

## Trade Unionism

The strength of a country lies in the force of the workers. From this viewpoint it is easy to understand the impact that unions have on the strength and development of a country as a whole. The protection of the everyday worker is what sets Canada apart from many other countries. In Canada the largest percentage of unionized workers can be found in Newfoundland and Labrador at 38%, after the census of 2012, while the lowest reside in Alberta with 22%. Regardless of the small percentage seen in Alberta's unionization rates, when compared on a global scale Canada takes a high stand point in the value of workers' rights through unions.

Trade unionism in Canada has developed greatly over the years that it has been in existence. Since 1872, starting with the printers in Toronto who fought for shorter working weeks, unions have evolved into well-established forces, whose objective is to fight for the rights of the everyday workers. The strike of 1872 ushered in the beginning of workers organizing themselves into unions to fight for improvements in the workplace. This paved the way for modern unionism. It is these workers who have kept Canada as the great nation it is today. From its beginning in 1872 unions have gained more forms of negotiation, such as arbitration: an ingenious idea created in the 1900's to choose a mediator between unions and employers. Arbitration played a fundamental role in the Rand decision of 1946 to involve an entire workplace in one union and keep the workers from becoming divided. In the 1950's an idea was brought forward to excel the impact of unions by helping them work towards a common goal. In 1956, this idea was formed into the Canadian labor Congress. The largest labour organization in Canada, that provides policy and research leadership on issues facing the workers of Canada.

As a child of a union worker it is important to understand the difference that can be seen when a parent works for a non-unionized company and later moves into a union. The difference was not realized until recently but to see how well a parent can be treated in regards to health problems when with a union is an inspiration to never settle for less than what you deserve. In unions not only is the worker protected, but their family as well. In private companies, with their regulations towards health, it would be impossible to receive surgery and still provide for a family. Unions walk the extra mile to insure their workers are in good health before expecting their best workmanship. It is the compassion that unions extend towards the well-being of their workers and families that set them apart to make unions a sought after function of strong nation. Unions continue to inspire today, by exhibiting the rights one should be granted in their work place and encouraging others to stand up for themselves. Through the unions history it can be seen how the power of the people can never be denied and when directed well enough, has the potential to bring great change to our world.

