



Video Companion

Monster in the Closet

May 2018



[VIDEO COMPANION]

INCOME INEQUALITY

Monster in the Closet

Check out the video at unionsyeah.ca

99%

INCOME INEQUALITY

Ninety-nine percent of us live with a monster in our closet.

It destroys jobs. It loots pensions. It puts families deeper into debt. It tears at the very fabric of society.

It's the monster of income inequality.



CANADA'S ECONOMIC OUTPUT

The awful truth is that the more Canadians do, the less they get. Canada's real economic output today is twice as big as it was in 1981. But growing the economy doesn't count for much if the increases just mean bigger slices for the top 1% and crumbs for everyone else.

Most Canadians have gained nothing from decades of economic growth. The poor are getting poorer. The middle class is shrinking. The top 1% is getting a lot richer. The income gap in Canada has been skyrocketing. There is no dispute about this.



*BUT, WHY
SHOULD WE
CARE?*

BECAUSE... INCOME INEQUALITY
UNDERMINES

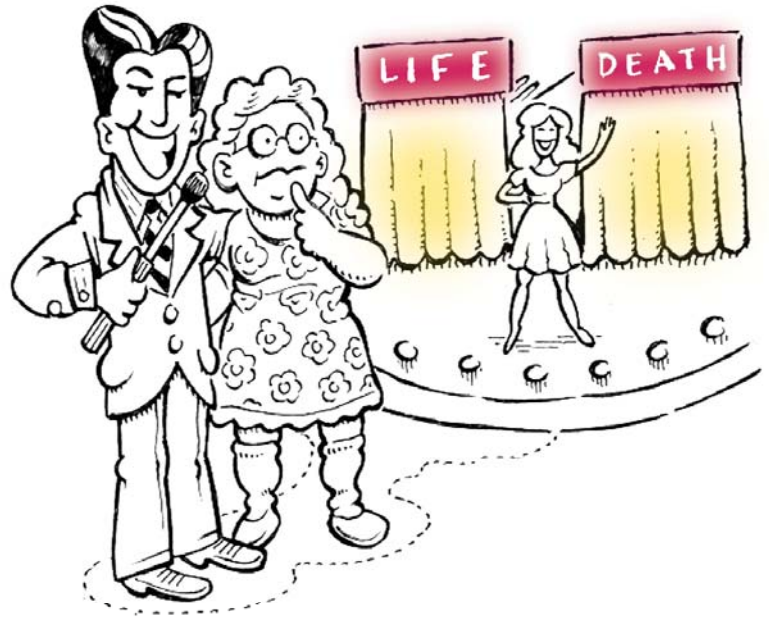
**DEMOCRACY
FREEDOM**



Canada has become a radically less equal society.

The super-rich gain an enormous amount of political power. They treat democracy like their own private playground. Governments become more authoritarian. The real life concerns of most families are ignored. Their confidence in democracy erodes.

It has serious social and health costs. It can be the difference between life and death. Societies with large income inequality have lower life expectancy, higher infant mortality rates, more crime, more imprisonment, and more cases of mental illness and addiction.



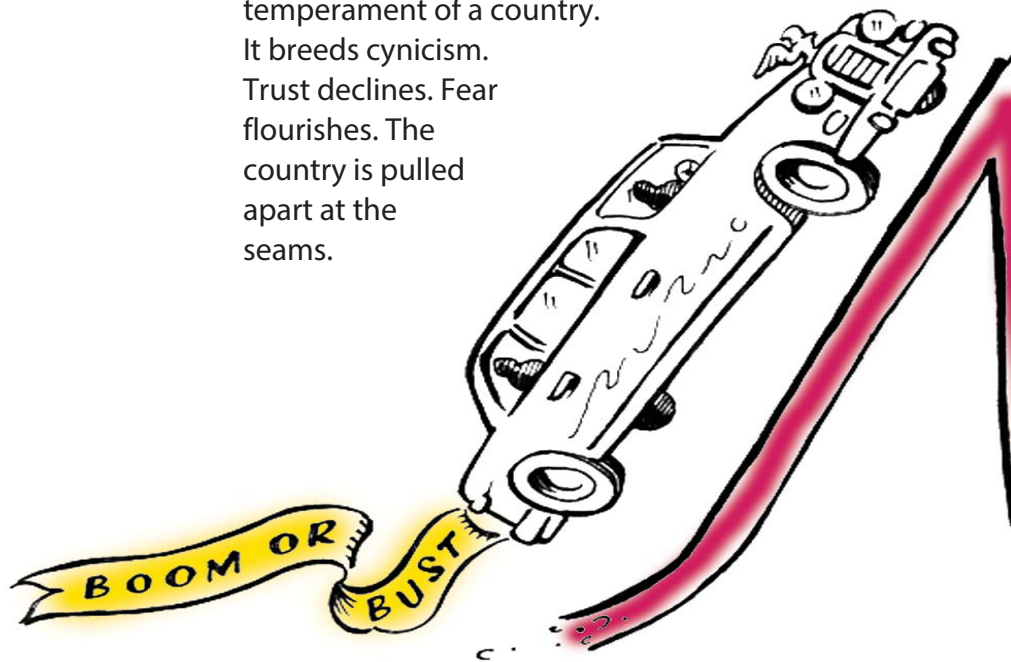
MORE UNEQUAL

*GREATER INCOME INEQUALITY
INCLUDES LOWER LIFE EXPECTANCY
HIGHER INFANT MORTALITY, MORE
CRIME, MORE PRISONS, MORE....*





It causes social divisions. Rising inequality means most of the economic gains go to the people at the top while everyone else struggles with growing costs and shrinking pay-cheques. People feel the system is rigged against them. This can affect the temperament of a country. It breeds cynicism. Trust declines. Fear flourishes. The country is pulled apart at the seams.





Income inequality is bad for the economy. Inequality peaked right before the Great Depression in the 1930s and the Great Recession in 2008. Experts say that's not a coincidence. You can't build a stable and sustainable economy with more families living in poverty, the middle class being squeezed, and household debt at record levels.

ECONOMIC PERFORMANCE SHRINKING YEAR *after* YEAR

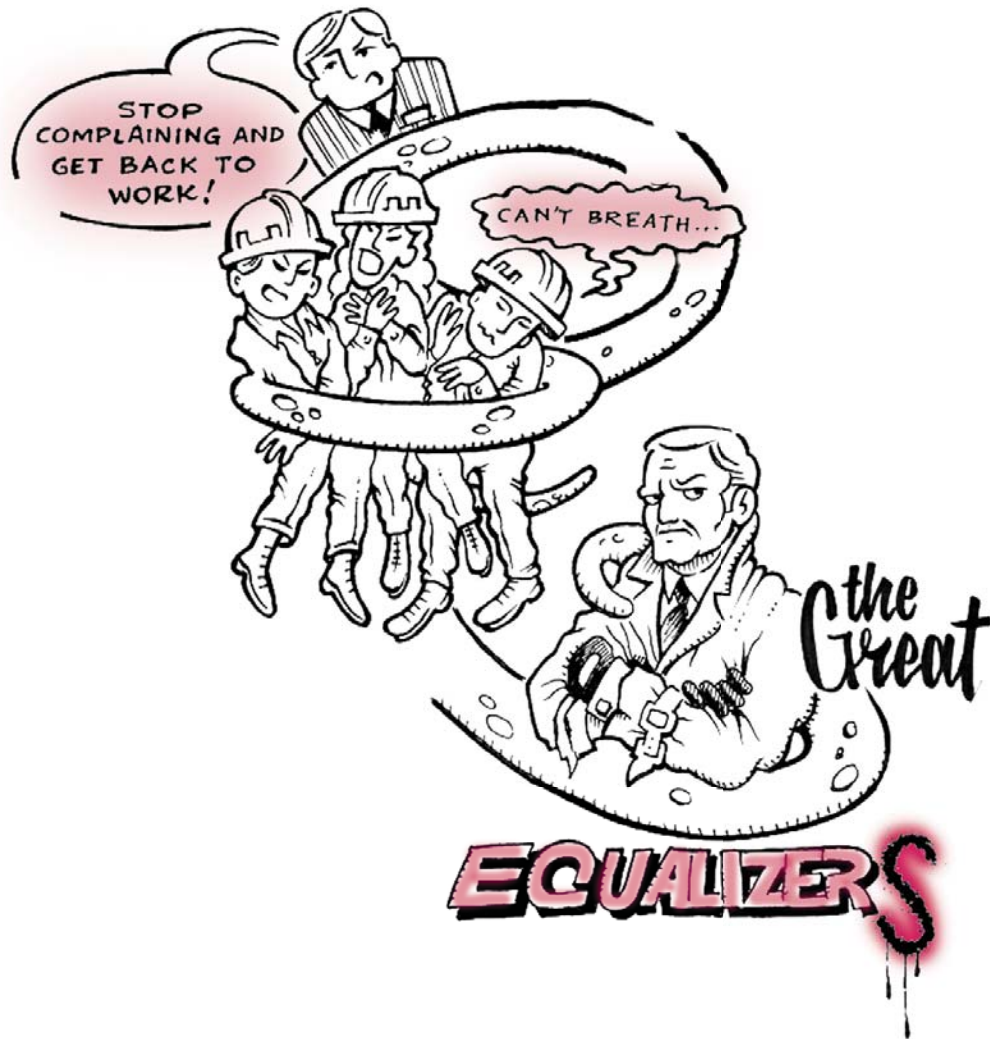
BEFORE THE
CRASHES OF
1929 *and* 2008



How do you end up in this situation?

Governments and corporations attacked the rights of workers. Over the past three decades, 199 of the 206 labour laws passed have restricted, suspended or eliminated labour rights. The result has been a race to the bottom on wages, benefits and pensions for all workers.

Governments and corporations abandoned an active industrial strategy. Instead, they adopted a “hands off” approach to economic development through deregulation, bad trade deals, privatization and corporate tax cuts. It’s left our economy drifting without a vision and purpose. It’s created an economy plagued by short dashes for growth followed by damaging recessions. It has hollowed out our economy. Hundreds of thousands of jobs have been eliminated.



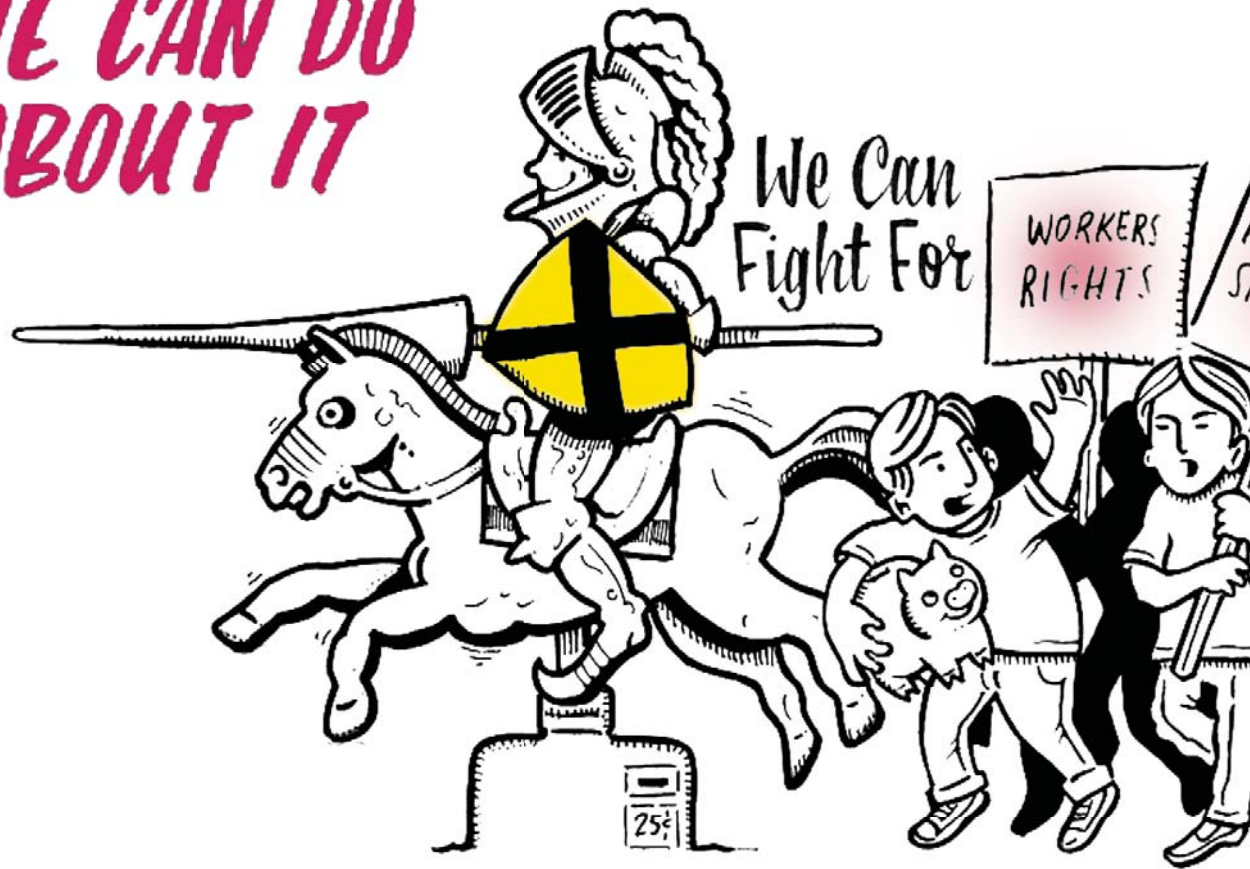
Governments and corporations eliminated tax fairness. The richest Canadians pay an effective tax rate that is lower than middle class families and the bottom 10%. The super-rich are hiding billions in offshore tax havens. Corporate tax rates have been reduced to the lowest of all G8 countries. A lot of families are struggling to find jobs and make ends meet. But the super-rich are getting tax cuts and exploiting loopholes. And corporations are hoarding hundreds of billions of dollars in profits. That's the height of unfairness.

Governments and corporations attacked public services like health care, education, old age security, services for autistic children and adults with developmental disabilities. These services are the great equalizer. They create opportunity and make life more



affordable for families. But the share of total government revenue spent on these services has been shrinking every year. Families must pay more out of their pockets for these services or go without the help they need.

WHAT WE CAN DO ABOUT IT



We can fight for labour rights.
Labour rights are human rights.
We've got to be ready, willing and
able to stand up for workers rights
whenever they are threatened.
Strong labour rights level the
playing field and give everyone a
fair shot at getting ahead.

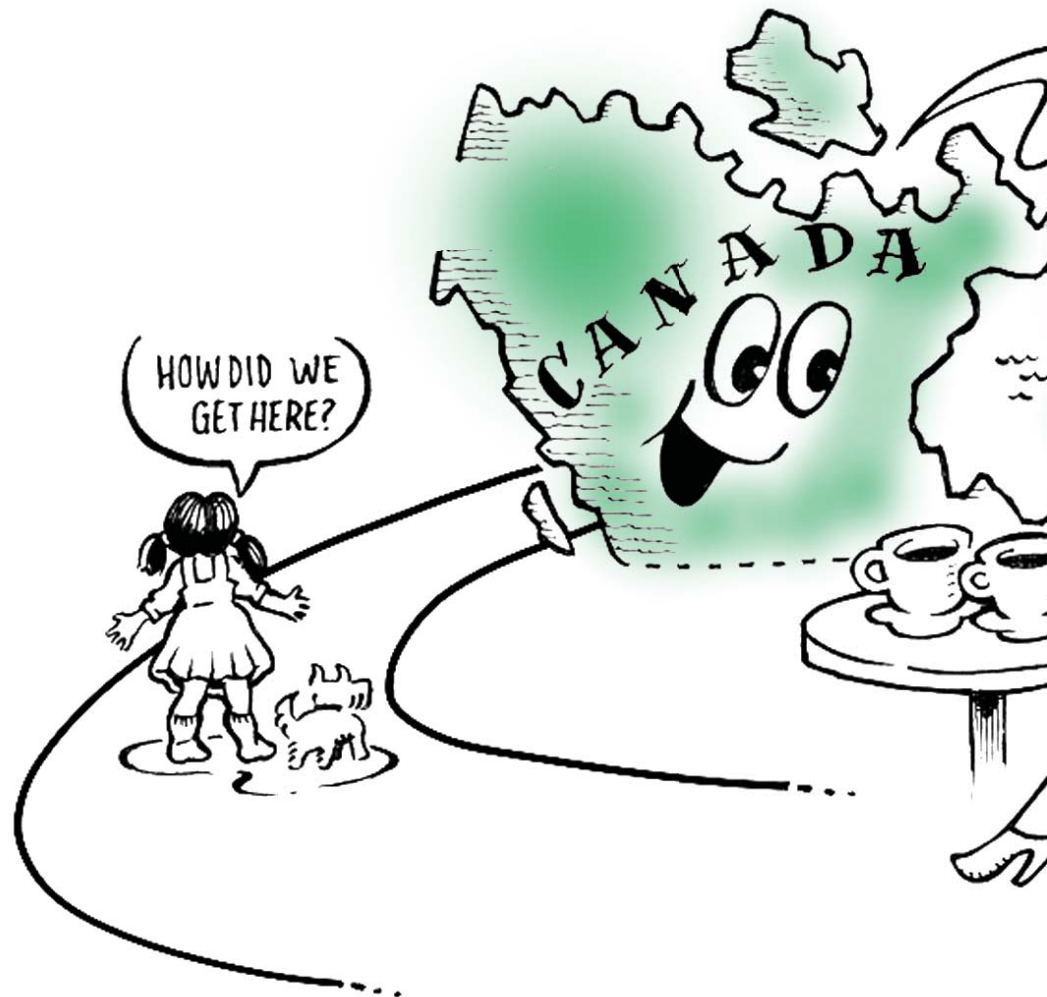


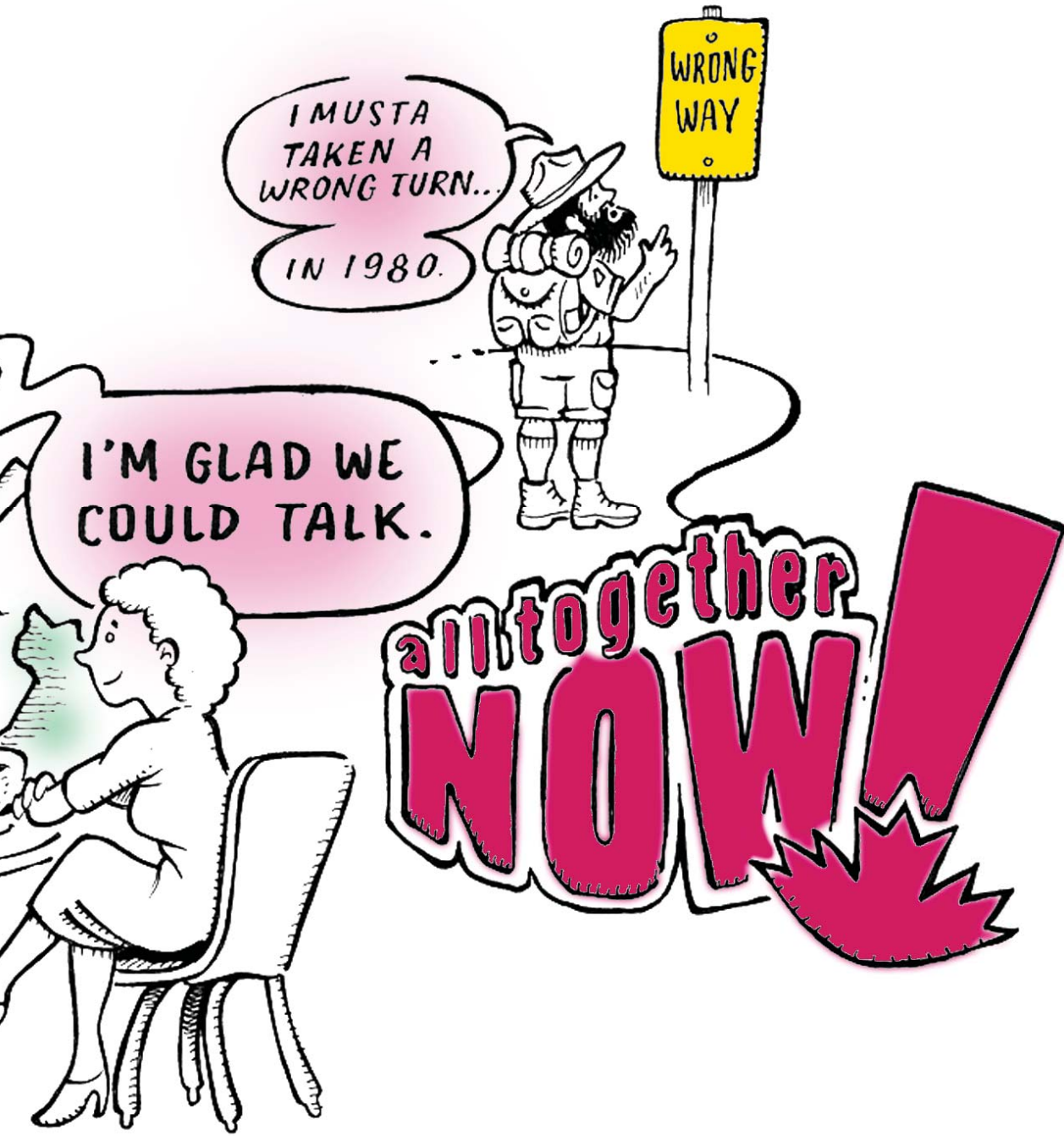
We can fight for a modern industrial strategy. A strategy that puts people and nature at the heart of our economy. A strategy that creates jobs that pay decent wages, benefits and pensions. A strategy that brings labour, government and business together to build a strong economy.

We can fight for tax fairness and quality public services. Tax fairness means the richest Canadians and corporations pay their fair share. It means tackling offshore tax havens that allow the super-rich to dodge their civic responsibility to build a better Canada. Tax fairness is how we can generate the revenue needed to protect and expand the public services we need to take care of each other. This is also important because taxes and public services are how we use our common wealth to pursue our collective aspirations.

Income inequality has taken us down the wrong road for three decades. Too many Canadians are falling behind and barely scraping by. But income inequality is not inevitable. It is preventable. The monster in the closet can be defeated. All of us working together can definitely do it. We must put this very important issue front and centre in our national dialogue and at kitchen tables across Canada. Let's start the conversation.

All together now!







For more information and to take action, visit these websites:

- National Union of Public and General Employees
www.nupge.ca
- All Together Now! Campaign 2
unionsyeah.ca
- Canadians for Tax Fairness
taxfairness.ca



NATIONAL UNION OF PUBLIC AND GENERAL EMPLOYEES

- B. C. Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU)
- Health Sciences Association of British Columbia (HSABC)
- Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA)
- Saskatchewan Government and General Employees' Union (SGEU)
- Manitoba Government and General Employees' Union (MGEU)
- Ontario Public Service Employees Union (OPSEU)
- Canadian Union of Brewery and General Workers (CUBGW)
- New Brunswick Union of Public and Private Employees (NBU)
- Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU)
- PEI Union of Public Sector Employees (PEI UPSE)
- Newfoundland & Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE)

The National Union of Public and General Employees is an affiliate of the Canadian Labour Congress and a member of Public Services International.

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