

## **Build Worker Solidarity Now or Suffer the Wrath of the 1%**

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Wednesday, February 19, 2014

<https://politicsrespun.org/2014/02/build-worker-solidarity-now-or-suffer-the-wrath-of-the-1/>



Working people need to seek out solidarity opportunities.

Unions and unionized workers need to reach out to non-unionized workers and seek legislative improvements for all, like improvements to the EI and doubling the CPP and renegotiating the Canada Health Accord and expanding Medicare and getting a national pharmacare program and starting a national childcare program and building a poverty reduction plan and a national housing strategy and no longer funding First Peoples at third world conditions. And the list, actually, does go on.

And public sector workers need to build solidarity with private sector workers, whose union density is declining.

If we don't fight the 1%'s decades-long plan to divide us, we are toast. Here are two key thought experiments to try on this hump day:

*To overcome these divide-and-conquer strategies, and defend against further attacks on the rights of public sector workers, unions will require new strategic thinking and modes of action. That means more effectively connecting the interests of public sector workers with those of citizens, by linking contract demands to the enhancement of the quality and availability of public services.*

via [Rethinking Labour - Not Our Dads' Unions Anymore.](#)

Public sector unions need to communicate more effectively with citizens about how public services are better, more humane, less profit-seeking cutthroat, and in the interest of building society. We have the facts, it's the communication plan that needs work.

And here's a case study thought experiment:

This is where we see the intersection between citizens, a privatized crown corporation public service, public sector unions and the private sector union that represents BC Ferries workers. How do we build a nexus of interest among all these groups to make BC Ferries what we all need it to be?

*A central argument for privatizing British Columbia's ferry system was that a strict business model would prove far more efficient than continuing the system under provincial control.*

*Instead, the privatized model has yielded bloated management, lack of transparency, increasingly inefficient service and rapidly rising costs that now threaten perhaps \$500 million in annual provincial tax revenue and place a recessionary drag on perhaps \$50 billion in provincial economic productivity.*

*Thirty years ago, when Premier Bill Bennett's Social Credit government ran the operation, BC Ferries serviced 23 routes with 3,800 employees and a management/administration unit of 120.*

*Today, it services two additional routes, but has added about 1,000 employees and has a management/administration unit of more than 600, including — based on 2011 reports — 12 vice-presidents.*

- via [Stephen Hume: BC Ferries a bloated, inefficient and recessionary drag on the province](#)