



**national
union**

National Office
15 Auriga Drive / Nepean
Ontario / K2E 1B7 / Canada
[613] 228-9800 / fax [613] 228-9801

www.nupge.ca
national@nupge.ca

COMPONENTS

- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public & Private Employees
- P.E.I. Union of Public Sector Employees
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers / Component 325
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta
- B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia

Going even farther, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), comprising the 29 major industrialized countries, should put pressure on multinational corporations to accept these standards, and others that promote the fair treatment of working people. Like ensuring a living wage and decent living conditions whether workers were employed directly, or through a contractor, sub-contractor, supplier, or licensor.

This isn't about protectionism, or the imposition of a global minimum wage. It's about giving workers more of a say in what happens in the global economy; ensuring that they are treated fairly and justly; and guaranteeing that the public programs and services they rely on are there, when they need them.

More fundamentally, it's about taking a giant step towards making the world economy work for all of *us*, not just for "free markets" and multinational corporations.



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Making the Global Economy Work for **People**

- Freedom of association
- The right to organize and bargain collectively
- Prohibition of forced labour and child labour
- Minimum age standards
- Non-discrimination in employment



Making the Global Economy ...

Over the past twenty-five years, a handful of huge multinational companies have quietly but effectively seized power from countries around the world in what almost amounts to an international coup – a coup carried out with the assistance of a variety of right of centre governments.

The new world order has been revealed, and its face is financial.

Near total control of the global economic system has been ceded to the multinational corporations, through organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank, and World Trade Organization (WTO).

With a blind faith in global free markets, the multinationals and governments have built a system that allows capital to flow ever more freely across borders, using global and regional trade agreements that restrict the right of governments to control the movement of capital or the behaviour of the business sector.

Such agreements restrict the policy choices available to gov-

ernments. Governments are often prevented from favouring local companies, or from helping workers adjust to new economic conditions.

Multinationals use their unrestricted power to decide where to locate (or relocate) production, to squeeze concessions from countries and workers. Too often, countries compete against each other, to see who can offer the most concessions of workers' protection, environmental protection, even basic democratic rights.

The results - massive job losses; seriously eroded social programs; weakened labour and environmental standards; and the privatization of an increasing number of government services.

It's time to put an end to this failed experiment. A quarter century of neo-conservative economics has taken too great a toll on citizens around the world.

Because economies are so intertwined, we must act globally against this agenda, using our

united strength as unions to pressure our governments, the international bodies they serve on, and the institutions they support.

Like the WTO, established in 1995 to oversee the rules of international trade.

We can begin to establish a *new* framework for global trade. We can do this through the very trade agreements that so far have been used to implement only absolute global capital freedom.

There *is* a way to do this. It's available right now. It's through the negotiations that have recently begun on the WTO.

We, as people of the world community, the people our governments were elected to serve, can demand that all states who benefit from WTO membership have to accept, as a condition of their membership, the key conventions of the International Labour Organisation (ILO), covering:

- freedom of association (ILO Convention no. 87);
- the right to organize and bar-

gain collectively (ILO Convention no. 98);

- prohibition of forced labour (nos.29 and 105) and child labour (no. 138);
- minimum age standards (no.138); and,
- non-discrimination in employment (no.111).

This would become an important tool for identifying countries who do *not* respect labour standards like these; and for forcing them to improve their behaviour. The world has adopted decent standards for workers' rights; all we're suggesting is that the world's governments live up to their commitments.

Similar provisions should be integrated into the objectives and obligations of other international organizations, like the IMF and World Bank. The IMF, for example, should have to include provisions like these in its loan agreements, instead of its current dogma that forces countries to cut public spending, privatize public programs, and deregulate their economies to make things easier for huge corporations.

