

Times Colonist (Victoria)

Sailors without food in Ontario now strike over wages

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A union says two weeks ago 18 sailors and their captain ran out of food and fresh water aboard their idled cargo ship in the Port of Oshawa, Ont., and are now striking over unpaid wages.

Seafarers' International Union of Canada says the crew from Romania and the Russian captain haven't been paid since April and were allegedly left without supplies by the ship's owner.

International Transport Workers' Federation inspector Vince Giannopoulos says the ship arrived in Canadian waters about a month ago from Europe and that the 19 on board have been "abandoned" without food or water for about two weeks.

Giannopoulos says since arriving in the Port of Oshawa a week ago the crew got so desperate they yelled at passing fishermen for gear so they could catch something to eat. Supplies were later delivered by supporters.

He says the ship's owner allegedly ran into financial trouble but that talks are underway for the owner of the cargo - 18,000 tonnes of steel pipe and coils, which remains onboard - to pay their wages and end the impasse.