

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MEDIA RELEASE

**OFL TO MOBILIZE MASSIVE RALLY IN LONDON AGAINST CATERPILLAR INC:
London Day of Action declared for Saturday, January 21 at 11 am**

(LONDON, ON) – The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) today issued a call to workers across Ontario to mobilize for a massive rally in London, Ontario on Saturday, January 21 to oppose Electro-Motive Canada (a subsidiary of U.S. industrial giant Caterpillar Inc.) and its attack on decent paying Canadian jobs.

“We see this fight as being central to the entire labour movement and we are going to dig in our heels and fight Caterpillar with everything we’ve got,” said OFL President Sid Ryan. “Good jobs and retirement security are being threatened by greedy corporations and every level of government. If workers don’t start to fight back, decent jobs will become a thing of the past and the middle class will be decimated.”

Electro-Motive locked out workers at its London-based diesel train plant on New Year’s Day. It was the latest tactic in the company’s attempt to slash benefits and cut wages from \$35 to \$16.50 an hour, after a year in which Caterpillar enjoyed billion dollar profits and a 20 percent boost to production. The company is rumoured to be planning to take advantage of Ontario’s lax labour laws by bringing in scab labour to keep the plant operational while bullying the union into devastating concessions. Many fear that the company’s hidden agenda is to move production to a U.S. plant in Indiana.

“This greedy multi-national corporation is trying to bulldoze living standards in Canada. If Caterpillar is successful in halving wages and gutting benefits, families in London will lose their homes and the whole community will suffer,” said Ryan. “Prime Minister Harper and his friends on Bay Street don’t seem to care about the livelihood of working Canadians, so we are going to raise enough of a ruckus that it will be impossible for them to ignore us.”

In calling a Day of Action against Caterpillar, the OFL has promised to bus thousands of public and private sector workers from across Ontario to the London plant to demonstrate the support for the workers of Electro-Motive Canada. The rally will draw attention to the failure of the Harper government to protect Canadian jobs and interests when domestic companies are acquired by foreign multi-nationals. It will also call on Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty to support fair collective bargaining by banning the use of scabs in labour disputes.

“This mass rally is meant to define 2012 as a year of militant resistance against corporate greed. Workers are fed up with growing income inequities in our society and the governments that are allowing citizen-funded corporate tax cuts to fatten CEO salaries while delivering no net benefit to our economy or our families,” said Ryan. “The message for employers is simple: support decent jobs and benefits or it won’t be business as usual in Ontario.”

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) represents 54 unions and one million workers in Ontario. OFL President Sid Ryan is the voice of Ontario’s labour movement.

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