

October 5, 2017

When Workers Worldwide Hurt, We All Hurt

Saturday October 7 is the tenth anniversary of the World Day for Decent Work.

The world we fight for will be one with safe working conditions, living wages, respect for all, and one where discrimination and harassment are unacceptable. While some of us work in decent conditions, many – nearby and globally – are left out in dangerous, demeaning or unsustainable conditions. The labour movement's work will not be complete until we improve conditions everywhere.

Perhaps the greatest global threat to decent working conditions worldwide is the selling out of workers in negotiations of international trade agreements.

Agreements including NAFTA are really about many things other than trade. The United States, where workers are fighting under right-to-work legislation and the oppressive power of huge multi-national employers, has re-opened NAFTA. Our federal government has appointed labour representatives to the advisory panel for NAFTA renegotiations, but many unions believe that this is window dressing – that Canada's negotiators will not stand up to U.S. pressure to lower working standards. Chapter 11 and the Energy chapter of NAFTA must go!

Mechanisms like NAFTA's Chapter 11 are helping large employers attack everyone's wages and conditions. They undermine our ability to create our own labour laws, public policy, and

regulation. Capitalism dictates that when the working conditions of millions can be degraded in one fell swoop, it accelerates the race to the bottom.

As well, global working conditions are now more and more interconnected with climate change and climate justice, the informalization of work and the gig economy, large-scale outsourcing, the condition of women's rights, racialized oppression, and other human rights crises.

The battle for decent work for all has become more complicated in recent years, and gets more and more critical. With the deep level of globalization in the world economy, it is true more than ever that until all workers' rights can be protected, none of us is truly secure in our working conditions.

On October 7, inform yourself about the global struggle and talk to your friends and family about what you can do in your home and community to support decent work for all.

In solidarity,



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2015-2019 / Bulletin #277
/bk cope225

