



OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF CUPW 730 / FEBRUARY 2023

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INSTEAD.**

**INSIDE OUT** is the monthly publication of the Edmonton Local of CUPW.

This newsletter aspires to educate and inform members and affiliates about our union's activities, opportunities, and challenges, as well as to raise awareness regarding all things labour.

Opinions expressed are those of the author and not necessarily the official views of the Local.

The Communications Committee (responsible for this publication) is always interested in submissions of original articles, photographs, or illustrations. Prospective material must always concern CUPW or the labour movement, but submissions of general interest to the membership will also be considered.

All submissions for publication are subject to the approval of the Local President, and may be edited for brevity, clarity, etc.

To make a submission, or to get involved, contact the Communications Committee at [communications730@gmail.com](mailto:communications730@gmail.com).

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**EMPOWER  
ORGANIZE  
RESIST**



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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT FEBRUARY 2023

**W**e have a hell of a year ahead of us. This time next year, both the Urban and RSMC contracts will have expired. Our National CUPW negotiation team will have our list of demands in hand and with it a strike mandate. This leaves us less than one year to prepare.

## Where We Are At

One only needs to look back at 2022 to find evidence for the necessity for us to fight for our jobs. In Edmonton alone, we lost dozens of permanent full-time postal worker jobs. These losses happened in the EMPP as CPC made the arbitrary decision to eliminate positions. In the depots, it was done through fraudulent letter carrier and RSMC restructures. These cuts are going to continue through 2023.

In the meantime, we have Canada Post threatening to bring in further automation in the plants and ridiculous delivery models like Separate Sortation and Delivery (SSD) on the delivery side. All of these will eliminate more postal worker jobs. Those who are "lucky enough to still have a job," will have to deal with a health/safety crisis, incompetent supervisors and bullying management.

With these challenges, we are also facing sky-high inflation and fuel costs. A trip to

the grocery store will tell you that our wages are not keeping up with the rising cost of living. Gone are the days when a postal worker's wage could comfortably support an entire family. But don't worry, we have a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) payment to cover that, right? We even received two COLA payments last

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***"But don't worry, we have a Cost of Living Allowance (COLA) payment to cover that, right? We even received two COLA payments last year...my second COLA payment was \$0.94. At that time, I could have purchased 500ml of gas!"***

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year. In case you had forgotten how much the payments were, my second COLA payment was \$0.94. At that time, I could have purchased 500ml of gas!

## What's our Union Doing?

On February 2nd, I received from our National Executive Board a discussion paper to assist in the preparation of bargaining demands for negotiations. To give the NEB credit, the paper does

highlight most of the issues facing postal workers going into this round of negotiations. This is an incredibly important document to read in the next few weeks and I strongly encourage you to check it out on our website.

Despite the paper's accurate description of the current issues we face, it does not prescribe any new solutions. On the one hand, it points out the ineffectiveness of our bargaining over the last decade; on the other, it proposes that we continue to do what we've been doing. Where is the plan and discussion of supporting our negotiations with real pressure? The most alarming aspect of this paper is the implication that we can rely on the Liberal-NDP deal to protect our bargaining rights.

I can assure you that Canada Post is going to resist any substantial changes as much as possible. Knowing that they have the support of the Federal Government, there is little motivation for them to negotiate fairly. The only solution that I see is for postal workers to mobilize. We cannot expect the government to support us, and we cannot rely on our negotiating team to succeed if Canada Post isn't feeling the pressure.

If we want to make meaningful changes to our contracts, it will require a

meaningful strike. We have less than 12 months to prepare.

## The Local's Responsibility

I'm not going to just sit back and throw shade at the NEB for not having a new plan. We are going to prepare the Local. Come March, we will be hosting a series of demand resolution workshops and special GMMs. This will be in tandem with an aggressive spring education schedule that's focused on member engagement, Shop Steward, and Building Worker Power training.


In May, our delegates will be headed to Toronto to elect our Regional and National leadership that will take us through this next round of negotiations. It's imperative that we elect leaders that have a vision to carry our Union through

to a much-needed victory on the picket lines.

This Fall, our Local will shift to putting strike plans in place. We will be preparing our Stewards and picket captains for the inevitable come the new year. Again, we have less than 12 months to prepare and make meaningful changes to our contracts.

## Member Responsibility

This level of member engagement will require a huge amount of effort that can only be accomplished with all hands on deck. Full-time officers, vice-presidents, and Stewards are not going to be enough. Everyone will need to step up; join committees, come to meetings, write resolutions, sign up to be picket captains and so on. The opportunities

will be there for every member of this Local to be engaged, and it will be through this engagement that we will be able to fight to improve the lives of every postal worker across the country. After all, that's what a union is supposed to be doing. 

## DEVON RUNDVALL (HE/HIM)



**PRESIDENT**  
LOCAL 730 / EDMONTON & AFFILIATES  
CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS

# FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

Hi everyone! We've got some Local news to cover here – mostly updates from recent General Membership Meetings.

First, at a special GMM in January, our Local elected delegates for our next National Convention: Bev Ray, Devinder Sunner, Devon Rundvall, Elizabeth Smallwood, Gursharan Gill, Gwen Kroetsch, James Ball, Jenn Reimer, Karry Biri, Kathleen Mpulubusi, Kyle Turner, Natasha Fryzuk, Nicole Gruninger, Osamah Abdullah, Parminder Pannu, Peter Hall, Raina Dakus, Rashpal Sehmy, Robert Hohnstein, Roger Chau, Sanjay Malholtra, Stephanie Bourque, Todd Brooks, and Wendy Crispin.

Our 2023 National Convention will be happening in Toronto, ON, on the first week of May. We have 6 alternates who

will take the place of delegates if they are unable to attend: Greg Mady, David Griffiths, Edward Buchholtz, Tim Nault, Jack Seredynski, and Aden Edey.

Second, at our February GMM, our Local voted to endorse Greg Mady and his campaign to become the President of the Alberta Federation of Labour. Greg has been a member of CUPW for the last 12-years. He was one of the first vocal Shop Stewards that I met on the workforce and he encouraged me to get involved, which I greatly appreciate. He also referred to himself as the Steward with perfect pitch, but I think that remains to be seen.

Five years ago, Greg became the President of the Edmonton & District Labour Council (EDLC). Now he hopes to take his vision to the AFL. Greg's

campaign has also been endorsed by our Regional and National CUPW offices.

Finally, I've been getting a lot of questions and hearing a lot of conversations about the Rosedale restructure – Depot 9 in particular. For the most thorough information we have on that, please read Kathleen Mpulubusi's article in this edition.

## KYLE TURNER (HE/HIM)



**COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER**  
LOCAL 730 / EDMONTON & AFFILIATES  
CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS



# A TALE OF TWO DEPOTS: THE TRIALS AND TRIBULATIONS OF ROSEDALE

**I**t all began routinely. Depot 9 and Depot 3 units, which make up the Rosedale Delivery facility, were going to be restructured as per Article 47 notice provided 12 months in advance. The Route Measurement Committee pored over the current routes, with the help of the letter carriers, updating pacing, route timings and pickups. The Volume Counts for both depots proceeded smoothly.

The first sign of trouble began after the volume count of Depot 9. With the current decline in both mail and parcel volumes, it was predicted that there would be cuts to the current number of routes. The losses in volume shown were shocking. The % of Coverage dropped on average 15% per route. Some routes had % Coverage of less than 30% meaning that less than a third of a route received mail everyday. The drop in volumes overall equated to a potential cut in 9 FT routes.

By contrast, the Depot 3 results were not as dire. The % Coverage dropped on average of 10% per route and the drop-in volumes overall equated to a potential cut of 4 FT routes. Overall, this was alarming because this meant up to 13 FT routes could be cut from Rosedale. There were already 10 FT routes cut from Depot 2 and Mayfield Depots. The carriers at Rosedale reacted swiftly, presenting a petition to management protesting the potential cuts. But management persisted - schedules must be maintained and the March fiscal year-end bonuses earned.

The building of the new routes started under Union observation. The observers gave input, objecting when the RMOs (Route Measurement Officers) were not

following agreed upon procedures. The decisions made during the builds ultimately rest with the RMOs and their Geo Route program. The facility Supervisors are to drive and verify the final route design and health/safety concerns before fixing them. Depot 9 build was finished on December 14th. The Depot 3 build finished on December 29.

Starting with the Depot 9 review, there

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**“[We discovered] that a supervisor was tampering with the current route database; cutting values for the sake of “efficiency” while the main build was proceeding and without providing notice/knowledge to our Union.”**

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were immediate issues arising. The first issue was that the 038s had Zero variable value, the second was there were Zero Drive Times calculated for On-Demand Pickups, the third was the reduced park and loop to .97 of a min instead of 2.51 min and the fourth was that incorrect and altered lower Load/Unload times were assigned to routes doing RPO clearances and customer pickups.

The On-Demand Pickups are an ongoing concern because CPC is not following the agreed upon procedure to give us fair value to begin with. Now with even


the meagre values given for On-Demand pickups, there is no time to even drive to them nor flex time for volume, weather, or traffic problems.

But what is absolutely unprecedented is the realization that a supervisor was tampering with the current route database; cutting values for the sake of “efficiency” while the main build was proceeding and without providing notice/knowledge to our Union. This has set off a cascade of issues including carriers losing over assessment time on current routes, putting newly built routes over 480 minutes and introducing wait times to the new routes. All of this while eliminating 5 FT and 2PT routes in D9. It is completely understood that the time for adjusting the route database is during the Prep Phase when updates are done and Union observers are present. Once the build starts, the database is locked down except for minor changes like vacancies or occupancies. Even the RMO’s have admitted that this has not happened before.

The Depot 9 restructure became a Hydra with more arms becoming entangled and growing. We immediately filed grievances demanding: 1) That the implementation of the restructure be stopped until everything can be updated, verified and the Union is satisfied. 2) That all values removed be replaced. 3) Bidding on new routes cannot start until the new routes are corrected and the information is accurate. 4) All correction and verification work be done with CPC paid Union observers present throughout that process.

In addition to the loss of routes, Canada Post has to determine which relief and

depot support positions are actually assigned to D9 or D3. Even if they work for both depots in the same facility. Working as a common pool is not an issue but for bidding purposes they must be distinguished. They have never done this, even though it is clearly spelled out in the Collective Agreement that it must be done.

It is to the credit of your Local Route Measurement Committee, our Local and Regional representatives and the push-back of the Depot 9 carriers that Canada Post has agreed to re-do the build. The only other time this happened here was in 2010 when an arbitrator ordered Canada Post to halt the restructure of Depot 2 and provide the Union with the required information to review routes and go back to fix the missing values and other irregularities. Kudos to everyone involved! This is an empowering moment for our Local - to show what can be done when we all can work collectively together. 

*Kathleen Mpulubusi*  
*On behalf of the Route Measurement Committee*  
*Jen Reimer, Chair*

[Editor's Note\*\*\* As of publication, the Depot 9 build is to be redone totally using the volume count that was most recently completed.]



## Building Worker Power



CUPW is only as strong as our workfloors are organized, unified around a plan, and willing to mobilize. Union leadership will never have the power to defeat the boss and government on their own. Without mass buy-in from our members to strengthen CUPW from the workforce up, our jobs as postal workers will keep deteriorating.

The corporation is positioned to use Amazon and the pandemic as excuses to cut us down in bargaining in 2023. We must be ready, but our capacity to fight forward will only be proportional to how many of us are committed to building the solidarity of our union, in whatever way we can.

The Building Worker Power campaign is the first time since 1988 that CUPW has committed to a National plan to build up the internal capacity of our members to confront the employer directly on the workforce. For this campaign to succeed we will need hundreds of members to volunteer as workforce captains to be trained to help their co-workers collectively assert their rights.

### What does a Work Floor captain do?

There is no shortage of problems at work – the role of the workforce captain is to help channel deeply and widely felt frustrations into demands for a better workplace that can be won using time-tested tactics. Regional Organizers and Local CUPW Executives will coordinate the efforts of the captains in their Local and throughout the rest of the Region.

This is a volunteer position and will only take as much of your time as you want to offer.

### How do I become a Work Floor captain?

If you are interested in supporting this initiative to empower our workfloors, please contact the Organizer for your Region listed on the campaign website [bwp.cupw.ca](http://bwp.cupw.ca). They will be able to answer any questions you have about the role as well as coordinate with your Local to arrange training sessions.

I'm not ready to become a Work Floor captain.

How can I still support the campaign?

Sign up to join the campaign on our website: [bwp.cupw.ca](http://bwp.cupw.ca) to receive updates



# THE CHAOS OF RESTRUCTURES

**Our jobs are about to get a lot harder, longer, and more dangerous. If we don't stick up for the people undergoing restructures today, none of us will be able to stop it.**

Nathan Lamarche

I recently transferred to Mayfield as an OA, earning myself a crispy new route. I was met with a cacophony of nightmarish route design in the wake of the recent restructure.

This new route of mine is a flip-case. Not the entire case, mind you. Just three strips. Ironically, I also have three empty strip slots. So every day, I put up and take down every single strip in the entire case. My case-mate uses a third of the case for their flips. The other two thirds, we both have the flip-side empty. We don't share them, we each take down the entire case.

We also each have one Point of Call (POC) per case separation, rather than two. Which means, I shouldn't even be using the third of the case that my casemate uses for their flips — and my case mate shouldn't have a flip case at all.

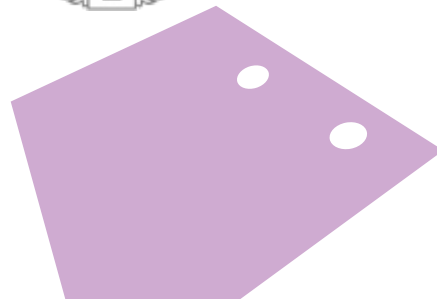
When I pull my route, I have to pull stop 22 for 10 POCs, then pull 21 for one POC, then 22, then 21, then 22. These are all unmarked, so even numbered and odd numbered addresses are mixed together. As well, my sequence mail is backwards to the case, meaning if I did want to not sort in sequenced, I'd be delivering that road twice, or re-sorting the mail while out walking the street.

There are many more issues, and my route is not alone. Even in the structure of the cases – some flip-cases have casemates, while others with no flip-case are alone.

This chaos, coming soon to a restructure near you. This absolute mess, this nonsensical structure that has even my supervisors baffled, isn't even the worst of it. St. Albert is being faced with separate sort and delivery (SSD), which would force us into a full day of delivery with no time inside and with no chance to customize the route.

Answer this: how long do you actually spend in the depot, sorting and pulling your route? And how long do you spend doing other inside work? A line all reliefs should be familiar with is "your route has been sorted, you should be out of here in five minutes." It's not that simple. It never has been. Marking parcels, loading vehicles, flyer collation, these all take time beyond just sorting your route.

Our jobs are about to get a lot harder, longer, and more dangerous. If we don't stick up for the people undergoing restructures today, none of us will be able to stop it. If St. Albert doesn't fend off SSD, it will be coming to other depots. Eventually, it'll make its way to the walking routes, where the four-bundle system will be an even greater problem than ever before. We have the power to stop this. We need to pick up that fight again. We are a union!



## JOB ACTION BULLETIN:

# EDMONTON

In January, we learned that the rumors were true: St. Albert was slated to be restructured as a Separate Sortation and Delivery (SSD) depot.

On the morning of January 27th, 2023, workers at facilities across Edmonton delivered petitions to management to let Canada Post know that the postal workers in Edmonton do not accept the implementation of SSD.



## NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE MEETING REPORT: OTTAWA, ON, DECEMBER 10-12, 2022



Rashpal Sehmbly

**The following is a summary of Rashpal's report on the National Human Rights Committee. For the full report, please contact the Local office.**

As members flew into Ottawa evening, the weather was not too cold, yet the wind made things much colder than expected. Dave Roberts and I flew out to Ottawa on the same flight. As we landed in Toronto, the city was clear of any snow. Ottawa did have some snow on the ground when we arrived at the hotel.

Sat. Dec. 10/2022

Michelle Riley and brother Dan had decided to do an Indigenous prayer; thanks for the foods, berries, water, and the herbs that heal us, the animals for cleaning our earth, the birds for giving us

songs from all four directions, the shining of your light and warming our earth. Live in peace and harmony for all. We had interpreters for both English and French as well as American Sign Language (ASL).

After lunch, Bev Collins told us of a glitch that CPC had with the money-loan program part of Postal Banking. This will be fixed and CPC tells us they want to commit to more financial services. There was continued discussion if we wanted to continue with this work, the general consensus of the room was that it was our first attempt and that we are at the forefront of some very groundbreaking work which needs to move forward in the future as well.

We were reminded of the total number of delegates to National Convention which will be about 640 and there will be electronic voting by keypad.

Sunday Dec. 11/2022

We went into separate rooms with our respective equity groups and had discussions to bring forward a variety of recommendations to be presented to the National Executive Board in January.

Monday Dec. 12/2022

This was our busiest day as the committee now must pass our recommendations to be moved forward to the N.E.B. As well, those catching flights need to check out of our rooms at our first coffee break at 10:15 am and either store our luggage downstairs or bring it into the large plenary room. I have decided to help behind the scenes with the upcoming Human Rights Conference which is scheduled for April 2023. For the Workers of Colour Equity group, Mike Nelson will present recommendations and Jey Iyadurai will chair and Anju Parmar will be the secretary. ✉️



A melancholy scene from Marconi Trail, Nova Scotia: a lonely CMB, mere steps from the shore, contemplates the tumultuous sea and longs for the return of its letter carrier, swept away in the last storm.

Just kidding! But honestly, can you imagine making deliveries here? You'd need a little boat some days. (Photo by Kyle Turner)



# SEPARATE SORTATION AND DELIVERY: THE SPECTRE AT THE DOOR

By Kathleen Mpulubusi

**This article originally appeared in the Winter 2019 issue of the InsideOut, but with the threat of SSD in St. Albert and potentially in Delton, this article is still painfully relevant.**

A new acronym is making the rounds in the depots. Whispered in hush tones – SSD. What is SSD? It stands for Separate Sortation and Delivery and it's brought to you by the diabolical engineering (and non-delivery) minds of CPC. It's the latest attempt to wring more blood ('productivity') from long-suffering carriers.

With SSD, the routes are sorted by routers who will sort multiple routes over their shifts. They will only sort the non-sequenced mail and bundle it for delivery. The carrier will have to put together sequenced and non-sequenced mail bundles, mark packets and parcels, and collate mail. Then it's loaded into the truck and off you go.

According to CPC, this model is necessary to create more space in depots for parcels. But is that the real reason? At the North Fraser Delivery Centre in British Columbia, this was the result after conversion to SSD: Reduction of three full-time routes and two part-time routes and the creation of ten routers. Route Optimization and depot management thinks it's great: they applaud the cost savings and the "improved customer service."

But what about us, the people who actually have to do the work?

For employees, SSD is known as Systemic Service Destruction. The inside time to prepare and load your vehicle is cut down to 20-30 minutes, with the 20-30 minutes of sort time on each route now given to the routers. Because of this, the routes can now be extended that much time for outside delivery. How much more can be added on? Another loop of 30 hours or 10 more parcels. How about five more Customer Pickups, CMB deliveries, or another RPO clearance, or 2-3 more kilometres of walking on top of the 15-20 (or more) kilometres already walked each day.

This delivery model completely flies in the face of CPC's current slogan of "Make it Safe, Make it Home." Is CPC living up to Article 33.02, which states that "the Corporation has the primary responsibility for ensuring that safe conditions prevail" and Article 33.02 (b)(i), which states "...provide and maintain workplaces, equipment, work methods and tools that are safe and without risk to health"?

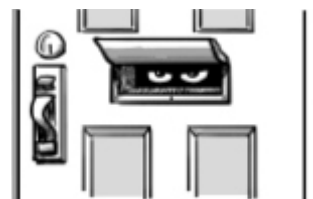
Is SSD a safe work method? More delivery work outside for fewer employees. In the Corporation's mind, fewer people outside equals fewer injuries. But for the people actually doing the outside work, more time outside equals potential for greater injuries. More fatigue, more overburdening, greater possibility of slips, trips, and falls. Will the number of injuries actually be reduced?

Depots currently being restructured to SSD are using the Letter Carrier Route Measurement System (LCRMS). The current LCRMS has major issues which negatively impact route design. The percentage of coverage calculation does

not include flyer coverage or flyer weight when building routes. The calculation of parcel values, PCI, and mail volume index is information currently withheld from our Union and CPC is not currently accountable to provide accurate information. Until the LCRMS is updated to reflect our current delivery reality, then the SSD model will have a negative impact on us and our work.

We know this is coming, but it can also be fought. In Calgary, the Royal Oak depot which was slated for SSD restructure successfully stopped the restructure. A depotwide petition was signed by employees and letters were also written to management. In Edmonton, there are no depot restructures scheduled for this year – but what about next year? The Rosedale IJOSH committee passed a motion to compel CPC to do a Risk Assessment on SSD.

We have to be ready. We can close the door on the spectre and make CPC truly live up to its primary obligation to provide safe work for all. If we have safe work, then we can truly make it safe.



**WE TOGETHER STRONG  
DECEMBER 18 @ DELTON**



With thanks to the generous donation from the Local along with support from the EDLC, the We Together Strong group distributed Christmas Hampers to 120 families. Every family also got treats, toys and a visit from Santa! It was cold and snowy but the hearts were warm all around.







### LABOUR VICTORY AND STRUGGLE, AT HOME AND ABROAD

**Communications Workers of America (CWA)** – 300 quality assurance (QA) testers at ZeniMax, a gaming studio owned by Microsoft, voted to unionize earlier this year. This is the first official union at Microsoft and it is now the largest gaming union in the United States. In June, Microsoft said it would not stand in the way of employee organizing and a spokesperson for Microsoft has said that Microsoft will recognize the CWA as the representative of the QA workers at ZeniMax.

**Cape Breton University Faculty Association** – Faculty members at Cape Breton University went on strike on January 27th, 2023. The union, which represents professors, librarians, lab instructors, nursing practice educators, and specialists, is asking for respect and raises that are in line with inflation. On February 5th, CBUFA and the university reached a tentative agreement.

**Memorial University of Newfoundland Faculty Association** – On January 30th, 2023, the faculty at Memorial University represented by MUNFA – which consists of around 800 members, including faculty, librarians, counsellors and co-operative and field educators – went on strike after negotiations with the university stalled. Among MUNFA's demands are a 14% raise over the course of 4-years, improved working conditions, and a rejection of a two-tier payment scheme for post-retirement benefits.

**UFCW Local 175** – After a multi-year delay at the Ontario Labour Relations Board, workers at Canada Royal Milk in Kingston have received union certification.

**USW Local 1944** – On January 30th, 2023, USW Local 1944 members who work for Telus voted to reject Telus' offer. Telus has apparently been using captive audience meetings and one-on-one meetings to pressure members into accepting the deal.

**Britain** – Around half of a million workers walked off the job on February 1st in Britain. Among these workers are teachers, civil servants, train drivers, and university lecturers. This is being described as the largest coordinated strike action in a generation. Like in other situations, this is a result of wages not keeping up with inflation and the cost of living.

**France** – Workers in France have been striking and protesting over the Macron government's plan to raise the age of retirement from 62 to 64. Unions have reported over one million people have taken part in these demonstrations. In the most recent wave, unions representing teachers, oil workers, and public transportation took part in the strikes.

**Welcome to the Bread & Roses Update!** I am hoping for this to be a regular report from the Local Women's Committee. The Committee is open to all cis women, trans women and non-binary individuals who are willing to centre on the experiences of women. The purpose of the Committee is to educate and advocate for women on equality issues facing women both in the Union and the Post Office. The goal of the Committee is to encourage involvement of women at all levels in the union and empower women to take their place within the Union. The late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg said "Women belong in all places where decisions are being made". This is true within our Union and in the broader society.

The Committee has been working to identify issues that are of specific concern to women at Canada Post and in our Local. To that end, we want to develop a questionnaire to send to all

women in the Local asking them to identify issues of concern and what education and assistance the Women's Committee can provide. Once we identify the issues then we can plan different ways to provide education and support for women.

We do not operate in a vacuum. Over the years, members of the Women's Committee have worked closely with women in other unions and organizations to promote women's equality. We learn and grow together. One of the first events of the year is International Women's Day on March 8. Our Women's Committee works with Women for Rights & Empowerment (W4RE) to do an annual march and rally. This year, the march will take place on Sunday, March 5 with a dinner on Wednesday, March 8. Save the Date! More Details to come!

The Women's Committee is a very dynamic group and we want to welcome

all women to join us at our meetings. The next meeting is on Tuesday February 28 at 7:00 pm at the Union office. A Zoom link will be available for anyone to attend online. We want to provide a good space for all women to come, learn, laugh and support each other.

Want to join the email list for updates or to get more information?

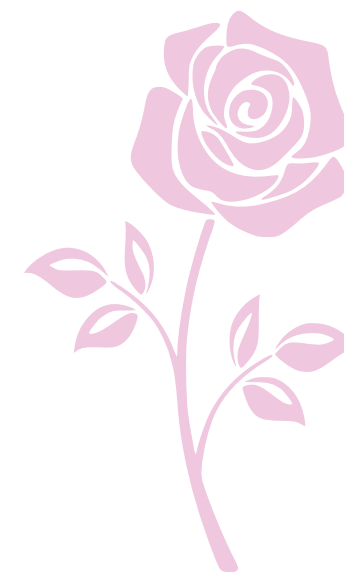
Email Kathleen Mpulubusi at [kmpulu@gmail.com](mailto:kmpulu@gmail.com).

*"We fight for bread but we fight for roses too"*

- "Bread & Roses" by James Oppenheimer

Written in 1912 to commemorate a women workers textile strike in the US fighting for wages and better working conditions. Bread and Roses is the anthem for women workers all over the world.

Kathleen Mpulubusi  
Chair - Women's Committee




### CUPW LOCAL 730 EDMONTON & AFFILIATES

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING SATURDAY, MARCH 4<sup>TH</sup> @ 10 AM

AT UNION OFFICE (18121 107 AVE NW) AND ONLINE VIA ZOOM

REGISTER BEFORE FRIDAY MARCH 3<sup>RD</sup> AT NOON TO ATTEND ONLINE

**INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY**  
*Women in the forefront of the fight for the rights of all!*




**SUNDAY, MARCH 5**  
Starts at east side of Corbett Hall  
March on Whyte Avenue

**1PM RALLY /MARCH**  
112 street and 82 avenue  
Refreshments at Gazebo Park

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 8 DINNER/DISCUSSION**  
5:30 DOORS  
Santa Maria Goretti Centre  
Tickets \$25 on Eventbrite

**6:30 DINNER**  
11050 90 street  
No one turned away for lack of funds

Organized by:  
Women for Rights and Empowerment  
For more information or to get involved:  
[women4rights@ymail.com](mailto:women4rights@ymail.com)  
[facebook.com/EdmontonW4RE](https://www.facebook.com/EdmontonW4RE)



IWD March on Whyte March 2022 by Mary Joyce

# CANADA'S "FREEDOM CONVOY" IS A FRONT FOR A RIGHT-WING, ANTI-WORKER AGENDA

As the anniversary of the so-called "Freedom Convoy" passes with a well-deserved whimper, we decided to revisit this article from a year ago. We hope you will find it illuminating, as the various "freedom fighters" in our midst flail about for a new issue to be enraged about—real or imaginary—whilst continuing to ignore the true struggles of working people. - Ed.

By Emily Leedham

**Workers in Canada's trucking industry have suffered during the pandemic. The "Freedom Convoy," a right-wing, pro-business social movement, purports itself to be the people's champion of liberty — yet it couldn't care less about the hardships and burdens of its fellow workers.**

Originally published on *Jacobin.ca* on February 5, 2022

The so-called "Freedom Convoy" of truckers currently occupying Canada's capital city claims to be a broad people's movement concerned with the plight of workers — specifically truckers — who have suffered throughout the pandemic.

The convoy has received plaudits from the likes of Elon Musk and Jordan Peterson, sympathetic coverage from conservative media, and acclaim from some Canadian members of parliament. The Freedom Convoy's GoFundMe has thus far raised \$10 million in donations. Despite this wide recognition and support, the convoy presents itself as a scrappy coalition of working people who, fed up with the hardship they have undergone, are now speaking truth to power.



Supporters wave flags and cheer as a convoy of trucks passes in Rigaud, Canada on January 28, 2022. (Christinne Muschi / Bloomberg via Getty Images)

But a closer look at key "Freedom Convoy" participants reveals that many of the concerns of the protesters have little to do with workers' rights or labor issues within Canada's trucking industry. In fact, Convoy organizers have previously harassed workers on the picket line and ignored calls for support from racialized truckers fighting against wage theft.

## Union-Busting History

What motivated the Freedom Convoy to protest was a new piece of federal regulation that requires unvaccinated Canadian truckers to isolate for fourteen days upon returning to Canada from the United States. Unvaccinated foreign truckers, however, are not allowed into the country. Despite 90 percent of Canadian truckers being vaccinated, this policy galvanized a vocal minority on the Right whose anger had been brewing long before the pandemic.

Freedom Convoy organizer and Canada Unity founder James Bauder's allegiances are to the far right — he

certainly didn't emerge from the labor movement. Two years ago, Bauder participated in another convoy called United We Roll which had connections to far right elements in Canada's Yellow Vests movement and other white nationalist hate groups. United We Roll toured the country in opposition to Canada's federal carbon tax and the UN migration pact, garnering support from Conservative politicians across the country.

United We Roll also planned an anti-union protest where convoy members threatened to dismantle the picket line and run over workers. Bauder livestreamed the protest at which workers say convoy members harassed them and shouted obscenities from a megaphone. The episode's anti-labor pièce de résistance came when the employer of the picketing workers gave the convoy an in-person shout out at a press conference before the protest.

Just months before that, United We Roll shared articles critical of another strike on its Facebook page. Teamsters CN Rail

workers had shut down railways for one week demanding better scheduling, pay, and working conditions. United We Roll was more interested in the concerns of an agribusiness CEO. To say that Bauder or any Freedom Convoy participants who were involved with United We Roll are friends of organized labor is to stretch credulity past its breaking point.

## No Solidarity With Immigrant Truckers

In addition to Bauder, other Freedom Convoy organizers, such as Pat King, Tamara Lich, and BJ Lichter, have a history of associating with hate groups and expressing racist and anti-immigrant sentiments. This could explain why the Freedom Convoy is strangely silent on labor issues facing immigrant truckers who now make up over one-third of truckers in Canada. Over half of truckers in major cities like Vancouver and Toronto are South Asian immigrants.

Some of these immigrant truckers believe the Freedom Convoy is distracting attention away from serious labor issues within the industry. The Freedom Convoy has plenty to say about vaccine mandates but little about predatory recruitment scams, inadequate training, lack of rest stops and highway safety infrastructure, worker misclassification, and the "billion dollar scam" of employer wage theft.

Over the past several months, immigrant truckers in Brampton, Ontario have marched in the streets, protested outside of employers' homes, and even disrupted a political candidate's rally with the simple demand of being paid for their work. The grassroots group Naujawan Support Network formed to support these truckers and launched a legal defense fund which currently sits at over \$18,000.

The difference between legal defense funds and the \$10 million dollars raised by the Freedom Convoy is that the former will actually be used constructively to help working people. Conversely, because there's no clear idea where the Freedom Convoy money

even came from or how it will be used, GoFundMe is pausing the Convoy's fundraiser page.

Freedom Convoy truckers have also blocked the US-Alberta border, leaving fifty to a hundred South Asian Canadian truckers stranded in Montana for two days without food in the middle of a blizzard.

"A lot of truckers, they don't even have food, some of them have medical issues, some of them have asthma, some of them have thyroid issues," Lovepreet Singh said in a social media video calling on government officials. "Nobody's even listening to us, so please help us out."

## Freedom for Me, Not for You

The Freedom Convoy wants to put an end to all COVID-19 mandates and restrictions, including mask and vaccine mandates and gathering restrictions.

Anti-union Conservative politicians across the country have expressed support for the Convoy, even showing up to meet them in person. In stark contrast with the police treatment of other protesters in recent Canadian history, Ottawa's law enforcement have thus far used a gentle hand in their dealings with the group's members. Canada's small business lobby, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, has also called upon the federal government to reverse the vaccination requirement for truckers.

There is no doubt Canadian federal and provincial governments have botched the pandemic response over the past two years, causing much harm to workers, their families, and communities. It is also true that Canadian leaders have placed an outsized amount of blame on unvaccinated individuals for prolonging the pandemic. Scapegoating an intransigent minority is evidently preferable to holding employers accountable for unsafe workplaces and reversing the decades-long

underfunding and slow privatization of our public health care system.

But Freedom Convoy organizers aren't making calls for policy changes that would ease workers' suffering either. The Freedom Convoy can seemingly only bleat "no vaccines" when it comes to issues of utmost importance for the demographic they purport to speak for and to. There has been no discussion within the Convoy's ranks of investment in public health care, employer accountability, paid sick days, rent control, or financial support for workers who lost their jobs. And the convoy certainly isn't advocating for workers to organize collectively into unions.

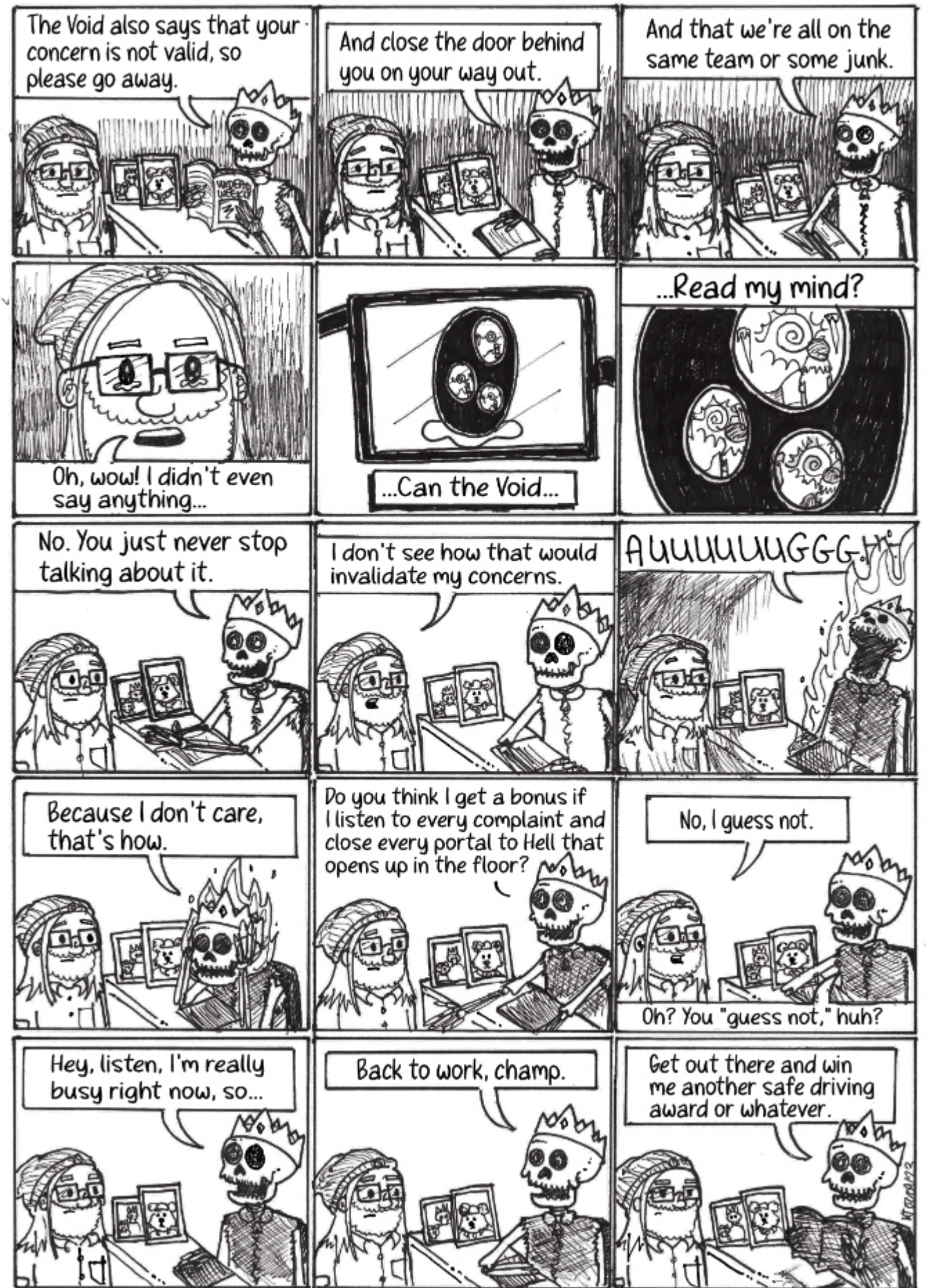
Convoy organizers promote a selfish, libertarian mindset where "individual freedom" includes the freedom to ignore how one's decisions impact others. The freedom that matters to the Convoy's organizers is the market's "freedom" to operate without interference from both unions and government regulations that cover workers' health and safety. In short, the Convoy only purports to be a people's movement. In reality it is the populist wing of right-wing interest groups, actively undermining real worker solidarity. 🗳️

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Emily Leedham is the Prairie Reporter for PressProgress and editor of Shift Work, PressProgress's weekly national Canadian labor newsletter.











**Overburdened** - A podcast of issues and current events that affect members of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Hosted by Brandi Hughes and Kevin Hitchings out of the Saskatoon Local (824). 103 episodes. Most recent episode: MIGS, Rands, and other membership types – what they mean and why you should become MIGS. (<https://anchor.fm/overburdenedpod>)



**The Silver Bullet Podcast** – A news, information and educational podcast for letter carriers of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers. Hosted by Pirate Jim out of the Calgary Local (710). 3 episodes. Most recent episode: Yesterday's Mail & Article 9, Part 2 – article 9 in the Urban and RSMC contracts and the problem with "Yesterday's Mail." (<https://anchor.fm/pirate-jim>)



**The P.O. Box Radio Show** – Open format show with a focus on new Canadian music. Hosted by Daniel "Postman Dan" Greer. (<https://linktr.ee/thePObox>)

**CHECK IT OUT!**

**A LETTER TO THE EDITOR**

I was quite amazed to see an entire 2-page article about "casuals" without any reference to Temporary Employees - their actual job title - and not a single reference to Article 44 of our Urban Collective Agreement, negotiated by the Union in 1995 to cover their "Entitlements and Working Conditions".

Certainly our contract can be improved in this regard, e.g. Disability Insurance coverage, as well as our CUPW National Constitution on commencement of deduction of Union dues, which has been an issue at several National Conventions, and should be again.

But the current Article 44 does cover Seniority, Allocation of Work Assignments and Filling a Vacant Regular Position, 5-Day Work Week, (contract) Provisions Applicable to Temporary Employees, Bereavement Leave, Vacation Pay, 4% Supplement in Lieu of Benefits, Uniform and Protective Clothing Entitlement, and Boot & Glove Allowance.

None of this was covered before CUPW negotiated Article 44 for Temporary Employees.

*Greg McMaster, Lifetime Member*

**WRITE FOR THE INSIDE OUT**

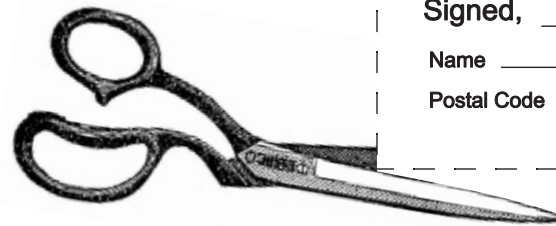


Here's your formal invitation: write your stories for Inside Out. They can be anything CUPW or labor related — the poor excuse for a boot allowance that you're just not satisfied with, or how your vehicle still doesn't have functioning climate control despite the temperatures dipping below -50 in the winter and over +40 in the summer. If you feel like it's something people need to hear, there's a really good chance it is. We want your perspectives, your stories and your concerns. This publication exists through the members!

So, what's your story? Send your submissions to [communications730@gmail.com](mailto:communications730@gmail.com).



**CUT IT OUT  
FILL IT OUT  
SEND IT OUT**



While Canada Post slaps a hefty fuel surcharge on its products to absorb the cost of powering corporate vehicles, RSMCs' (Rural and Suburban Mail Carriers) fuel and mileage allowances stay flat. The result? RSMCs struggling to keep up with the costs of doing their job, while their pay is stolen by skyrocketing fuel costs.

RSMCs are sick to the stomach, and the paycheck. Therefore, I am urging you to push **Canada Post to pay the costs of delivering the mail**, instead of the employees who must use their own vehicles.

**Stop forcing RSMCs to pay to work!**

Signed, \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_



The Honourable Helena Jaczek,  
Minister of Public Services and  
Procurement

House of Commons,

Ottawa, ON

Canada

K1A 0A6

**SOLIDARITY STYLE**

**OFFICIAL CUPW 730 T-SHIRTS AND MERCH**



We now have Solidarity-style mugs and tote bags in stock!

100% of Orange "Every Child Matters" T-shirt sales will go in support of Creating Hope Society.

Shirts are also available in White and Monochrome Black editions.

More colours, styles, and sizing options are on the way!

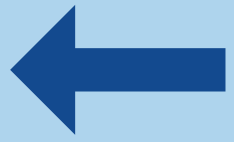
Contact the Office for pricing and delivery options.



*Gas pains from bloated fuel prices?*

Canada Post RSMCs need

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