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Releases

Marking UN Human Rights Day, December 10: BCFED urges all British Columbians to take up fight against hate and intolerance

Vancouver-The following is a statement from BC Federation of Labour President Irene Lanzinger to mark the UN's 68th International Day for Human Rights:

"It's timely that a month after the election of Donald Trump—after a campaign based on intolerance, hate, and discrimination—we mark the 68th International Human Rights Day (IHRD) on December 10th.

The IHRD was originally declared by the United Nations as a way for all states and interested organizations to draw worldwide attention to the theme of human rights.

The UN's theme for this year is "Stand Up For Someone's Rights." This encourages people worldwide to think about how they can be an ally, and to take immediate action by standing up for someone else.

Many of us watched with shock and horror as Trump was elected. But for those Canadians who think it couldn't happen here, I have a few reminders.

Remember Toronto Mayor Rob Ford? What about Stephen Harper and the Conservatives' barbaric cultural practices hotline?

As a labour movement, and as a society, we must respond to this kind of intolerant, hateful politics.

Our response must be to build a movement that includes and fights for every member of the working class and the poor.

That means we must now more than ever take leadership roles in defending the rights of others. We must refuse to accept violence against women, racism, homophobia, transphobia, discrimination against people with disabilities, and discrimination against people living in poverty.

We must be a movement that builds bridges not walls.

Above all, at our core, we have to be a movement that rejects hate and resentment, and practices love and compassion.

We encourage all British Columbians to take up the fight against intolerance and discrimination, and to refuse to allow the hateful politics brewing south of the border to take hold in BC.

Let’s look upon this day as a celebration of where we have gotten to, and a call to action to keep pushing further to respect human rights.”