



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

**Federation of Labour Calls on NL Government to take action
to support workers of Voisey's Bay**

Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL) President Lana Payne is calling on the provincial government to take immediate action to support the workers of Voisey's Bay, Labrador.

In a letter yesterday to Premier Danny Williams, Ms. Payne urged the government to send a clear message to global mining giant Vale that enough is enough!

"Today I have called on the Premier to bring an end to this strike by sending the matter to binding arbitration before it reaches its one-year anniversary which is a shameful indictment of a company that has attempted to erode labour rights in our province. I have also reiterated the need for legislation banning the use of scab labour," said Ms. Payne.

"It is clear and it has been clear for some time that this employer is not interested in negotiating a fair collective agreement. This company is only interested in using its power and wealth to bring the workers and its union to their knees by starving them out. The question is: Are we as a society going to allow that to happen in our province," said the labour leader.

Contract talks between Vale and USW 9508 broke off Tuesday afternoon and no talks have been rescheduled. The company which continues to rake in stunning profits is seeking concessions from the workers who are trying to get their second collective agreement.

"We are at a standstill. These workers through their union have attempted to push back against the excessive concessions being demanded by this global mining giant. They have been trying to get the best deal possible for their members and in doing so have had to take on one of the wealthiest mining companies in the world – a company that is stepping on long-standing labour rights such as the right to free collective bargaining and breeding discontent in our communities by using scab labour."



This strike has exposed severe gaps in our legislation with respect to how as a society we protect the labour rights of working people, said Ms. Payne.

This company has been imposing anti-union tactics the likes of which we have not seen in at least a generation in our province.

The use of scab labour; resuming operations including production; filing frivolous lawsuits against the union; and pitting union member against union member by forcing office and technical workers to perform mining duties and threatening them with discipline including discharge for failing to follow orders are negatively affecting the labour relations climate in this province.

“As President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour (NLFL), I believe our government must send a message to Vale and other corporations that they don’t get to starve people out. They don’t make the rules. Governments do. Societies do.”

The Federation has proposed sending the matter to a binding arbitration panel and once again called for anti-replacement worker legislation.

“This strike is the end result of globalization on steroids. It is why our movement has spoke out against the ills of globalization with its impact on working people and the race-to-the-bottom mentality that comes with it,” said Ms. Payne.

In the case of Vale, this is the second largest and wealthiest mining company on the planet and it has one objective in this strike – it wants to break the union, force concessions on its employees despite staggering profits and in doing so send a message to its thousands of workers around the globe, many in developing countries. If this company can take on its Canadian workers and win, imagine what it can do to workers in countries where laws and labour rights are not as advanced as they are in Canada.

“This strike symbolizes why in the face of this new global age that citizens need their governments to act – now more than ever, to change the rules under which global capital operates, repairing the huge imbalance in power between workers and their employers and in turn protect the interests and rights of their citizens,” said the labour leader.

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**Newfoundland and Labrador
Federation of Labour**



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