazi forces embedded in that countries armed forces? What concern was there for the international rule of law when NATO bombed Libya? When it bombed Yugoslavia? When the United States and its lackeys invaded and occupied Iraq, murdering hundreds of thousands? The answer is always NONE!"

Liam, a graduate student from BC, wrote, "At a time when the United States risks war with a nuclear power, I intend to attend the May Day rally to bolster the clarion call of the ICFI against great power conflict. We, the workers of the world, must reject the war propaganda of NATO and the United States and embrace the proletarian call for a revolutionary struggle against capitalism and imperialism."



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