

FIGHTING THE GOOD FIGHT IN 2013!

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I made a New Year's resolution for 2013.

Every day when I get up, I am now asking myself: "What can I do today to make life better for Canadians and make this a better country."

Not surprisingly, the answer has yet to be: "Cut wages, layoff workers or send jobs overseas."

However, that's exactly the answer many businesses choose – and conservatives endorse – in their quest for higher profits.

These are the same people who - as they ruin local economies, devastate workers' lives, and slash away at the Middle Class - have the audacity to scapegoat unions for what's wrong with the economy, despite the fact that only a minority of workers belong to a union.

Over the next year, CWA Canada will continue to fight the good fight by standing up and speaking out for quality jobs and quality journalism. We will do that at the bargaining table, through talks with employers, with press releases, and by building coalitions.

2011 saw the rise of "Occupy" and 2012 brought us "Idle No More." These grassroots movements show that a great many people are fed up with the social and economic injustice in our society and, more importantly, they're willing to do something about it. We need to support that. We will work with the labour movement, community groups and other progressive organizations to promote the cause of

the 99%, stop further job cuts and improve wages.

We enter 2013 full of hope that the worst is over for the media industry and optimistic that the new year will bring more jobs and better journalism.

But, of course, hope and optimism don't bring change - that takes effort. The challenge will be persuading our employers to invest in a quality product and grow their businesses rather than keep trimming jobs and cutting costs.

One fact has become painfully obvious over the last decade of media slash-and-burn economics: cost-cutting saves money in the short-term, but results in declining revenue in the long-term as readers, listeners and viewers tune out.

Another key challenge for 2103 will be political. As a leader who represents thousands of journalists, I have said repeatedly that I cannot support one political party over another. But that doesn't mean we must sit idly by and watch injustice or ignore attacks on the interests of our members, the 99%, and democracy.

When a government, political party or any group attacks the common good, we will stand up, speak out and fight back. That's why we spoke out against the Harper Conservatives when they introduced Bill C-377 - an intrusive, unfair, unnecessary and ideologically motivated piece of rubbish that will cost taxpayers millions of dollars a year to administer and yield no benefit to anyone. Its sole aim is to target unions, tie them up with red tape, and suck out financial and other information for right-wing propaganda.

We will keep up the fight against C-377 and support a court challenge when it receives Royal Assent.

We will also build on our efforts to protect the CBC from further

funding cuts - through grassroots campaigns and other actions - so that Canadian public broadcasting can survive and thrive.

And we will step up pressure on the Conservative government to abandon its ideological and mean-spirited plan to push back old age pension benefits until age 67 - a move that steals money from our pockets and will force thousands of Canadians to delay their retirements.

The challenges ahead are many, the hurdles high.

We have two options. We can lie down and hope that a rump Middle Class is still around in a generation.

Or we can fight back!

Let's work together to protect jobs, defend journalism, improve wages and make this country a better place for all Canadians.

Let's fight the good fight. Together.