

Canada Post is a thread that binds our communities together

Northern News Services

The sight of picket lines and halted mail delivery can be frustrating, especially during busy times like the holidays. Yet, amid the disruption of a postal strike, it's crucial for Canadians to step back and understand the broader stakes involved.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) is not merely fighting for improved wages or working conditions; they are advocating for issues that affect all of us: fair pay, safe workplaces and the preservation of a vital public service.

Supporting CUPW workers isn't just about solidarity with one group of workers; it's about standing up for the principles that underpin Canada's labour movement and recognizing the invaluable role postal workers play in our society.

Postal workers are the backbone of a service that connects Canadians from coast to coast to coast. Whether it's delivering essential medications, parcels or important government documents, postal workers ensure that Canadians, especially those of us in Northern, remote and rural areas, stay connected to the world.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, postal workers were hailed as front-line heroes. They continued to work despite the risks, ensuring that individuals and businesses could still receive vital supplies while much of the country was in lockdown.

Now, as they stand up for better wages, improved working conditions and protections against job precarity, these same workers are being met with resistance, negativity and vitriol.

CUPW workers are not asking for the moon. They are asking for fair treatment and respect for the essential role they play.

One of the key issues driving the postal strike is workplace safety. Postal work is physically demanding. Many workers face high injury rates due to repetitive strain, heavy lifting and long hours spent on their feet in all weather conditions. CUPW is calling for better safety measures to protect workers, particularly as parcel volumes have increased dramatically with the growth of e-commerce.

Another major issue is the push for decent wages and benefits. As inflation rises and the cost of living becomes more unmanageable, CUPW workers are advocating for wage increases that reflect the realities of today's economy. For rural and suburban mail carriers — who often earn less than their urban counterparts — this issue is even more pressing. As Northerners, we can all relate to the crushing increases in our daily living expenses.

The union is also seeking protections against the erosion of stable, well-paying jobs. Canada Post has increasingly relied on temporary and part-time workers, a trend that undermines job security and contributes to economic inequality. CUPW is pushing back against this shift, fighting to ensure that postal jobs remain a pathway to a stable, middle-class livelihood.

While some might view the strike as an inconvenience, the issues CUPW is highlighting have implications far beyond the post office. When workers fight for fair pay, safe working conditions and job security, they set a standard that benefits everyone. Strong labour standards lift all workers, creating a ripple effect that improves living conditions across industries.

Moreover, public services like Canada Post are worth protecting. Privatization looms large as a threat to our postal system, with calls to replace it with for-profit alternatives. CUPW's fight to defend decent jobs is also a fight to protect the integrity of Canada Post as a public institution.

A privatized postal service would likely prioritize urban, high-density areas, leaving Northern, rural and remote communities underserved or without service entirely. Costs for parcel delivery and essential services would likely skyrocket, disproportionately affecting small businesses and low-income Canadians. Supporting CUPW in this strike is, in part, a way of standing up for the values of equity and accessibility that strengthen Canada's public services.

The CUPW strike is also part of a larger struggle for labour rights in Canada. All across the country, workers are grappling with stagnant wages, unsafe workplaces and increasingly pre-



LABOUR Views

Sara-Jayne Dempster is the president of the Northern Territories Federation of Labour.



Public services like Canada Post are worth protecting. Privatization looms large as a threat to our postal system, with calls to replace it with for-profit alternatives. Wikimedia Commons photo

carious employment. Unions like CUPW are at the forefront of challenging these conditions, and their success or failure will have ripple effects throughout the labour movement.

When workers stand up for their rights, they remind employers and governments that people are not disposable. They challenge the status quo of corporate profits growing at the expense of workers' well-being. The CUPW strike is about more than just mail delivery — it's a fight for the future of work, the preservation of public services and the dignity of workers. In a time when economic inequality is growing and corporations are cutting costs on the backs of their employees, standing in solidarity with postal workers is a way to push back against these harmful trends.

Canada Post has always been more than a delivery service; it's a thread that binds our communities together. By supporting CUPW workers in their fight, we ensure that this thread remains strong and that the rights of workers in all sectors are protected.

The success of CUPW's fight is a success for all of us — for a fairer, more equitable Canada, where work is valued and public services thrive.

Notice of Cancellation, Public Hearing

Project: Rayrock (Kwetłıᓂᓂ) Remediation Project

Location: Rayrock, NT

Purpose: Miscellaneous – Remediation

File #: W2020L8-0003

The public hearing scheduled by the Board for December 17, 2024, has now been canceled under subsection 72.15(3) of the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*. No requests to appear and make representations at the hearing were received, and the Applicant has consented to the disposition of the matter without a public hearing.

The Application and materials related to the proceeding, including an updated work plan, can be viewed using the Board's Online Review System (ORS) at www.new.onlinereviewssystem.ca or by contacting the Board's office at (867) 765-4592.

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

Join the Inuvialuit Arbitration Board

The NWT Minister of Justice is seeking expressions of interest for the Inuvialuit Arbitration Board GNWT member position.

The GNWT invites expressions of interest from candidates interested in being appointed to the GNWT member position on the Inuvialuit Arbitration Board (IAB).

The Member will participate in any IAB proceedings, will hold the appointment for a term of three years and may be eligible for reappointment.

Please contact Janice Larocque at 867-767-9136 ext. 18058 or email at Janice_Larocque@gov.nt.ca for position and application details.

<https://boardappointments.exec.gov.nt.ca/en/boards/inuvialuit-arbitration-board/>

Deadline: January 31, 2024



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