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Releases

BC Federation of Labour steps up pressure on Western Forest Products, issues “hot edict”

Vancouver – The BC Federation of Labour (BCFED) announced a “hot edict” today on Western Forest Products (WFP) in a show of solidarity with striking forest workers. The move, welcomed by the United Steelworkers (USW), means that members of the BCFED’s affiliated unions have been asked to no longer handle any WFP coastal lumber, log and wood products.

“The announcement of a ‘hot edict’ is a significant but necessary escalation in what is frankly an employer-initiated dispute” said President of the BCFED, Laird Cronk. “Through the solidarity of affiliated unions, the company’s products could lay dormant.”

Over 2,600 Steelworkers employed by WFP on Vancouver Island are on strike to save their pensions, seniority rights and long-term disability from being cut by the company. WFP has decided to attack its own employees with attempts to introduce a two-tier pay system for new employees, elimination of the current pension plan and demands to roll back several other clauses of the collective agreement that were bargained and agreed to over decades.

“The company is attempting these draconian roll-backs to worker benefits and rights despite continued profitability”, said Steven Hunt, Director of USW District 3. According to WFP’s 2017 and 2018 financial reports, the company made over a billion dollars in sales and made a net profit of $74.4 million and $69.2 million respectively. In addition, the salary of the CEO has steadily increased

from $1.5 million in 2015 to $2 million in 2017, and from $500,000 in 2015 to $1.2 million in 2017 for the Vice President.

USW Local 1-1937 are seeking to achieve a new agreement that ensures workers are treated with respect, share in the success of WFP and that benefits that have been successfully achieved in previous bargaining are protected.

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