

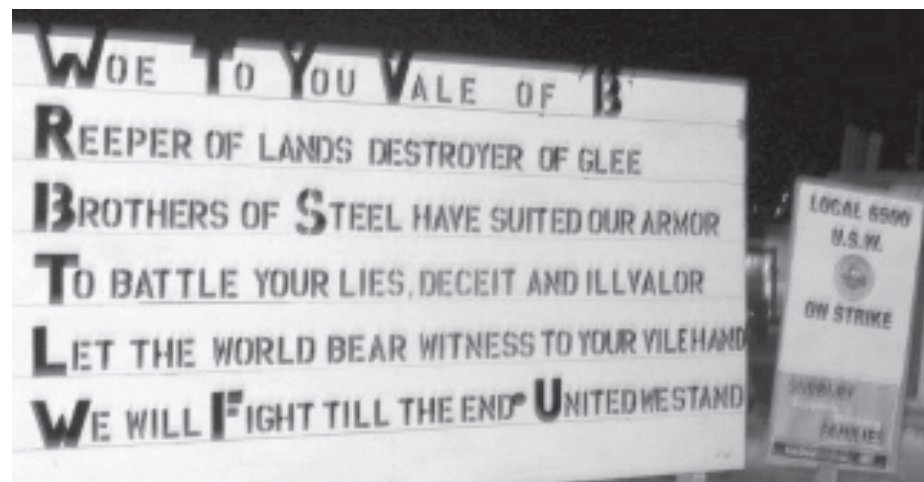
**S**teelworkers at Vale Inco's operations in Northern Ontario have been off the job since May of last year. Firstly, because of a cynical and unprecedented company shutdown. Then, since July, because of a strike deliberately provoked by the Brazilian multinational. The misery imposed on working families is incalculable. This stand-off may likely last for many more months, dwarfing even the bitter 9-month strike of 1978-9. A line has been drawn in the rock and snow of the Sudbury basin, and we call on the working class of Canada, and indeed across the globe, to mobilize to win a battle in which we all have a huge stake.

Vale is one of a new breed of international megacompanies that has come out on top in an ever-more-feverish battle for survival in the mineral extraction and processing sector. But the worldwide financial avalanche of 2008 has driven down the price of nickel – along with other raw materials. Vale's corporate "brains" believe they can make more money by leaving the ore in the ground, waiting for it to appreciate in value, than by digging it out, processing it, selling it in a "depressed" market, and putting it to work.

Vale is a highly diversified company with deep, deep pockets. Iron ore and dozens of other metals contribute just as significantly to its profits as nickel. It calculates that it can afford to shut down its Canadian nickel production for months or years without greatly hurting its overall bottom line. Private mining companies have followed and promoted "boom-bust" cycles for generations, in contemptuous defiance of their workers, community needs and national interests. But the relentless globalization of capital gives this tactic a vicious twist. "Private property" in individual mineral stakes has been consolidated and sold off to multinational corporate behemoths, without any effective intervention or regulation by national governments. In Canada over the past five years, barbarians at the gate like Vale, Xstrata and RioTinto – and (in the Steel Sector) US Steel, ArcelorMittal and Essar – have been given a free pass by right-wing governments to swallow the likes of Inco, Falconbridge, Alcan, Stelco, Dofasco and Algoma.

Now their agenda is being advanced at full throttle.

Vale Inco is using the recent financial meltdown to tighten the screws on its workers. It has tabled "non-negotiable" demands that show its naked purpose. After extracting \$4 billion in profit from its Sudbury "assets" since acquiring them 3 years ago, it wants to undermine pension benefits – deferred wages – for generations to come. And it wants to eliminate the "nickel bonus", which, despite its many drawbacks, was a way for



Sudburians to share a little of the profit in good times. Vale's intransigence on this point – at a time when it's virtually no-cost at the current price of nickel – shows that it's driven not by financial need but by long-term cynical greed, and by determination to break the union. Furthermore, recent leaked documents show that it plans to cut its workforce – which fell from 12,000 in 1980 to 3,000 today – to 1,800.

"Ourselves alone" has long been the strength, and weakness, of the Steelworkers Union in Sudbury. The miners have traditionally dug in for the long haul, self-reliant, waiting it out. But this is a time when wider community support, working class solidarity and international coordination is urgently needed. The Communist Party pledges to help build this.

- ◆ We salute the Vale Inco workers for their courage in walking away from the bargaining table and resisting huge concessions.
- ◆ We call on all Canadian unions and working class organizations to rally around the struggle of the Vale Inco workers.
- ◆ We call for international labour solidarity against the deprivations of Vale Inco in Sudbury and across the globe.
- ◆ We call for federal and provincial intervention to force the arrogant ‘suits’ of Vale Inco to bargain in good faith, and to guarantee production and workforce levels in Canada.
- ◆ We call for national and provincial bans on scab labour, which would prevent Vale’s attempts to run certain smelting operations during this strike.
- ◆ We call for a Canada-wide labour campaign to put our natural resources and key manufacturing sectors under public ownership and control.

## ***Nationalize Vale Inco!***

Issued by the Ontario Committee,  
 Communist Party of Canada  
 290A Danforth Ave., Toronto, Ont. M4K 1N6  
 416-469-2446 ■ rowley@cpc-pcc.ca ■ www.communist-party.ca

# **Build Solidarity with the striking Sudbury miners at Vale Inco**



***A Message from the  
 Communist Party***

**people's VOICE**  
 General strike in France  
 1,310,000 jobs, a million without them!  
 LAYOFFS WRECK LIVES  
 And the crisis is just beginning: see pages 5 & 6

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