

What can you do to help?

Put an I SUPPORT CUPW sign on your window. You can download it at: http://www.cupw.ca/index.cfm?ci_id=12962&la_id=1

- Walk the picket line with CUPW members or join other activities. Visit the CUPW website to find out about picket locations.
- Wear an I SUPPORT CUPW button (available through CUPW locals);
- Respond to newspaper and online articles, editorials and radio talks shows
- Post and share CUPW's communications in social networking and online communities
- Contact your local MP and let them know you support the postal workers
- Contact the Canada Post President Deepak Chopra and encourage him to drop the demands for concessions from the workers. Tell him to negotiate solutions with postal workers.

Fax: 613-734-6084

E-mail: deepak.chopra@canadapost.postescanada.ca

This leaflet was produced by the Greater Toronto Workers' Assembly, with information from articles by: Jesse McLaren, Cindy McCallum Miller, the Bullet and CUPW.

If you are interested in becoming active in defense of workers rights and social justice, , contact the Greater Toronto Workers' Assembly to learn more about how to get involved at: workingclassfightback@gmail.com, or visit our website at: <http://www.workersassembly.ca/>.

We are labour and community activists trying to build just political alternatives and movements for social justice.

Why you should support postal workers

The 48,000 members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) are holding a series of rotating strikes against Canada Post. Although missing our mail might be an inconvenience, this strike will affect our lives in other ways. It is a fight over issues that most working people are facing today. Postal workers are fighting to maintain healthy conditions at work; the right to decent wages and benefits; retirement security and pensions.

All these rights are under attack by employers and governments, who are trying to make workers pay for the economic crisis that we did not create. And, just like so many other efforts to weaken public services we rely on or sell them off to the private sector, it is a fight over the very nature and survival of the public post office.

The real issues are: should workers have to pay the price and bear the burden for managers who only want to increase profits and match lowest cost competitors? Even more, should our key public services 'modernize' by becoming more like private, profit-making operations, or should they provide needed, affordable, new and innovative services by decently paid, skilled working men and women?



Postal workers are standing up for a different vision of the post office and defending all public services:

The media are trying to pit postal workers against those who depend on the postal service. But it is Canada Post Corporation that has been cutting services, closing offices, and trying to privatize postal services.

Further it has been the union which has had to fight with management to make sure that union volunteers will still be able to deliver federal Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and Child Benefits cheques, as well as provincial social assistance cheques during any strike

The union is trying to negotiate, for expanded and progressive changes including increased door-to-door delivery, increased staff at postal outlets, expanded parcel service and adding services such as banking and high-speed internet services to rural areas.

Canada Posts is demanding cuts that will mean reduced services, cutting workers and selling off more and more to the private sector.

Certainly, some services the post office used to do are now taken up by new communications technologies. But this is no excuse to destroy a key public service such as the Post Office. This strike is about the need to defend and improve Canada Post and to ensure there are good jobs for young people.

The rights of postal workers are under attack in a number of areas:

In its drive to make work look like it does at its competitors in so many private-sector workplaces, the employer is imposing dangerous and unhealthy conditions on the workers. According to Bob Tyre, president of the Winnipeg local of CUPW:

“You're walking with different shapes and sizes balanced in your arm, with another in your hand.....You can't see where you're walking, and you're up and down stairs all day.It's caused a lot of slip and fall injuries, a lot of shoulder, arm, and neck pain.”

The livelihoods of workers and the future prospects for new workers. Canada Post wants to pay new hires 30% less, reduce their benefits, weaken their job security and reduce their pension benefits.

This is part of as broader austerity agenda that we can help challenge:

Despite making profits for the past 16 years – including \$281-million in 2009, and having the highest paid public service bureaucrat – Canada Post Corporation is blaming workers. This is part of a broader austerity agenda to make ordinary people pay for the economic crisis we did not create. As Lynn Bue, CUPW's second national vice-president stated, *“This is a fight against an ideology from the government, from banks, that big businesses should make more, and people should live on poverty wages.”*

Prime Minister Harper has been pushing a cut-back agenda, and recently visited Greece to support austerity there – which includes privatization, massive cuts to social services, layoffs and attacks on pensions. Rob Ford has begun to do the same things in Toronto. The CUPW strike is a major obstacle for both of them. A defeat for CUPW will be a victory for Harper, Ford and their corporate backers across the country. A victory for CUPW will build confidence and solidarity for others to resist the austerity agenda. This is a fight for all of us.



Postal workers have a history of defending all working people – even when it was difficult

CUPW has a long history of standing up for women's rights, civil liberties, peace and justice. This is the 30th anniversary of CUPW's strike for paid maternity leave – a strike that won paid maternity leave benefits for the first time in Canada!

They have stood in defense of the rights of all Canadian working people and others around the world and we have to stand beside them now.