

July 8, 2016

Press Release

The Communist Party of Canada today called on Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to intervene with Canada Post CEO Deepak Chopra to restart negotiations and stop the clock on the 7 hour countdown to a lockout initiated by the corporation July 3rd to take **effect at 12:01 am Monday.**

“Canada Post’s Deepak Chopra’s “my way or the highway” approach to bargaining won’t lead to a collective agreement and will suspend public postal services across Canada, while lining the pockets of Fed-Ex, Purolator, UPS, and other private, for-profit multi-national corporations. These companies are licking their lips at the prospects of a long work stoppage delivered by Pitney Bowes’s ex-boss Deepak Chopra, which begs the question: Whose interests is Chopra working for anyway?” said CPC leader Elizabeth Rowley.

“Canada Post’s demands for massive concessions on the defined benefit pension plan, including the introduction of an inferior defined contribution plan for new hires that will eliminate any kind of pension security for the youngest workers, is a declaration of war. It will lead to the elimination of defined benefit pensions for all postal workers, likely sooner than later, as workers in the private sector have found out after hard struggles with employers to stop the theft of their DB pensions.

Canada Post is also demanding concessions and roll-backs on wages and working conditions, and is refusing to address pay equity issues which have condemned female-dominated rural and suburban mail carriers to work for almost 30% less than their counterparts in urban mail carriers. Canada Post’s opposition is shameful, and it’s illegal. The government must act: Canada Post and Deepak Chopra are not above the law,” said Rowley.

“Deepak Chopra refused to step down when the Liberals asked for his resignation following the ouster of the Harper Tories in 2015. He is continuing with the Tory agenda of **driving down wages and pensions** smashing the unions, slashing services, and breaking up the public post office as the prelude to the complete privatization of postal services that is now the norm in the advanced capitalist countries. Inaction by the Liberals now would demonstrate support for the Tories’ privatization plans. The government must speak up in defence of the public post office, and of free collective bargaining

now. The courts have already slammed the Harper government for their shameful and illegal role in the last set of postal negotiations; the Liberals must act now to get negotiations back on track,” she said.

Canada Post has conducted a massive disinformation campaign aimed at turning the public against postal workers and their union, CUPW. This disinformation includes the assertions that Canada Post is losing money when in fact it is generating considerable profits every year; and the wild and unsubstantiated statement that the union’s opening offer in bargaining would cost \$ 1 billion. At the same time, the corporation also refuses to consider adding new business services to offset the decline in mail volume, preferring instead to use the ‘create-a-crisis’ **strategy honed by the Tories to privatize public services and assets like Canada Post.** In the process the corporation clearly hopes to derail the public review of Canada Post’s services now underway; a review that will consider adding new services such as postal banking. **This is public service that CUPW states could provide basic financial services for everyone, through its network of 6,000 postal outlets across Canada, including in rural and northern communities.**

“If postal workers are locked out, or forced out on strike, they can count on the active support of the Communist Party of Canada in their struggle for a **collective agreement that includes increased wages, defined benefit pensions, pay equity, and expanded public postal services in public post office,**” said Rowley. “The Communist Party calls on the labour and democratic movements and all those concerned with the preservation of public services and free collective bargaining rights, to support postal workers and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers . This is everyone’s fight!”