



INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PROFESSIONAL & TECHNICAL ENGINEERS AFL-CIO & CLC

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IFPTE Statement Condemning Unlawful Occupations and Intimidation of Communities in Ottawa and Windsor

WASHINGTON, DC – Officers of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) issued the following statement regarding recent occupations in Ottawa and Windsor, Ontario.

Michelle Johnston, President of the Society of United Professionals-IFPTE Local 160 and IFPTE Executive Council Canadian Area Vice President:

“While IFPTE respects every Canadian’s Charter-protected right to freedom of expression and assembly, the recent events in Ottawa and Windsor, as well as at other border-crossings and cities across the country, go far beyond what is justifiable in a free and democratic society. We call for the authorities to reassert the rule of law and end this attempted insurrection immediately.”

“IFPTE recognizes that there is a diversity of opinion on pandemic public health measures, and it is legitimate to debate them as well as to organize public demonstrations for or against them. Yet from the very start of these convoys, protesting public policy has only been a pretext. Through the demands they have issued, it is clear that the Neo-Nazis, avowed white nationalists, and other far-right extremists who lead the convoy movement seek to overthrow Canada’s democratically elected government. Authorities must take these violent extremists at their word and treat them as the threat they are to Canadian democracy. We only need to look at what happened at the U.S. Capitol Building on January 6, 2021, to see what we risk by allowing such antidemocratic movements to fester.”

IFPTE President Matthew Biggs:

“I am greatly relieved to see the chaos and upheaval of critical commerce in Windsor finally being resolved by local authorities and wish to lend IFPTE’s full support to the [February 9, 2022 statement made by the Canadian Labour Congress](#).”

“The Labour movement has a history of leading and supporting protest that, at times, includes civil disobedience in order to call attention to injustice and to demand justice, but never to cause sustained and unjust economic harm to fellow workers and communities or to undermine democratic institutions, as has been done over the past few weeks.

“The Ambassador Bridge blockade in Windsor that has now ended was far from a legitimate call for justice, as it has wantonly and callously undermined the livelihoods of working families on both sides of the border. Furthermore, the violent and hateful imagery of actions taken by some of the occupiers in Ottawa, similar to that seen in

Washington on January 6th, reveal a deeply sinister motive that must be forcefully confronted and rejected by all people across the political spectrum.”

IFPTE Secretary-Treasurer Gay Henson:

“While there is plenty of room for citizens to disagree in good faith and peacefully protest regarding public policy, it crosses the line when such actions hinder the lives of working families. The actions and stated intent of those who have descended on Ottawa threaten public safety and the well-being of Ottawans – these protests are not borne out of solidarity with working people. IFPTE believes that the Canadian and the U.S. governments must be prepared to act promptly in the future to prevent recurrences of such unacceptable and undemocratic behavior.”

Across the United States and Canada, IFPTE represents 90,000 highly skilled workers in the federal, public, and private sectors. IFPTE is an affiliate of the AFL-CIO and the CLC. More information can be found at www.IFPTE.org.

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