

MEDIA RELEASE...



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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USE OF POLICE AGAINST WORKERS CONDEMED

The **National Workers' Union** (NWU) forcefully and unreservedly condemns the use of the riot police to terrorise and intimidate TSTT workers, members of the Communication Workers' Union, as they sought to pursue their quest for a decent collective agreement from their employers.

The **National Workers' Union** views this intervention by the armed forces of the state in an industrial relations dispute with great alarm. We warn the citizens of our country that the state has clearly signalled that it is quite prepared to resort to naked militarisation to ensure that working people and the poor do not create more space for themselves. The recent Summit of the Americas revealed the extent of the militarisation of the police force.

The people of T&T have grown accustomed to the police infringing upon rights supposedly guaranteed by our neo-colonial constitution. They perform illegal acts and justify it in the name of security. This paramilitary police force that is being unveiled before us has nothing to do with crime prevention or detection, but has much to do with the suppression of the growing resistance by increasing numbers of citizens as they struggle with the effects of the economic crisis. When the system is stripped to its bare essentials it goes back to basics: the heart of state power is the ability to enforce policy through armed force.

The **National Workers' Union** reminds the citizenry that TSTT is majority-owned by the government and any intervention by the armed forces of the state would have been approved and sanctioned by the Manning regime.

The **National Workers' Union** calls on the trade union movement to condemn this attack upon the CWU and to take heed that the state clearly understands that the present political and social arrangements will not be enough to deal with a society buffeted by the fallout from the international crisis of capitalism. Their response is the militarisation of the society.

In order to survive the short term in good order the trade unions' response must be to develop a minimum programme of struggle; a programme of self-defence as the political situation sharpens and the capitalists attempt to force working people and the poor to pay for the crisis. In the long term this involves dumping the capitalist system and creating a system where those who labour hold the reins of power. Let the discussions on developing the minimum programme and the mechanisms for implementing it begin.

END

Dave Smith

General Secretary