



February 15, 2022

### **Joint Labour Council Statement on the Recent Far-Right Convoys**

Late last month we watched with outrage as the so-called “Freedom Convoy” rolled into Ottawa and established an occupation which continues to this day. The convoy claims to represent “truckers” who seek to overturn vaccine mandate policies. In reality, reports indicate 90% of truckers are fully vaccinated, and continue to do the important work of keeping goods moving throughout Canada and across our borders. No union representing truckers has expressed support for the convoy, nor has any legitimate association representing the trucking industry.

As evidenced in their own postings and words, far-right groups have been behind the organization of this action from the start with the aim of building the size, profile, and resources of their fascist, anti-democratic movement. A substantial portion of the funding and support has origins outside of Canada, particularly amongst far-right groups in the United States.

Participants in the convoy have openly displayed racist, oppressive, hate symbols such as Nazi and confederate flags, and have engaged in the racist appropriation of Indigenous culture even after being asked to stop by First Nation groups. They have disrespected and desecrated the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and defaced the Terry Fox statue in Ottawa. They have used violence and harassment against Ottawa residents, even employing harmful noise and other disruptive tactics that are prohibited in war; they have threatened elected representatives and public figures; and stated their intention to overturn our democratically elected government.

We know that much more needs to be done to protect workers and ensure a just recovery for all. We also know that the convoy movement has neither the intent nor the ability to achieve those needed changes. The convoy is, by its origins and in its actions, an expression of white supremacy and an attack on democracy. We reject the intention of the convoy, their organizers and their hateful ideology, and we stand in strong solidarity with the residents of Ottawa, healthcare and frontline workers, truckers actually *doing* the work to keep us supplied, journalists, and every Jewish community, woman, LGBTQ2AI+ and racialized person who has been subjected to the oppression, violence and harassment of the convoy and its supporters.

Convoy actions were also organized across the country in support of the ongoing occupation of Ottawa. In Metro Vancouver, a convoy travelled across the region with the express aim of establishing a similar occupation in downtown Vancouver. Their efforts were blocked by counter-protests organized by community members, and it is evident that it will be up to our communities to stop them when they try to return. We stand in solidarity with those who have, and will again, act to thwart this aggression.

We join with those opposing the “Freedom Convoy”, their hateful ideology, oppressive rhetoric, and actions, and we demand the same from our elected representatives. We condemn the harmful and opportunistic actions of politicians who have legitimized the convoys and occupations at the expense of the communities they claim to represent.