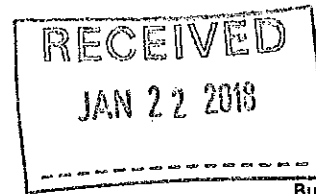




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January 22, 2018

Presidents of Federations of Labour and Canadian Labour Councils

Sisters and Brothers,

Canadian Labour Congress President Hassan Yussuff has taken the position that Unifor can no longer participate in the activities of Federations of Labour and Labour Councils.

Unifor's position with regard to the maintenance of our union's affiliation to Federations of Labour and Labour Councils is quite simple.

History and precedent show that the CLC has cherry-picked how it applies provisions of its Constitution, including those provisions that define affiliation. This uneven interpretation of the Constitution has contributed to putting our movement in this position in the first place.

Firstly, according to the CLC constitution, members of the CLC must belong to a National Affiliated Union. This is what led to the creation of the National Union of Public and General Employees. Their creation allowed for Provincial government unions to have a national organization and affiliate to the CLC. For more than a decade now education unions from Ontario and British Columbia have belonged to the CLC and have not been required to affiliate through a national union. This affiliation requirement has been ignored by successive Presidents of the CLC and its affiliates. Unifor has not objected to their affiliation, and neither has any other affiliate. And nor do we now, they bring an important perspective to the table.

Secondly, the CLC constitution requires all affiliates who join the CLC to affiliate to Federations of Labour and to Labour Councils. This has never been enforced by the CLC.

Article 5 states;

All affiliates must require their local unions to join Federations and Labour Councils where such exist.

There are endless examples of CLC affiliates who simply pay their CLC per capita in order to be

afforded the protections of Article 4. They do not even remotely affiliate at all three levels of the labour movement.

Federations of Labour and Labour Councils have been trying unsuccessfully for years to get this issue to the floor of the CLC convention, but it is always shut down and meaningful conversation never takes place.

Frankly, the most problematic abuse of the affiliation provisions is found at the Labour Councils level. Across the country Labour Councils struggle to survive. They have little support to do the important work asked of them in communities across the country. Affiliation levels are pitiful and virtually every affiliate is to blame for this.

Let us not forget that recently ONA, SEIU, OPSEU and others disaffiliated from the Ontario Federation of Labour. Never was their affiliation to the broader labour movement in question. In every province, unions affiliated with the CLC have chosen not to affiliate with Federations and Labour Councils.

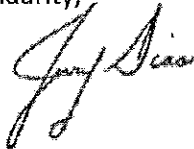
When any affiliate either ignores their obligation or leaves the Federation or Labour Council, the CLC simply takes the position that these are voluntary organizations. The notion that it is acceptable for Federations and Labour councils to be optional is hypocrisy at its finest. One could argue the opposite. More on the ground activism happens through Federations and Labour Councils than the CLC, and therefore, the funding is more critical.

Sisters and Brothers, this is a broad problem that has plagued our movement for decades.

Unifor's issue is at the level of the CLC. Our concerns have been well documented and we will work to sort those out with the CLC. When it can be demonstrated to our National Executive Board that the rights of workers to belong to a union of their choosing and autonomy for Canadian workers is worth more than the paper it is written on in the CLC constitution.

Once again, Unifor stands in support of the Federations of Labour and Labour Councils and to the important work being done in communities across the country.

In solidarity,



Jerry Dias
National President

cc: Unifor Front Office
National Executive Board

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