



Dominion Diamond Corp: A 360 in 30 Months

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Labour Views

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Editorial note: PSAC members are currently in bargaining with Dominion Diamond Corp. with bargaining dates set for mid-January.

What does it mean to be committed to the North and more importantly the development of Northern society?

Last month in Northern publications, readers had the opportunity to compare reality with how Dominion Diamond Corporation acts and behaves as a corporate citizen. Splashy ads reading “Dominion Diamond, committed to the North” and “Dominion Diamond is committed to making a lasting positive contribution to the North” tried to assure citizens that the company is here for us in a bright, foreseeable future.

Similar rhetoric and empty assurances concerning the company’s loyalty to the North have been heard at the bargaining table since our members’ collective agreement expired 30 months ago.

Yet on Nov. 7, 2016, the company announced that it would be pulling its corporate headquarters out of our fair city with 100 good paying jobs in tow, for a bit of financial relief in Calgary. The intent, we are told, is to save \$19 million.

The hypocrisy in what amounts to a further devastating situation for the North, has been barely reflected in the Yellowknife-area media which has uttered what can be safely described as a very quiet roar. Richard Morland, President of the NWT Chamber of Commerce noted recently that it would mean possibly: “a few hundred less people living in the community. This means less money being spent around the various businesses around the community. There will be an impact on the housing market. There will be an impact to the community level, to schools and other organizations that many of these people are part of so this is a big deal.”

Make no mistake that although there may be some leaving our community, the UNW will support those who are left behind to uphold any integrity Dominion Diamond Corporation ever had as it comes to being “committed” to the North.

Predictably, we know that the pockets of its top six executive leaders have been well lined as more than \$23 million (Canadian) was paid out in total compensation for the year ending on Jan. 31, 2016. While

frontline workers who spend their money in Yellowknife and our small communities won't ever see pay days like these, we want to put the employer on notice that in 2017, the UNW will put any and all resources into ensuring that our members receive a fair deal.

We look forward to our next round of bargaining, Jan. 16 to 20 – the first opportunity we have had since July.