

OVERVIEW

of the Conservatives' attack on workers' rights

Mandatory union dues	<p>Existing labour law requires that workers covered by a collective agreement pay union dues. The principle is that workers enjoy the benefits of union membership and should therefore each contribute dues.</p> <p><i>The Conservatives plan to make illegal any requirement that workers pay union dues.</i></p>
Mandatory union membership	<p>Existing labour law allows workers to negotiate with their employer a clause in their collective agreement requiring that workers covered by the collective agreement join the union. Beyond the responsibility of paying dues there are also the responsibilities of union membership - including collective action to defend and improve the collective agreement.</p> <p><i>The Conservatives plan to strip workers of this right to act collectively. They plan to make illegal all clauses in collective agreements that would require that workers join a union.</i></p>
Mandatory dues check-off	<p>Existing labour law requires that employers agree to include in collective agreements, clauses that obligate them to collect union dues on behalf of the union. Deducting dues from workers' pay cheques costs employers almost nothing. For unions, however collecting dues would be time-consuming and very costly.</p> <p><i>The Conservatives plan to allow employers to ignore dues check-off requirements. Dues check-off would be at the discretion of the employer.</i></p>
Strike votes and ratification votes	<p><i>The Conservatives plan to interfere in the internal affairs of unions by requiring that strike votes and ratification votes be supervised by the government.</i></p>

Labour funding for social issues and community organizations	<i>The Conservatives are also considering steps that would limit the right of trade unions to contribute to campaigns on social or political issues. There would be no such limits on corporations.</i>
Arbitration	<i>The Conservatives plan to increase government interference in the arbitration process.</i>
Financial reporting	<i>Harper has already required extraordinary financial reporting designed to consume union funds and resources.</i>
Undermining Student Unions	<i>Hudak has suggested that University Student Unions, which have structures very similar to labour unions, would face the same treatment concerning dues and membership.</i>