

APRIL 28 – DAY OF MOURNING

In 1984, the Canadian Labour Congress began to observe April 28 as the National Day of Mourning for workers killed or injured on the job. Because of the perseverance of many union activists, the Parliament of Canada passed the “Workers Mourning Day Act” in 1991 which officially recognizes April 28 as a day to remember workers who gave their lives or were injured simply because they went to work.

Day of Mourning observances are held in many communities across the country, often organized by local labour councils. Ceremonies will remember the 139 workers who died on the job in 2007, seven of whom were under the age of 25. This means that, on average, one worker is killed every second working day in this province. In addition, thousands of workers are permanently disabled every year.

BCTF members have enjoyed tremendous support from the labour movement. We are fortunate that few of our colleagues die on the job although hundreds are injured every year. The 139 workers who died last year are our union sisters and brothers, our friends, our neighbours, our family members and our students. It is important that BCTF members show solidarity with other workers by attending the Day of Mourning ceremonies in their communities. We must mourn the loss of these workers and then fight for the rights of those of us who remain.



At one time canaries were the only safeguard underground miners had against dangers in their workplaces. When the canary died it was time for the workers to evacuate the mine. Our sisters and brothers in CUPE have adopted the canary as the symbol for the Day of Mourning and the canary is recognized around the world.

Fight for the living, mourn for the dead.