

## STATEMENT:

### Good collective action versus the Convoy

CUPW firmly believes that protest is a legitimate means of expressing opposition to governments and bosses, and advancing demands for justice. It has a long history of demonstrating that by way of strike, rallies, demonstrations and marches.

There are several elements that distinguish the type of civil disobedience that CUPW activists take part in, and the convoy that descended on unceded Anishnabe land (Ottawa) over the weekend of January 29, 2022.

When CUPW protests, it aims to redress an injustice. Typically, we **make demands** (like improvements to our working conditions through bargaining); when these have not been met over time, we **build a campaign** to pressure those in power to change their policies and actions to respond to these demands. Our demands are accompanied by context and explanation that we set out in order **to inform our members** and the powers to whom we are addressing them. CUPW believes in principled **non-violent** demonstrations that are oriented toward positive social change, and that are organized with integrity and transparency. We make demands and **negotiate solutions** with our opponents.

The convoy, on the other hand, went from a demand to drop the vaccine mandate for truckers crossing the Canada-US border, to now removing all public health regulations concerning COVID-19. Furthermore, it proposes to remove government elected representatives and take over. Canadian truckers have distanced themselves from these demands and it is not clear that the majority of people present understand that the campaign aims to remove the government; nor do they seem to know that a sizeable number of those present are advocating a fascist takeover, or are promoting hate and racism, as is witnessed by the flying of confederate flags for example. Confederate flags and swastikas have no place in a democratic society and must be dealt with firmly.

The absence of a robust response on the part of authorities to the actions and positions taken by this convoy is problematic. People taking part in the rally have desecrated monuments, intimidated people, and behaved like vandals. We denounce the behaviour, and remind members that when other groups made up of people of colour and Indigenous people organize peaceful events, the police response is more immediate and often brutal.

There are cogent and appropriate ways to express opposition to public policy. Now more than ever, we remind ourselves of the work that is required to achieve justice for all people, and the need to close ranks among our allies in order to bring about a fair and equitable society for all.

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