

July 16, 2020

STATEMENT:

SUPPORT OF MOVEMENT FOR BLACK LIVES STRIKE, JULY 20, 2020

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers (CUPW) represents over 50,000 postal workers, cleaners, food couriers, drivers, vehicle mechanics, warehouse workers, printers, and emergency and medical dispatchers across Canada.

We commend you for your bold act of solidarity and wish to let you know that CUPW stands behind the Movement for Black Lives and all workers who will be striking on Monday, July 20, to fight for an end to systemic racism, white supremacy, and for justice for workers of colour.

Our union condemns systemic racism based on white supremacy, corporate greed and the profit-driven capitalist system that drives workers to the bottom. We join you in calling on elected representatives to change laws and practices in favour of labour and unionization, to defund the police, to create a satisfactory social net so that no one is left behind, and to tackle climate change. Further, we must ensure our societies are places where all bodies of equal value are held. The legacy of slavery must finally be put to bed once and for all. We stand with our racialized sisters and brothers leading this struggle so that all of us will experience our right to dignity and respect.

We note the appalling prison system in the United States that incarcerates millions of its citizens for petty crime or no crime at all. Black political prisoners still remain cruelly confined in U.S. prisons, some for decades, many experiencing the torture of solitary confinement. In Canada we also see Black and Indigenous people incarcerated at disproportionate and unseemly levels.

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Now is the perfect opportunity to wield every tool at our disposal to dismantle injurious institutions that prey on communities of colour, workers and the poor. Indeed, we further denounce, in the strongest terms, the exploitation meted upon all workers, by corporate greed and the fallacious “bottom line” approach to work.

A renewed and robust call to upend the social, economic and cultural system that has failed workers and marginalized racialized people, now must place the voices of black, Indigenous and all people of colour at the center of this struggle for freedom, for rights, and for dignity. We have the collective capacity and responsibility to model a new and vibrant way to engage and struggle for justice.

Workers united together in solidarity and resistance are the guarantors of massive societal change, a change that will enhance our lives and our planet. Your bold action reminds us of a time when workers struck for the social good outside the confines of collective bargaining. Rebel energy, when strategic and well organized, has the capacity to change the world. What we are experiencing is historic and offers us new hope to obtain the justice that so many have sought for so long.

We are grateful you are taking these steps; we wish you great success; and wish to express our solidarity for showing the way.

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