

# Economic disruption is the struggle for sovereignty

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During this crucial time of standing with the Wet'suwet'en nation, our land defence movements are saying no to the economy that depends on colonial land theft. Coastal Gaslink has no consent from the Wet'suwet'en, so there will be no pipeline.

Blocking access points of trade of goods and flow of capital disrupts the economy. Our movements know that there is a direct opposition between the Wet'suwet'en struggle for sovereignty and Canada's economy. Canada's economy is solely built on land theft, the commodification of the life of the earth. For the Wet'suwet'en nation to be free, to stop Canada's invasion of their sovereign territories, the economic system based on profit-gain needs to stop!

From the drilling of the land, to the pipeline that carries the stolen gas, to the export of that gas as a commodity into world trade, every step violates the consent of Indigenous nations. Oil and gas extraction continues Canada's imperialist land theft from Indigenous people's territories. Since Indigenous people's connection to the land is the basis of sacred Indigenous law, by removing the land from Indigenous nations and Indigenous peoples from the land, the RCMP, provincial state and Canadian state is breaking Indigenous Law. Hurting the land in irreparable resource extraction not only breaks Indigenous Law but also continues the colonial project for profit.

What happens to the land, happens to the people. And, although the attacks on the Wet'suwet'en are being carried out by RCMP officers carrying rifles and flying in helicopters, it is actually the capitalist economy and colonial land theft that is attacking our people. Therefore, our movement actions that stop and disrupt the economy are part of the fight for Indigenous people's sovereignty.

Standing with Wet'suwet'en stands up for the Wet'suwet'en people. But the people who are blockading the flow of commodities and interrupting the economy here in the towns and cities, are also standing up for their children, and all the future children that are Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Protecting Mother Earth for our children - all our children - and future generations is our responsibility.

Stopping and disrupting the tracks of economy, trade, and profit is the tactical fight that we have! Stopping the pipeline keeps the land healthy and bountiful and heals the people.

Today we are supporting the Tyendinaga Mohawk and Gitksan nation's blockades of Canada's rail line system. With them we are saying: Protect the land: protect the people.

This interruption of Canada's economy is the struggle for the sovereignty of Indigenous people.

# Support the Train Blockades at Tyendinaga and Treaty 1 and Gitxsan territories! SHUT CANADA DOWN!

*The #CoquitlamRailBlockade is part of a Wet'suwet'en defence movement that is spreading as Indigenous nations blockade rail lines, exercising their sovereign control over their territories*

On Thursday February 13th we are beginning a blockade of the rail line in Coquitlam, at the most important CP train yard in Metro Vancouver. Our land defence action is part of the movement to #ShutCanadaDown in defence of Wet'suwet'en sovereignty, and also backs up, stands with, and celebrates the exercise of sovereignty and land defence at Tyendinega, Treaty 1, and Gitxsan territories.

On Thursday February 6th, the day that the RCMP began its raid on Wet'suwet'en territory and the Unist'ot'en Camp, Tyendinega Mohawks blockaded the CN rail line that trespasses their territory. In the week since, more Indigenous nations have started rail line blockades, stopping traffic on the original infrastructure of Canada's settler colonial project.

In a statement released on February 12th, the Tyendinega Mohawk Kanenhariyo explained that their blockade is an expression of the Two Row wampum, which is "the basis of the relationship between the Onkwehon:we and the newcomers." The Two Row wampum "doesn't have an expiry, it doesn't grow whiskers or get old, it doesn't become obsolete unless one of the parties in the river disappears," Kanenhariyo said.

Kanenhariyo explained that the Two Row wampum agreement is also one of co-operation. "It said that if there was ever rough waters ahead that we could reach over and stabilize each others boats. We had the responsibility to inform the other boat if there was troubled water ahead." Kanenhariyo paused before addressing the OPP, "it seems there is some troubled water."

On Saturday February 8th, the Gitxsan nation started a blockade of the CN rail line outside New Hazelton. Gitxsan hereditary Chief Norman Stephens explained that the sovereignty of the Gitxsan nation is inextricably bound up with that of the Wet'suwet'en. "If their rights are being trampled, our rights are being trampled. We have never surrendered our rights, nor have the

Wet'suwet'en surrendered their rights. The land remains under the authority of the Wet'suwet'en, the Gitxsan, since time immemorial," he said.

On Friday February 7th, the Ontario Superior Court issued an injunction ordering the removal of the Tyendinaga blockade. But nearly a week later, it has not been enforced. On Wednesday February 12th, Tyendinaga Mohawk Police Chief Jason Brant pleaded with the land defenders to end the blockade. In response, the Tyendinega Mohawks set up a second blockade on the rail line.

Also on February 12th, land defenders on Treaty 1 territory set up a rail blockade on a section of CN rail track about 7km outside of Winnipeg. Harrison Powder, one of the land defenders, explained to a CBC reporter that the blockade was in support of Wet'suwet'en sovereignty. "When you invade Indigenous territory, and you try to force pipelines on our people, there's consequences to that, and this here today is one of those consequences," he said, "We want the RCMP out of there."

But he also framed the blockades as "a long time coming;" the roots are resistance against Canada's continued colonial violence against Indigenous peoples. "Our people have been saying for years 'we can shut down this country, we can stop the economy, we can cause major economic damage' — and it's happening now," he said.

The Wet'suwet'en nation's heroic land and sovereignty defence has started a movement that is focused on defending the Wet'suwet'en nation, but which has quickly taken on a more radical, fundamental meaning. The sustained rail blockades at Tyendinega, Treaty 1, and Gitxsan, as well as the urban blockades of rail, port, and highways, show that the united struggle against Canada's settler colonial violence is growing, not going away.

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