



Local 298 Newsletter

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Finally, The Kitimat Weather Is Matching Our
Beautiful Kitimat Scenery

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Editorial

You're Invited To Participate

By Don Klie

I have to apologize for not getting out the July issue of the Newsletter. I have taken on some extra duties with the Worker Advocate position (assisting members with their WCB claims) and I was busy writing a submission for one our member's appeal. I had originally planned to only spend one day on it but ended up spending 4 days. And then I was off on vacation and out of town for a few days and finally decided to wait until early August to put out the next edition.

While taking on the duties of Worker Advocate requires a great deal of time, I have actually wanted to get involved doing this for some time. But, as president of the local (and editor) I already have several things on my plate that take up my time.

As mentioned in the Worker Advocate report, Pat Williams, Terminal Warehouse First Aid/Powerlift Operator, has volunteered to also act as a Worker Advocate.

It is important that we spread out the duties required of the Union to as many people as possible. If we concentrate the duties of the Union in just a few people the Union will not have the depth it needs to properly represent its members. We need to have people ready and trained in order to take over the reins of power and responsibility when those currently in the job are no longer available to fill the positions.

Working as an officer of the Union can be a very rewarding position. Like those who volunteer their services in community organizations, Union work fulfills a very necessary function in our society.

The union's presence in Kitimat is well known and recognized. Many of the social benefits we enjoy today have been championed by the union movement. There are still causes to be promoted and supported and the union will require the volunteer efforts of its membership.

On a local level there are issues that need the attention and focus of dedicated people. If we have too few people doing the work, there is a danger that they will be unable to deal with the workload and stress.

Burnout and frustration are well known conditions in our society. But, they aren't the only problems associated with too few doing too much.

When we have only a few people doing the work we limit the ideas, the knowledge, and the labour available to put forward the in-depth type of effort many issues need.

There are so many things to read and remember that there comes a point when you just can't absorb anymore.



When a subject or idea piques your interest it is really quite easy to do the necessary work. But, there is only so much a person can do.

We need volunteers to act as Safety Captains, Shop Stewards, committee members like the Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, Job Evaluation Committee, Contracting Out Committee, Rehabilitation and Re-Integration Committee, Environmental Committee, the Executive Committee, and Worker Advocate.

And, just as important, we need your ideas.

There is always a standing invitation for anyone to write their ideas and opinions in this newsletter. We have our regular membership meetings where the floor is always open to hear the membership's input. And, of course, we need your input on the shop floor.

In the president's report you will read about some of the Union's proposed changes to how we do and organize our work at Eurocan. The things we are discussing are very different from the way we do things today.

If the Union and Company are able to agree on a new workplace structure there could be resistance on both sides to these changes. There could be, and most likely will be, mistakes made along the way. We will need your input, advice, ideas and labour to help implement these proposed concepts.

Some might even say that the Union shouldn't be putting forward their proposals or even trying to improve the Union-Company relationship. We need to hear what your ideas are because in the end, it will be you who have to work and live with whatever gets decided.

On everyone weather opportunity the Olympic A and



another note, I hope is enjoying the hot and getting an to watch some of Games. little entertainment good weather are good for the psyche.

**In solidarity
Don Klie**

Executive Officers For 2004

		<u>Tel #</u>	<u>Work Local</u>	<u>Job Title</u>
President	Don Klie	632-1352	2367	Pipefitter
1st Vice President	Frank Verde Sr.	632-2924	2213	Shiploader/Labourer
2nd Vice President	Jack McCamy	632-5658	3513	Spare Board
Financial Secretary	Mary Murphy	632-5201	3451 or 2568	First Aid/Stores
Recording Secretary	Gary Ewanski	632-2743	2213 or 3519	Shiploader/Labourer
Inside Guard	Andy Sanwald	632-4131	3510	Spareboard
Outside Guard	Pablito Mendoza	639-9187	3466	Instrument Mechanic
Trustees	Gary Drake 3yr	632-2905		Lubrication Mechanic
Trustees	Ed Da Costa 2yr	632-7796	2356	Raw Materials
Trustees	Dan Belleville 1yr	632-5935	2367	Pipefitter
Chief Shop Steward	Ilona Kenny	632-4244	3451 or 2568	First Aid/Stores

Committees

Standing: Frank Verde Sr., Dan Belleville,
Committee Ed DaCosta, Ilona Kenny, Jack
McCamy

Wage: Frank Verde, Jack McCamy,
Delegates Dennis Urbanowski, Don Klie, Mary
Murphy

Job Evaluation:Dave Burrows, Jack McCamy

Rehabilitation & Reintegration: Mary Murphy 3yr

Employee\ Family Assistance: Mary Murphy, Gary Ewanski,
Peter King

Pensions:Gary Drake, Don Klie, Gary
Ewanski

Sunshine Committee: Dorothy Birkett

Contracting Out:.....Ed O'Halligan, John Miller,
Dennis Urbanowski Dino
Stamatakis

Central Safety:.....Mary Murphy, Dan Belleville,
Alfie Poellot, Angus MacLeod

Apprenticeship:John Burget, Dennis Urbanowski,
Paul Wilson

Women's Committee: Kelly Ruff, Mary Murphy,
Brenda Tewnion

Chief Shop Steward	Ilona Kenny
Yard & Stores	Mary Murphy
Janitorial	Kelly Ruff
Raw Materials	Mike Holland Arnie Carrita
Steam Plant and Pulp Mill	Andy Sanwald Richard Crockart Lucky Bhullar Dave Burrows Kevin Read
Shiploaders	Dino Stamatakis Wayne Fulljames
Warehouse\Dock	Jason Smith Angelo Marrelli
Maintenance	
Pulpmill	Al Hummel
CRU	Elvis Resendes
Paper Maint.	Dan Belleville
Electrical	Rick Wittmann
Inst. Mech.	Pablito Mendoza
Millwrights/Oilers	Steve Dudra
Millwrights	Derek Smith Paul Wilson

Is there a mistake in this list of shop stewards or committees? If so, please let the office secretary know and we will correct it.

Newsletter Editor: Don Klie;
donklie@telus.net

WARNING!!!

THIS NEWSLETTER IS RATED:

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FOR UNION!

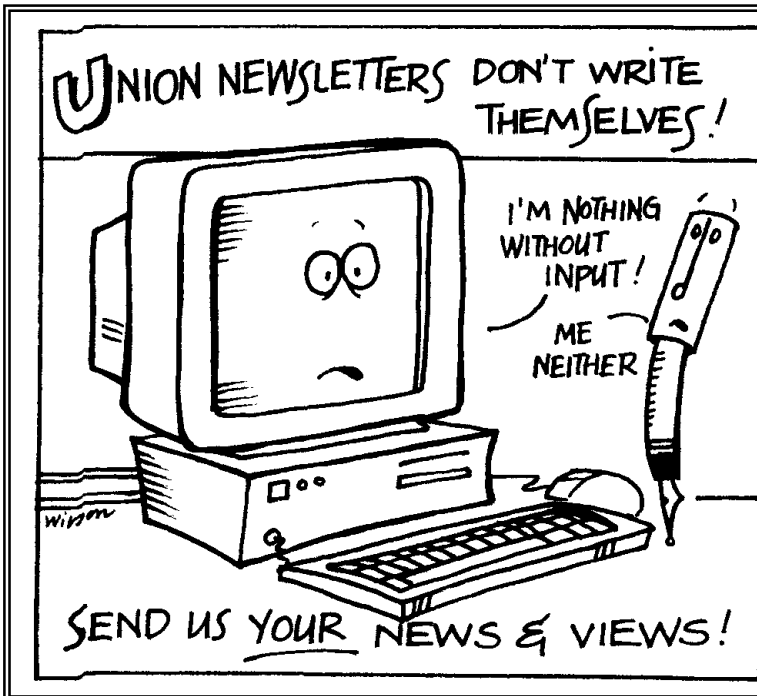
This newsletter is solely for the entertainment and information of the members of CEP Local 298.

Union Office Hours:

9:00 am to 5:00 PM
Monday to Thursday
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And Sunday
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Signed articles appearing in this newsletter express the view and opinions of the authors. They are not necessarily the policy of the CEP or views shared by Local 298, its executive, or the editor. Articles and letters are encouraged and should be handed in to the union hall. You can E-mail your articles or contributions to the editor at cep298@monarch.net, or donklie@telus.net. All contributions become property of the union and must be signed. Contributors should note if they wish their material returned.

Editor: Don Klie



Deadline for submissions
September 2004 Newsletter
September 16, 2004



President's Report

The Union Needs Your Input

by Don Klie

Over the past few months I have reported on the relationship improvement initiative between the Company and Union. At one point we called a special membership meeting to discuss the issues of the day, how those issues were affecting our discussions with the Company, and to seek direction from the membership.

Originally we had sought out the services of an outside consulting company to help us through the process. After an initial study and proposal from the consultants, the Eurocan management team decided it wanted to explore other options before committing to bringing in, and paying a substantial amount for, a program that neither one of us could say with certainty would help improve our relationship.

The Union did express its concerns with what Eurocan has proposed. The Union doesn't believe we have the skill set on site that will be able to develop a plan and implement the action needed to address the important issues and proposals that the Union has identified.

Some of the issues that both sides have identified as areas that need immediate attention are contracting out, Raw Materials/Traffic, Maintenance, and flexibility. This is not to say that the other areas of the mill do not have problems or that other issues aren't as important, but, the ones that are most immediate, and might be the easier ones to deal with, are in the areas identified above.

One of the proposals the Union has put forward is self-directed crews. The model we gave for this was the Project Crew.

When the Project Crew was first established the crew members were taken off the floor given training on how Eurocan's systems work. Things like how to figure out how to cost a job, how to coordinate with Engineering and Planning and how to bid on the jobs/projects that were available. The project crew at first reported only to a planner. Supervision was at a minimum and everything appeared to work well.

The workings of the Project Crew have changed; they now have a supervisor to report to and the Crew really isn't set up for doing projects anymore (anymore than any other crew). Our proposal is more in line with the original intent and the original way that the Project Crew was set up and run.

Most of us on the floor in maintenance are very critical of the leadership abilities of our supervisors. More so with the individual trades that have supervisors that are from outside of their particular trade. The training certain supervisors have received



falls far short of what is actually needed. It seems the focus of our maintenance workforce has been simply to respond to the breakdowns that happen. This is because the supervisors and superintendents in maintenance simply don't have the wherewithal to run a proper maintenance program. Their training, experience and knowledge of how things work, and how they used to work, haven't been adequate. (One of my favorite targets has been the area concept for maintenance and, the musical-chairs-selection-process for supervisors, superintendents and, to a lesser extent, planners.) And of course money and manning are quite likely far short of what is needed.

The Union has put forward a way to improve all of our initial issues, but how do we get it from being just hot air at a table to actually implementing and working towards a better workplace.

The Company has suggested that we embark on this initiative on our own, for a trial of six months. The Union has said it is prepared to explore this option, if only to better expose the Company's true intent. So far at the meetings the Union has been the one to offer up the most creative solutions. While the Company has said they are prepared to spend money to support this initiative, there will be obvious limitations to just how much will be available.

As always, the Union committee and executive will be seeking the membership's input and thoughts throughout this process.

We have said to everyone that we are willing to explore ways to improve our relationship with the Company. The Company's response to this has been positive, so much so that they believe that we can find the ways and willingness to implement the changes needed on our own.

Earlier in the year there was some success at the special meetings in the Steam Plant and Pulpmill dealing with issues in those departments. That led to special meetings in the Raw Materials department.

The Company's obvious goal for an improved relationship is to have a more profitable mill. The Union believes that what we have offered will make us more efficient and lead to improved production results which will lead us to being a more profitable mill. Our problems in the past have stemmed from the way each side views just how to best achieve improved efficiency and productivity.

Hopefully, both sides are at a point where we will be willing to make the necessary changes.

And, in order to make those changes as best as possible, we will need the input, ideas and resources of our membership.

----- Joint Occupational Health and Safety

When Are We Going To Start Driving Forward

One of the most dangerous jobs in our mill is being a powerlift operator and one of the most dangerous areas in our mill is the Terminal Warehouse. Over the years we have had five fatalities in that area. Two of those fatalities involved individuals who were struck, or run over, by a powerlift.

There have also been several injuries caused by accidents, the nature of the job or by both. It is well recognized in the health insurance field that employees who drive these unsprung vehicles have back injuries caused, in part, by the repetitive jarring to their spine and back muscles.

And, if you add the extra stress on the body by having to drive in reverse the risks and injuries, and possibly fatalities, increase.

In the past there have been at least three people who have developed permanent functional impairments because of the way they have had to drive these vehicles. They had to be accommodated in other jobs in the mill because they could no longer drive the vehicle in reverse. Another employee is permanently off work because of back pain, which was most likely aggravated by having to drive repeatedly in reverse. There have been several serious accidents and other temporary disabilities.

In the Two-Day Warehouse, the powerlift operators are able to drive forward most of the time but when they have to enter the basement of the Papermill, to deliver cull to the guillotine, they too must drive in reverse.

The reason the operators must drive in reverse is because when they are carrying a load their forward vision is severely impaired.

For a number of years the Union JOHS Committee has been trying to find a solution to the problems created by the powerlift operator having to drive in reverse 50% of the time.

One proposed solution was to find a forklift/powerlift that had a seat that would swivel 180 degrees with two sets of control; one for each direction. Unfortunately, no one knew if such a machine existed.

Recently, a committee of management and union representatives visited Alcan in Kitimat to look at a vehicle that was in use there. Lo and behold, there was the long sought after vehicle.

Apparently, this particular type of powerlift has been manufactured in Vancouver for the last 20 years.

A few years ago the Company upgraded (some would argue downgraded) their fleet of powerlifts to the Lindes. These vehicles have hydrostatic drive and were very nice to operate when driving forward.

However, one of the problems with these machines was that the interior design made it much more difficult for the operators to get in the correct position for driving in reverse. There have been several accidents with these machines and some have blamed it, in part, on the impaired vision of the driver because of their inability to get their body in a position that would allow them to get a better view.

At the July JOHS meeting the Union requested, and the committee agreed, to raise the issue of, and recommend that we purchase, the improved designed powerlift.

The Union has also written a letter to Rick Maksymetz requesting the same.

Too many people have been killed, maimed and injured for this Company not to take immediate action and start today a program for replacing the Linde fleet of powerlifts. There might be a few areas where the Lindes could still be used. The improved designed powerlift also uses the hydrostatic drive, a feature that most people thought was good to have. Obviously, money will be a concern. The Company could look at replacing a few at a time.

But, now is the time to start down that road.



**In solidarity
Don Klie**

Standing Committee Report

THERE WILL BE NO SEPARATE EQUIPMENT LINE INTO THE MILL

By Dan Belleville with notes from Jack McCamy

The following is a summary of some of the issues discussed at the July 12, 2004 Standing Committee Meeting.

The Union wanted to know if we could look into replacing **Maritime Life** with another insurance company. They are there for us and we are not pleased with them because they are cutting our members off for no good reasons. The Union has checked out other carriers and, we need to know what premiums we pay out to Maritime Life so we can offer this quote to the other company's. We want to talk to Sun Life, and any other carriers, to see if they can provide short term coverage. We also would like to know the length of the contracts signed so we can be ready when and if we decide. The Company said that they didn't see any problem with getting this information.

Grievance – Raw Materials – On a regular basis the department is not replacing the Purchase Chip Operator when they go on vacation and are running short. But, when someone in that department applies for a floater or a banked day the department is saying they can't afford to run short for a day. The Company must improve its manning levels in this department so that the employees can take their earned time off without having to run the department short.

Gravel Hauling using Jose Excavating – Other trucking contractors have asked why Jose is getting all the work at Eurocan and they are not being given the chance to bid on these jobs. Also, the Union stated the company is stalling jobs until it is too late for us to do them and then contracts them out. The Union noted we used to have three trucks of our own and were able to do a lot more of this work. We have discussed an extra truck for the winter but now we see that a truck or two could be used on the dump plus other equipment. We have a lot of qualified drivers on site that you can use. We also noticed that you used Jose's truck to haul Slaker waste one day when the kiln was down. The story we were told was his truck had a sealed box but, we asked our mechanics and they said our truck has a sealed box as well.

The Company responded by stating Dave Stein said we are using Jose because he knows the dump and helps manage it so he is an expert in the area. Stein will also investigate the bidding process and

check into the Union's concern that other contractors had about "greased palms".

The Union stated that the Company encouraged Jose to be an expert on the dump. We have people here that worked on the dump for years and we should be using them to pass information to others so they can be our experts. What is being created here is an equipment line into the mill. The Union stated, **BE CLEAR, JOSE IS NOT A SEPARATE EQUIPMENT LINE INTO THE MILL.** We are not even using our truck fully and it is being used as a personnel transporter the get to other areas.

The Union commented that Jose got jobs from us because we didn't speak up and allowed him to replace our workers while Eurocan dumped our equipment. Under the new contract we believe this should not be allowed, the company should replace the equipment and create more jobs by returning the work contracted out. We shouldn't have to go to arbitration to get back what is our work. Eurocan should do what is right and get back the equipment we need to do the work that we are expert in.



High Pressure Pump – The Union question where our high pressure pump was; the one that we had bought years ago and had people trained to operate? One of our members remembered that it had been stored somewhere for years. When we checked to see where it was we heard that it might have been sold or given away. The company said they would look into this and let us know. The Union noted that if we had this equipment we could use it to clean out pipes and the need to contract out this work could be reduced. This is another great opportunity the company has to have flex and create work and possibly save money.

Vacations – The Company said that all vacation requests must be in by May 15th or they would schedule them. Then, they could fill in the empty spaces with last years holidays that were not taken. The Company received a letter from a member saying he had put in his holidays and was denied the time off because someone else had it off. The problem is that there is no way of knowing early what is and is not

available. Even now, the only thing maintenance can do is check on L Drive, which only goes to June.

Also, the Union asked if holiday pay was calculated from January 1st to December 31st or is it from May 1st to April 30th. The Company stated that it is from May 1st to April 30th. The Union then asked if we could have a running total of earned money on our cheque stubs for holiday pay so we can check out if there are any errors made in the calculations. The Company said that they would try to provide this, if possible, as soon as they can.

The Union stated it wanted a copy of the list of vacations not yet booked so as to make sure they are scheduled. The Company said the only list that they did not have is the Pulpmill's but, they will send them all.

Floater and Banked Time – The Union noted that the floater list was not accurate, and the Union requested that it be corrected and the Union given the updated list. We also wanted the list to include the paid out deferred floaters. The Union also expressed its concerns about some employees not taking their floaters but being paid out for them. The Union believes that this practice must stop and that people should be required to take them, or lose them.

The Union noted that at one time if you didn't take your Floaters you lost them. The Company agreed and didn't know when it was changed but said they do pay them out but will look at it. The Union said there may be times when it is proper to pay them out the same as holidays (e.g.: employees going onto LTD) but we want to have a say when that happens. These Floaters were exchanged for Stats so the company could run more days per year; therefore, the Company must make the extra effort to ensure people have the opportunity to take the time off.

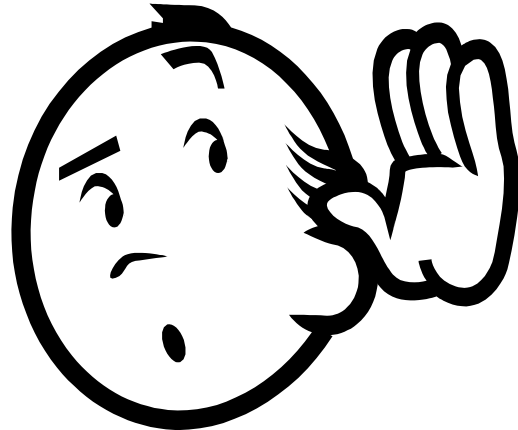
The Union said if our workers have made an attempt to get banked time off but are being denied, and are being paid out at half time, we will fight this. We will post a notice to this affect. The Company must have the manning to provide earn time off.

Special Meetings – Steam Plant – with Kevin Read, Randy Dobson and Standing Committee members; – **Raw Materials** – with Arnie Carrita, Russell Ruff and Standing Committee Members. These meetings are to deal with the many problems that have occurred in these areas and to mend our relationship in these areas.

Grievance Procedure – The Union stated the Company is not following its own grievance policy. The supervisors can't make a decision on their own. The Company said that they are training their staff on the contract, and grievance handling is part of it. Policy grievances go to H.R. or to the Superintendents and Managers to deal with. We discussed the format and how the steps are to work

and stressed that the individuals talk at supervisory level and see if it can be fixed.

Hearing Tests – The Union requested an update in regards to the backlog with the hearing tests and was told that it was at 70. We raised the issue now so that this work wouldn't again be contacted out. We advised that, if necessary, overtime could be worked so the backlog could be reduced and properly managed. Also, it was noted that we need better planning on the Supervisors' part so that the employees get released by their department to go to First Aid for the tests.



In regards to the grievance that was filed last year when the Company contracted out the hearing tests to a West Fraser staff employee, the Union said this work was classed as being done by a temporary worker and should have been paid our rate and must pay union dues and any other dues that our members pay. We do not consider her staff because we can not allow staff doing hourly work. The Union also stated that we do not want staff from other divisions coming to Eurocan to do our work.

Working Through Lunch – Both the Union and Company talked to employees at other companies and they said; if you work during your lunch then you are entitled to have time to eat your lunch. Also, you have two choices, one is to go home at 3:30 and the other one is to work until 4:00 and be paid 1/2 hour overtime. The Union asked what happens if you don't have time to eat lunch; will the person get an extra 20 minute pay? The Company said they didn't see this happening very often but, were prepared to do so with the caveat that this position would be rubber stamped, which means that at anytime in the future it could be withdrawn upon 30 days notice.

Stores – Canceled Vacations – The Company agreed with the Union's position that people attending training courses were not to be regarded as people off on vacation and that it should not affect the vacation ratio. The Union noted that once the vacation schedule has been determined then it should be obvious when training can take place. Also, we stated that there is no reason after May 15th to cancel vacations unless there is an act of God.

Overtime lists for the Steam Plant and Pulpmill – The Company said they would post them. The Union said these lists seem to disappear and would like to see extras printed out.

Ambulance Drivers – The Company said they would leave this as status quo with chip screening. They will tell their supervisors the union wants Len Hansen to assist in the training and will check to see if he is OK with this.

Throwing out of Union and Personal Material – The Company said they will talk to D. Klie and give him a week to go over everything to see what is missing. Then they would work out the details on how to replace what was lost. We need another pipefitter going to school so that the BCIT note books that were tossed can be replaced.

Contacting Out – The Union says this is really gotten out of hand. The Company says they want to contract out less because they know that is costs more. But what one hand wants the other hand doesn't seem to know. The Union noted that agreement on full flex was intended to help provide as much maintenance and repair work as possible for the mill crews. A special meeting will be held with the chief shop steward, company and the contacting out committee to try to settle these grievances.

Vacation Banking Request – The Union requested if an employee, who has not earned enough time to get full vacation pay (1200 hours), could bank a week of vacations at the appropriate rate. We would record this at Standing Committee so this is what he will be paid at when he takes it. The Company is to respond.

Posting Releases – The Union noted that there seems to be a problem everywhere for people being released to go to the new jobs that they have posted into. The Company noted that they had hired four or five new employees recently and hoped to hire between twelve to twenty more by late the Fall.

The Union raised this concern because the question has been asked that if the Company is having so much trouble releasing people to other jobs, how come they can release hourly people to do staff jobs so fast. Four days from being informed as a worker that there is a relief supervisory position needed in the Steam Plant the position is filled. Yet in the same area we have two people that got apprenticeships and they can't be released. Also noted, it appears to be easier for the Company to find staff workers because they come and go so fast, yet it takes months or even years to hire an hourly.

Commitment to Employment – The Union informed the Company that it was naming its members to be on this committee: Jack McCamy, Dan Belleville, Ilona Kenny and Frank Verde. The mandate of this committee is spelled in the contract in Letter Of Understanding – Job Creation and Working Time. The Union noted that it is time that

we formed this committee to look at this issue. The Union noted that as long as two people from its committee can make the meetings we will continue but if more are available we want them there. Doug Petersen, Wayne Muzykowski and Dave Stein will be the Company representatives.

B.C.'s budget `prudence' often written in red ink

A look at the best - and worst - from provincial governments in the past 20 years

BY CRISTOBAL YOUNG

(This article appeared in the July 28, 2003 edition of the Victoria Times Colonist. Editor.)

Scrolling through Finance Minister Gary Collins's press releases, the talk of "fiscal prudence" is endless. The Liberal government, one learns, "has made significant progress in restoring sound fiscal management." They have a "prudent approach to managing taxpayers' dollars [that] is beginning to pay immediate dividends." Budget year 2002/03 was "our first full year of sound fiscal management."

The final numbers - the audited public accounts - are in for 2002/03 and it was one of the worst years in B.C. budgetary history. The deficit, at \$3.169 billion, is the largest ever recorded, and as a share of government spending it is the worst performance since the Socred years.

For Collins, fiscal prudence means talking about it a lot.

But budget chaos is hardly a new thing in B.C. On the occasion of the largest budget shortfall in B.C. history, a dusting off of the back issues of the government accounts seems fitting. Call it a 20-year retrospective on that tormented creature called the B.C. budget.

The first thing budgetary history has to say is that deficits are an ingrained part of the B.C. government finances. Only five out of the past 24 years have seen a balanced or surplus budget B.C.

The second story is that the economy plays a considerable part in fiscal management. It is no easy task to balance the budget during a recession. Tax revenues naturally fall during recessions, and social safety net spending automatically kicks in. And slashing spending or raising taxes only makes the recession worse.

A simple correlation analysis suggests that real GDP growth explains about 60 per cent of the annual budget deficits in B.C. (during 1982-2002). This, however, leaves a sizable 40 percent that's politics.

The third story from budgetary history performs the finger-pointing task – who were the (relatively) good fiscal managers, and who were the bad.

It turns out that the Socreds, during the 1980s, were actually the worst fiscal managers in B.C. history. Between 1981 and 1991, B.C. had a deficit in eight out of 11 years. On average, the deficit represented 4.3 per cent of total government spending. Indeed, between 1983 and 1987, the Socreds brought in five massive back-to-back deficits, the largest accounting for more than 14 per cent of spending.

In the 1990s – the decade of the NDP – there were deficits in seven out of nine years. The average deficit, however, was considerably lower - 2.3 per cent of government spending. The average NDP deficit was roughly half that of the Socreds.

Being better fiscal managers than the Socreds is not, in itself, very impressive. But to be fair, the NDP's unique notoriety for fiscal recklessness is not deserved. Indeed, the last NDP budget showed the largest surplus in B.C. history (\$1.5 billion).

The Liberals acted swiftly to undo that progress. For all the chatter to the contrary, their performance to date has been a complete disaster. For the two budgets the Liberals have tabled so far, the deficit has averaged 8.9 per cent of government spending.

This is twice the average Socred deficit (4.3 per cent) and almost four times the size of the average NDP deficit (2.3 per cent). Such is an ominous beginning to a supposedly New Era.

And the Liberals cannot blame their fiscal blundering on dismal economic weather. Two-thirds of the current budget deficit is a consequence of the massive corporate and personal income tax cuts.

Personal income tax revenues in 2002/03 dropped 23 per cent. Corporate income tax revenues plummeted 60 per cent. This is the largest corporate tax cut in B.C. history, and probably in Canadian history as well.

The corporate and personal income tax cuts, taken together, represent \$2.1 billion in lost revenues - 66 per cent of the provincial deficit.

The deficit would have actually been considerably higher. However, the government clawed back a full one-third of the personal tax cut by raising the Medical Services Plan premiums. MSP revenues have nearly doubled in one year - up 42 per cent. The MSP is now one of the largest tax instruments in B.C.

Perhaps the most alarming of all this is that the Liberals have no real plan for balancing the budget. The Liberal's fiscal strategy is simple: bludgeon the B.C. balance sheet and hope (pray) that the budget finally balances by election time. This does not add up to fiscal prudence.

Earlier this year, Collins proclaimed "We began the difficult task of getting the government's fiscal house in order – and we are getting the job done."

Rarely has a budget speech been more at odds with budgetary reality. The New Era rhetoric – the constant prattle about "fiscal prudence" – is jarringly out of line with the New Era practice.

Indeed, the so-called New Era looks far too much like the old Socred era to deserve a new name. If B.C. voters were hoping for a dose of sensible budgetary management, they have been sadly disappointed.

Cristobal Young is a graduate fellow in the Department of Economics, University of Victoria.

Save the environment: Buy local produce

The Provincial/BCGEU/CALM

Sustainable food production is the first step to food security. Sustainability requires us to produce our food with less energy, water and chemical inputs. It makes no sense to produce vital, life giving food in the short term while undermining that capability in the medium to long term. Yet, that is precisely what we are doing with our devotion to large scale, energy intensive, chemical and water intensive, soil-destroying food production system.

Not all agriculture production fits this mould. But it is the dominant system, and becoming more so as our food system globalizes and a handful of multinational corporations takes over everything from farming, fertilizer and pesticide production, equipment manufacture, seed production and manufacture (genetically engineered seeds), processing, distribution and retailing.

The average item on our dinner plate travels well over 1,500 miles to get there. This requires tremendous energy inputs for transportation, packaging, storing and processing.

Local food production dramatically reduces energy requirements and the consequent impacts on pollution and climate change. Production for local rather than international markets can reduce the scale of agricultural operations, thereby reducing energy and chemical inputs, waste, and facilitating more humane treatment of farm animals.

Local food production is essential for dependable, safe supplies of food. Local food production also means more local jobs in food production, processing and distribution.

For many foods, the shorter the time between harvesting and consumption the higher the nutritional value. Buying locally grown food is a great taste treat. Imported food is largely from unknown sources, with unknown use of chemicals and energy, unknown agricultural land protection and changeable trade rules.

Workers' Advocate

Don't Get Screwed by the WCB

By Don Klie

As most people know by now the person who was assisting the Union with helping our members with their WCB claims has gone over to the dark side.

For now, I have taken up the position. As soon as the word got out that there was an opening for the position there were people expressing interest in helping out and filling the job. Helping people in need is one of the fundamental duties of this Union. And, while providing this help can be time consuming, the reward is knowing that we are helping our fellow brothers and sisters when they are most in need.

I will be doing most of the appeals for now and Pat Williams, First Aid/Powerlift Operator at the Terminal Warehouse has volunteered to help out. Pat and I will be working together and, for now, as best as possible, I will be training Pat.

Some years ago I had some Workers' Advocate training at a weekend course put on by the Kitimat and Terrace Area Labour Council. Also, I have had training and experience with arbitrations and there are definite similarities.

Already I have had to put in three submissions for appeals that were in progress when I took over the job. Fortunately, I got some good advice and assistance from the person who used to do this job. Plus, I have been in contact with the Workers' Advisers Office, set up by the Ministry of Labour, free of charge, to assist workers with their WCB appeals, and I have gotten some valuable assistance from them.

Some of the tools that are a must for this position are a computer and internet access. One good thing the WCB has done is made all of its laws, rules and regulations, policies and procedures, and much more, available on the internet for anyone to access. With a little bit of time, training, experience and luck a person will have a pretty good chance of properly representing our members.

Should anyone else like to volunteer to help out in the role of Workers' Advocate please contact the Union or one of the members of the executive. We are hopeful that the Area Labour Council will be able to provide some specific training this fall in the annual weekend labour training sessions.

For anyone who would like to meet with me regarding their WCB case I will be available most Fridays all day at the union hall. On weeks when I'm doing the newsletter I will be at the hall for WCB cases all day Wednesday.

THE MEAN LEAN WCB

Most of us feel outrage and frustration when we hear about one of our members being denied WCB wage loss benefits or having some other indignity forced on them by a seemingly uncaring WCB system.

Most of us believe that the WCB is there to protect us from catastrophic loss should we be forced off work because of a workplace injury. While I'm not sure of the statistics I do believe that a majority of the claims made to the WCB are accepted and are uneventful.

On occasion we do hear that a person's claim has been challenged by the Company's representative or that they are having problems with the WCB. This is when it is very reassuring to know that our Union will put the united effort of its members to help support those in need.

The Worker's Advocate, on a regular basis gets to see how the system works and things that need to be done to help make it work for the individual.

In the last few years the WCB has gone through extensive change; some would say revolutionary, other might say revolting. The most obvious are the benefit payout reduction (90% of net wages as opposed to 75% of gross wages), and the appeal system (only two appeals – Review Division and WCAT, and a much tighter time frame). Also, the WCB has changed its focus on getting/forcing people back to work. Their focus now is on employability.

What this means is that unless you are injured in such a way that your limitations/restrictions prevent you from doing any work, you will not be getting wage loss benefits for very long.

The WCB looks very closely at what work is available and if you can do it, within your restrictions, you have to go to work or face being cut off benefits.

What does this mean to the average worker?



"There's nothing wrong with you...
You can go back to work tomorrow."

Over the past 2 months I have seen two cases that are particularly instructive. One person has been off work for more than a year and has been denied WCB benefits. Even though his doctor put the individual off work and his injury/disability was clearly caused by a workplace accident, the WCB refuses to pay wage loss benefits.

Another person hurt himself recently on the job and his doctor put him off work because of the injury. At first, the WCB was not going to pay wage loss benefits. While the worker lost 14 days from work his doctor finally gave him clearance to return, on light duty.

These two cases were very similar in that the WCB denied wage loss benefits to the individuals, in part, based on the statements the Company representative made to the WCB Entitlement Officer.

And what did the Company say to the WCB officer? "We offered light duty to the employee."

In one case the supervisor stated that it was up to the employee to tell him what he couldn't do. In the other case the WCB officer said that the Company was prepared to provide any light duty that would meet the individual's restrictions.

Be very careful with what the supervisor actually says to you when it comes to WCB, an injury and light duty.

Once the WCB officer hears that the employer is prepared to offer light duty, and it falls within the restrictions placed on the individual by the doctor, or if your doctor doesn't note any limitations, then the WCB medical adviser will list the restrictions, then the individual had better be prepared to return to work or face being cut off, or not covered at all for wage loss benefits.

In the first example the supervisor actually wrote in an email that the WCB received that he didn't know what the individual's limitations were and that the individual was to tell him when he couldn't do a particular job. In view of where this Company stands regarding the medical documentation needed for an employee to return to work or to receive light duty in the first place, it's an amazing statement. The supervisor, and by extension the Company, must know the exact limitations, or lack thereof, of all its employees before the employee is allowed to go to work. And, in this case, the employee brought in a Eurocan Medical Return to Work Form that clearly outlined what the employee's restrictions were (was the supervisor suggesting he couldn't read? Or maybe he just didn't understand what he was reading?).

With the second example, the supervisor clearly stated to the employee what light duty was available, training and Job Safety Breakdown review. The employee told his doctor what the light duty was and what it would entail; probably one day worth of work sitting in an upstairs office. The doctor ordered the

employee off for at least 6 days (eventually it was extended to 14 days), possibly thinking that if there was only one day's worth of light duty then it wasn't appropriate and the employee should be off work. But then, someone told the WCB that the Company was prepared to meet the restrictions placed on the employee by the WCB medical adviser and thus the employee was, at first, denied benefits.

So, What's A Person To Do?

The best advice I can give when someone has been injured at work and is given the option of light duty over loss time is:

1. With a shop steward or safety captain present, meet with the supervisor and ascertain if light duty is available, get in writing just exactly what the job duties are, and if possible get a Job Task Analysis (how much bending, standing, walking, lifting, carrying, etc), and take that to your doctor so that you can review it with him.
2. If the doctor approves the light duty go back to work and, with a shop steward or safety captain, meet with the supervisor and review the restrictions/limitations with him. Make sure everyone understands what is being said.
3. Once you begin to do the light duty/modified duties, do your best not to re-injure yourself. Take the time needed to explore ways of doing the job so that you don't re-injure yourself. If you need help on a particular task, ask for it. If, once having tried your best to do the job, you are unable to accomplish a particular task, with a shop steward or safety captain, go and report it to the supervisor.
4. If, at some point, the supervisor says that he no longer has any light duty for you, with a shop steward or safety captain, get it in writing (so that the WCB can't claim later that the supervisor said there was). Don't go home yet and don't let the supervisor send you home. The Company is required by contract and by law to provide light duty work, short of an undue hardship; therefore, the Company must endure some hardship before denying you work. At this point, I would advise an individual to volunteer for the Rehabilitation and Re-Integration program and see what work is available there. Again, you want to have your union representative with you at all of the meetings.
5. At anytime the supervisor tries to give you different duties than what you and your physician

have discussed, you must get it in writing and review it with your doctor and get his approval **before** you commence those different duties.

At no time let the supervisor send you home without first reviewing the situation with him and a shop steward or safety captain. And, get it in writing that there is no more light duty or at least have a witness when the supervisor/Company makes the statement.

The WCB is now much more focused on the employability of an individual, and they do not want to pay loss time wage benefits any longer than they have to.

Also, the people at the WCB are using and interpreting the new legislation and rules in ways that seem hurtful and full of spite. They claim they are simply following law and policy. But, they are very quick to rule a person either plateaued or that they had reached a **medical maximum recovery**. They define that term in two ways; either "no other treatment would assist in medical recovery over the next 12 months" and/or "no changes in the next 12 months to be anticipated."

This allows the WCB to, one way or the other, conclude temporary, full time loss wage benefits and move an individual through to the next stage of benefits. If the individual returns to work the wage loss benefits are concluded and, in order to re-establish those benefits because of that previous injury, it requires a significant change or incident to reopen the claim.

If the person is unable to return to work then the claim gets moved to the Vocational Rehabilitation department – Voc Rehab.

Voc Rehab only pays for a few weeks to a few months and then, even if you can't find work (unavailability of work is not their problem) they will cut you off.

If it is determined that you have a permanent functional impairment you will also be sent to Disability Awards where they determine the extent of the impairment and then award a pension based on that. But, the amount of this award falls far short of wage loss benefits.

So, if you have the bad luck to be injured on the job, be very assertive (even aggressive) about your rights. Don't let the WCB add to your problems. Use the system to your benefit, not theirs, the Company's or the government.



Make The System Work For You

Something I've learnt over the course of my involvement with the Union is that some people are very good at working our insurance coverage system and some seem to have difficulty with it. Some people get cut off benefits for what appears to be no reason at all. One thing that I noticed was that people who were new to the system, that is they hadn't had to collect WCB or Weekly Indemnity benefits before, they would get bumped off benefits mainly because of a misunderstanding. Usually the misunderstanding would be corrected, but not until going through a whole lot of stress.

The fact is most people never need to collect WCB or Weekly Indemnity benefits. Most people are unfamiliar with exactly how the two insurances work (the first order would be that before you can collect benefits or make a claim you have to first visit a physician and get them to make out a report). Because of this unfamiliarity they make mistakes and sometimes those mistakes end up costing the individual money and, more importantly, causing unneeded stress. If you're not sure about something in regards to how these plans work please ask questions.

Another point of interest, our Weekly Indemnity – WI benefits are paid based on a person's inability to do their job because of an injury or disability. WI pay lasts for one year and then, if necessary, changes to Long Term Disability – LTD. The first 18 months on LTD are also paid on the basis of an individual's inability to do their own job but after 18 months it changes to the **"inability to perform the duties of any occupation for which he is qualified by education, training or experience."**

Therefore, a person doesn't have to accept light or modified duties in order to collect these benefits for at least 2 ½ years.

The WCB, however, looks at employability of the individual and if the employer is willing to offer work, modified or whatever, that fall within your restrictions (and assuming that the work is meaningful and not demeaning) then you will have to take that work or face being cutoff benefits.

If you are unfortunate and are cutoff WCB wage loss benefits and are still unable to return to work our WI/LTD benefits are supposed to pick up the coverage (that is as long as the WI insurance carrier doesn't agree with the WCB that you could be back at work). If you are fortunate and win your appeal with the WCB, you will have to pay back the benefits that the WI carrier paid you.

Remember, make the system work for you, insist on your rights, and make sure you seek help from your safety captain or union representative.

**To CEP Local 298**

Thank you so much for the excellent fruit basket after my surgery. It was very much appreciated.

Best Wishes
Mike Keating

To CEP Local 298

Thank you for the Bursary that you awarded me. It is very much appreciated. It will be very helpful in helping me achieve my goal.

Yours Truly
Angela Devries

To CEP Local 298:

Thank-you for the beautiful lily, it was a nice surprise to brighten our day.

Jeff, Kari & Brett Bjornson

To CEP Local 298 Members:

Thank you so very much for the beautiful (delicious) fruit basket. We are still enjoying it!
Having surgery isn't fun – but receiving the basket certainly made my day!

Sue Samuelson (Barry)

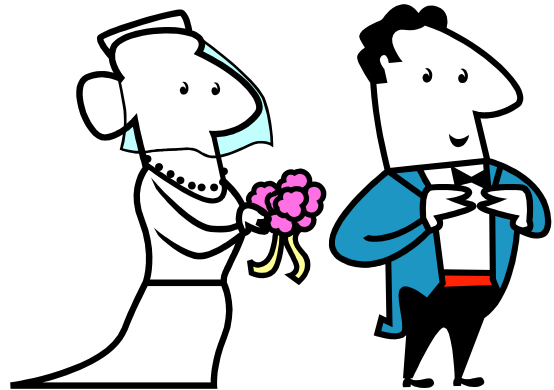
To the members of CEP Local 298:

We, the members of CEP 1129 send a big thank you for the support you have provided. Just the recognition is a positive re-enforcement tool to carry on with our battle. Again, we say "Thank You".

In solidarity, Dave Hart, President
Executive members: Leonard Pesonen, Gene McGuckin, Kelly Noakes, Herbert Cherrille, Ed Schmoeller

Just Married

The Newsletter is pleased to announce that Bruce Campbell was recently married in Revelstoke, B.C. The happy couple honeymooned in Ontario. (Unfortunately, this is all the information we have but will try to find out more. Editor.)

**Dear Brother and Sisters of Local 298:**

On behalf of the members from CEP Local 506 (Saint John, N.B.), I want to say thank you for your financial support during our labour dispute with Aliant.

The money will be used to assist our hardship situations and to help keep the solidarity strong within our local with support from our fellow Brothers and Sisters, we will win this strike.

Solidarity,
Ron Keith, President
Ron Dorcas, Secretary Treasurer

Dear Brothers and Sisters of Local 298:

On behalf of the striking members of Local 401 (Summerside, PEI) at Aliant, I would like to express my gratitude for the generous financial contribution, which will be of great assistance to our local.

Your support is very much appreciated by the striking members and your assistance will definitely help us in this dispute.

**In Solidarity,
Noel Pauley, President**

(Note: We sent the two Aliant locals \$100 each and Local 1129, \$350. Editor.)

To All CEP Local 298 & 1127 members:

A very large & Heartfelt thank you goes out to all of you for your help & kindness during this difficult time.

Pat Howes & family

To the Members of CEP Local 298:

I would like to express my gratitude to the members of Local 298 for their thoughtfulness in providing a card and fruit basket when I was hospitalized.

Seppo Suonpaa

(The following emails were sent between Jerry Stuebing to Doug Petersen. Editor.)

Subject: family?

(To Doug)

So, tell me, what happened to the "FAMILY" we are all supposed to be a part of?

I can not tell you how non family I felt at the memorial for Matti Vossi last Friday. A longtime employee of this company and not one single representative from management could bother to attend. Not to mention that most employees were not even informed of the service until after the fact. The notice appeared in our shop on Monday even though it was dated the 24th.

In my personal opinion, this is an absolutely disgusting way for you to treat FAMILY.

You have no right to wonder why there is such animosity towards this company when this kind of thing goes on.

YOU SHOULD BE EMBARRASSED AS HELL.

**G. Stuebing
Kitimat, B. C.**

Petersen, Doug wrote:

Hi Jerry,

It was unfortunate that the announcements regarding Matti Vossi's funeral arrangements were not posted on the bulletin boards in a timely manner. On Tuesday we put out an initial notice that Matti had

passed away. The funeral arrangements as we understand were not made until late Wednesday. We put the final notice bulletin out just prior to lunch on Thursday as the Funeral was to take place on Friday. In some areas the notices did not get posted on bulletin boards until the following Monday. The Company has developed a communication protocol that will endeavour to ensure timely communication of these matters in the future.

Regards, Doug Petersen

(And, Jerry's response)

Between you and me Doug, this is a crock.

I have not heard of one person who saw any notice about Matti before Monday of this week. Even Chris Howe who worked with Mattie for so many years, only got the word about the memorial 20 minutes before it started.

Jerry

(The rest of the email message, which dealt with issues other non Eurocan issues, has been edited out at Jerry's request. Editor.)

Tidbits

Internet/CALM

If the population of China started walking by you in single file the line would never end because of the rate of reproduction.

An average person in North America will spend an average of six months waiting at red lights during their lifetime.

The cruise liner Queen Elizabeth II moves only six inches for every gallon of diesel it burns.

In the last 4,000 years, no new animals have been domesticated.

An ostrich's eye is bigger than its brain.

Cats have more than 100 vocal sounds. Dogs only have about 10.

February 1865 is the only month in recorded history that didn't have a full moon.

Leonardo Da Vinci invented scissors.

Stewardesses is the longest word typed only with the left hand.

Lollipop is the longest word typed only with the right hand.

About 56 per cent of typing is done with your left hand.

"The quick brown fox jumps over the lazy dog" uses every letter of the alphabet.

There are two words in the English language that have all five vowels in order: abstemious and facetious.

Typewriter is the longest word that can be made using the letters only on one row of the keyboard.

Dreamt is the only English word that ends in the letters m and t.



(The following announcement appeared in the Northern Sentinel. Editor.)

George Edward McLeod

Born May 15, 1944 – died at home July 12, 2004

George is survived by his wife Pat; his children Andrew (Kim) Howes, daughter Belinda (Andy) Sanwald; and his grandchildren Kassandra and Dyllan Howes.

His is also survived by his brother Bob (Joyce) McLeod; sister Margaret (Beverly) McAfee and numerous nieces and nephews.

Cremation [was] followed by a private family remembrance. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the charity of your choice.

(George was a member of Local 298 since 1972. Most recently he worked at the Two Day Warehouse as a Powerlift Operator and previous to that he had been a Powerlift Operator at the Terminal Warehouse. Most of us know his wife, Pat, the Union hall secretary, and Andy, Eurocan electrician. His daughter Belinda works on a temporary basis in the offices at Eurocan and can quite often be seen at Stores. On behalf of the members of Local 298 we offer our sincerest condolences to Pat, Andy, Belinda and the rest of George's family. Editor.)

Horacio de Lima

Born in Portugal in the northern province of Minho in the town of Paredes do Coura. He took early retirement due to an illness sometime in the year 2000.

When his disease started to progress, he made the decision of selling the house on Omenica Street, in Kitimat, and moved back to Portugal, with his wife Laurinda. They ended up settling down in Amorosa, Viana do Castelo, again, in the northern province of Minho.

Sometime early this year his condition started to deteriorate, to the point of his wife being afraid of leaving him alone for fear of Horacio passing out for lack of insulin (which had already happened before).

Finally, he had to be hospitalized in Viana do Castelo, and after three days of trying to get his diabetes under control, the pancreas gave out and he passed away on July 1, 2004.

(Horacio was a longtime employee of Eurocan. Before retiring he had been a Shiploader for several years. Prior to that he had worked as a Powerlift Operator at the Terminal Warehouse. On behalf of the members of Local 298 we offer our sincerest condolences to the members of Horacio's family. Editor.)

FLA accredits Reebok

Update/Maquila Solidarity Network/CALM

The Fair Labor Association has accredited Reebok's program to implement its code of conduct in its footwear supply factories.

According to FLA President Aurret van Heerden, a review of Reebok's code compliance program indicates the company comprehensively monitored its footwear facilities and exceeds FLA requirements. "Reebok footwear has been a leader in providing opportunities to workers in China to participate in forms of worker representation," notes van Heerden.

Next year, the FLA will assess Reebok's compliance program for apparel products, as well the programs of other FLA participating companies. Under the FLA system, accreditation does not necessarily indicate that all company products are sweat-free.

Trading with the enemy

CCPA Monitor/CALM

Leading American corporations have set up foreign subsidiaries to enable them to get around a U.S. law that prohibits trading with the enemy.

As long as a subsidiary is run by non-Americans, a company can continue to trade with whatever countries they wish, including Cuba, Iran and Syria.

Big corporations such as Halliburton, General Electric and Conoco-Phillips have been quick to exploit the loophole.

Halliburton, for instance, has set up a wholly owned subsidiary called Halliburton Products and Services. Because it is registered in the Cayman Islands and its executives are not U.S. citizens, it is free to continue trading with Iran, one of the countries on the Bush administration's enemy list.

On The Line With Local 1129

Picket Line Scabs

Injunction

(Information release from Local 1129. Editor.)

Brothers, Sisters, and Local 1129 Supporters,

On Friday, August 6, CEP Local 1129 will be back in BC Supreme Court as NORampac seeks to have the June 8 court order (injunction) amended to further restrict picketing activities.

If management gets their way, the court would abolish our right to delay vehicles entering and leaving the millsite for two minutes. We would also be ordered not to "interfere" with any of the company's business relations or visitors and not to "trespass" on company property.

We are reliably informed that almost all of the rolls of product have been moved out of the mill warehouse. But the company has stated its intention to truck out raw material bales from the yard. There are thousands of tonnes of such material, but most of it is probably too rotten to be saleable.

In support of NORampac's new court action, they have put together affidavits from Mill Manager Richard Laramee, Production Manager George Dolmat, Controller Henry Slama, Shipping Supervisor Lorene Goodwin, and contract Tour Boss Rob Allen. There are also affidavits from a truck driver (P. Pangli), a computer technician, and a pest control service man.

Complaining about alleged events going back two months, these affidavits aim at convincing a Supreme Court justice to grant NORampac's desired amendment to the court order. Most of the alleged events cited are trivial, and several of them involve clear fabrications.

We will keep you posted on the results of the hearing.

Round two

Sisters, Brothers, and Supporters,

Local 1129 was successful August 6 in preventing any changes to the existing NORampac injunction against our picket line.

In the BC Supreme Court Mr. Justice Davies dismissed the NORampac application for such changes after a scheduled two-hour hearing went all day. He cited poor company evidence as part of the reason for his decision.

He also said that most alleged Union misconduct--if proven--would amount to breaches of the law, both criminal and civil. NORampac could deal with them through existing criminal and civil legal remedies, said Judge Davies.

NORampac had sought to get rid of the "two-minute rule," which allows Local 1129 picketers to delay vehicles entering and leaving the mill site for two minutes. But the company also wanted broad, sweeping bans on "interfering" with company business contacts, "interfering" with visitors to the mill site, "intimidating" anyone, and "trespassing" on company property.

To support their application for this increased "injunctive relief" the company had submitted seven affidavits sworn by management employees and by different scabs who have crossed our picket lines.

Going back to early June, the affidavits allege a dozen or so cases of union misconduct. These include throwing various substances at or onto or into vehicles, disabling a security camera, following scabs when they leave the mill and threatening them, spitting, name-calling, exceeding the two-minute delay period, and intimidating the 67-year-old mother of one of the scabs.



The choicest allegation--by Production Manager George Dolmat--is that CEP National Rep Randy Billow was being deliberately provocative when he was struck by a scab truck at the picket line. Dolmat swore that "*Because of the very careful manner in which I have observed the drivers to operate at the picket line I immediately had serious doubts that this was a correct statement(being hit by a truck) and suspected Randy Billow was trying to provoke an incident.*"

Union lawyer Dan Rogers called on Judge Davies to ignore or give little weight to much of the company's affidavit evidence.

He did this because much of that evidence consisted of people swearing that someone else had told them about an alleged event--hearsay. In some cases the affidavit swearer was two story tellers away from the supposed witness to the alleged event--double hearsay.

Also, affidavits gave testimony interpreting what was on various videotapes.

In the end the judge dismissed the NORampac application for changing the injunction.

He did, however, issue a stern warning to the union. He said the types of behaviour alleged by NORampac were "deplorable."

Further, Judge Davies said he was "satisfied" that picketers have engaged in intimidating conduct and illegal acts such as spitting, throwing objects and liquids at vehicles, and interfering with comings and goings through the picket line by flashing mirrors in drivers' eyes.

The union executive, he said, had failed its responsibility to discourage and control such activities.

But he concluded that this conduct, especially since it was disputed and not properly proven, was not "weighty" enough to merit the injunction amendments sought by NORampac.

In a final warning, however, Judge Davies said that further picket incidents--if they could be proven--might very well result in a stronger injunction against the union.

A written version of the judge's reasons for his ruling will be available in a few days and made available to the members.

Also, Justice Davies strongly suggested we draft guidelines for picket line conduct and notify the members about the Supreme Court's expectations. This is now being done by Local President Dave Hart and Bargaining Committee Chair Gene McGuckin, both of whom attended the hearing.

On the question of legal costs, which NORampac had asked the court to lay entirely on the union, Judge Davies reserved decision to "the next judge" who might hear a future application around the injunction.



CEP members ratify contract at Abitibi

Friday, July 16, 2004

Some 4,500 members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada have ratified a new five year contract with Abitibi Consolidated, the world's largest maker of newsprint.

Results of the week long vote in CEP Locals across Ontario, Quebec and Newfoundland were announced tonight (Friday) by the union's national president and chief negotiator, Brian Payne.

"This agreement will serve as a pattern for the rest of the pulp and paper industry across Eastern Canada," said Mr. Payne. "Our task now is to ensure that the same terms and conditions bargained at Abitibi are obtained for our other 25,000 members in the industry here."

The Abitibi contract calls for wage increases totaling 11%, improved vacations, and major improvements in health benefits and pensions, including provision for retirement at age 57 with full pension over the term of the agreement.

"This is a contract for our times," Mr. Payne said, "Our members clearly believe it serves their interests and we know that the rest of the industry can afford to accept it."

CEP leadership will work out details of a bargaining strategy for continuing the industry pattern negotiations in the coming weeks.

CEP is Canada's largest union in the forestry sector and has 150,000 members across the country.

Bringing Down the Government

(From <http://web.bcnewsgroup.com/portals-code/list.cgi?cat=48&paper=117&more=1>, posted June 23, 2004)

By RUSS FRANCIS

To hear a slew of Victoria trade unionists tell it, B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair blew it.

Last month, the labour movement was poised on the very edge of a province-wide general strike. With little prompting, City of Victoria workers walked off the job in sympathy with members of the Hospital Employees' Union, who took part in an illegal strike from April 30 - May 2. (The strike, which caused the

cancellation of about 6,000 surgeries, cost the union a \$150,000 fine.)

As well, ferry workers were ready to stop work, paralyzing crucial transportation links. Teachers, still angry at the government's clamping down on some of their hard-won freedoms, were entirely willing to skip school in solidarity.

To many, it appeared that public sympathy for the HEU was growing over the weekend of May 1-2.

A supposedly "leaked" plan of action from the federation laid out a range of job actions, escalating through the week of May 3.

In the view of some, had a general strike happened, it would have crystallized public opposition to the Liberals, opposition which had been steadily growing since it became apparent last year that premier Gordon Campbell's economic miracle was further out of reach than voters had been led to believe.

Facing overwhelming disruption across the province, Campbell would have had no choice but to resign. The subsequent election would return the New Democrats to power, and citizens would be full of joy once more.

As we now know, it never happened.

Late on Sunday, May 2, a deal was reached. While HEU wages and benefits were rolled back, fewer jobs would be contracted out, and the highly unpopular move to make the rollback retroactive was dropped. Instead of thousands of jobs disappearing, only 600 full-time equivalent jobs did.

But by reaching the deal, Sinclair sold out the trade union movement, according to speakers at last week's monthly meeting of the Victoria Labour Council.

"You seem to be reminding us of the ghost of Jack Munro's legacy," ferry worker Art Farquharson told Sinclair at the meeting. (Farquharson was referring to the events of 1983, when Munro, who was federation vice-president at the time, reached the so-called Kelowna Accord with Socred premier Bill Bennett. The agreement effectively ended the Solidarity protest movement, and for many trade unionists, Munro has yet to live down what they regard as his betrayal of their plans for a general strike.)

"You were the captain of the Titanic and you put us in front of an iceberg and then you let the ship sink and then you jumped," HEU member Sandra Giesbrecht told Sinclair "We're all mad in here still, Jim."

"We were at a general strike," furious HEU member Rob Johnson told Sinclair. "Everybody was ready to go!"

Johnson's anger wasn't mitigated by the fact that he himself recently lost his job at Royal Jubilee hospital, thanks to the government's privatization moves.

"We've got members losing jobs right and left," said Johnson. "You're sitting there, high and mighty, and doing nothing about it."

CUPE member Val Mieras called on Sinclair to resign over the HEU deal.

"Time to go!" shouted another audience member.

Sinclair rejected Mieras' request. "No, I will not be stepping down," he said.

"The priority was to save the jobs," Sinclair said to the meeting, noting that other labour officials were also involved in making the deal with the government.

"The objective of the leaders of the labour movement was not to bring down the government," Sinclair told the meeting. "The objective was to get the best deal possible for the HEU that was acceptable to the HEU."

Laura Neil, a member of both the HEU board of the labour council's executive, was the only speaker to defend Sinclair.

At the time of the strike, the government was preparing for mass arrests, she told the meeting. A Lower Mainland remand centre had been cleared out over the May 1 weekend, and the Canadian Forces were put on notice, Neil said.

Had the unions not accepted the deal, "43,000 members would have had their jobs potentially privatized."

Then, turning to Sinclair, Neil said: "Jim, it's not a perfect score, but I believe you did the best you could with what we had in front of us."

Last Wednesday, it was clear that not everybody agreed.

(From www.mytelus.com.)

New Skeena's bankruptcy protection extended

VANCOUVER (CP) - New Skeena Forest Products Ltd. has won further extension of its bankruptcy protection while it entertains yet another potential financial saviour.

Chief Justice Donald Brenner of B.C. Supreme Court gave New Skeena until Sept. 20 to work out a deal with Matlin Patterson Global Opportunities Fund of New York, a so-called vulture fund that specializes in distressed companies. Brenner was told Matlin Patterson has about \$3 billion of assets under management.

The privately held equity fund came into the picture last Thursday after talks between Toronto-based Woodbridge Co. and an unnamed forest company - widely believed to be Montreal-based Tembec - to bail out New Skeena fell apart.

Woodbridge, the private holding company of the billionaire Thomson family, had demanded an industry partner be involved in New Skeena's rescue.

"We just couldn't make it work on a deal basis," said New Skeena president Dan Veniez, who with partner George Petty bought the assets of Skeena Cellulose Inc. from the B.C. government for \$6 million in 2002.

"It was based on the economics."

Matlin Patterson needs six weeks to conduct its own due diligence on the assets of New Skeena and will advance up to \$1 million in debtor-in-possession financing to keep the company's lights on.

Veniez said Matlin Patterson has told New Skeena it would not require an industry partner as a condition of investing in the company.

"They have a fair amount of insight into the industry themselves and they'll now conduct their due diligence and see where it leads them," he said.

Veniez said he's not sure whether he and Petty, New Skeena's chairman, will continue to have an ownership stake in the restructured company.

"We'll see how that plays out," he said. "We're to a large extent starting from scratch."

Veniez had hoped to reopen New Skeena's Prince Rupert, B.C., pulp mill and its Terrace, B.C., lumber mill later this fall.

It's not clear what impact the arrival of a new player will have on the timetable.

New Skeena has been under court-ordered protection from creditors since last fall when northern B.C. municipalities tried to seize some of its assets to cover \$29 million in unpaid property taxes.

The communities reached a deal with New Skeena last month to restructure its tax arrears as part of its overall restructuring plan.

But the publicity surrounding the issue prompted Woodbridge to demand New Skeena get a forest industry partner as a condition of providing about \$70 million in financing.

Only one of New Skeena's unsecured creditors opposed the extension of bankruptcy protection: a law firm owed \$440,000 concerned the continued delays will erode the company's liquidation value if no restructuring deal is reached.

Another complication surfaced in court Monday when Local 404 of the Canadian Energy and Paperworkers asked Brenner to allow the union to file a \$3.5-million arbitration award with the court.

The union represents about 100 laid-off workers from Skeena's Carnaby sawmill in Hazelton, B.C.

Labour mediator Vince Ready ruled in June the mill was permanently closed and the employees entitled to their severance payouts.

The union representing idled Prince Rupert pulp mill workers then filed a similar motion asking the court to recognize a \$600,000 award.

But lawyers for New Skeena argued that filing the award with the court would in effect make the employees secured creditors.

Brenner said he would rule on the motion Tuesday.

New Skeena is appealing Ready's ruling that Carnaby had been permanently closed.

"We're going to consolidate our chipping operations at Carnaby and employ at least 30 people at the site," Veniez said.

New Skeena and its predecessor Skeena Cellulose has been in bankruptcy protection three times since 1997.

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(The follow up report of the court proceedings is from www.money.canoe.ca, with some editing)

Tue, August 10, 2004

Skeena unions lose court bid to entrench wage awards against insolvent firm

By **STEVE MERTL**

VANCOUVER (CP) - Two unions lost a bid Tuesday to become secured creditors if New Skeena Forest Products Ltd. goes into bankruptcy.

Chief Justice Donald Brenner of B.C. Supreme Court adjourned applications by Local 404 of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers and Local 4 of the Pulp and Paper Workers of Canada to lift the company's bankruptcy protection so two arbitration settlements could be filed with the court.

The company isn't contesting the awards although it is appealing Ready's original contention Carnaby is permanently shut down.

But Skeena's lawyers argued that filing the awards with the court would elevate the unions from unsecured to secured creditors in the event New Skeena fails to find a financial saviour and is forced into bankruptcy.

Under provincial labour legislation, the awards would then constitute a lien on the company and put the employees on the same footing or perhaps ahead of other secured creditors.

Brenner adjourned the applications, saying the unions' rights aren't prejudiced while the company continues efforts to restructure.

"Whatever rights exist are in place and there is nothing to prevent them from being determined at a later date," he said.

But lawyer Bill Skelly, acting for the PPWC, said there's nothing to stop the company from filing for

bankruptcy without notice if its latest bid to lure a new investor fails.

That would leave the Prince Rupert and Hazelton workers competing with other unsecured creditors for perhaps pennies on the dollar if New Skeena is liquidated, he said outside court.

GETTING READY TO RETIRE - DON'T DO IT YET

**By Dave Schaub
Pension Trustee
CEP Western Region Representative**

Are you planning for your retirement within the next year? Even if you're not, read on about your pension benefits.

As you may or may not be aware your trustees meet prior to the end of the calendar year to determine whether or not your pension benefits will be increased.

On July 19th, your pension trustees and plan professionals met to review the financial performance of the plan and therefore their ability to increase your pension benefit levels without creating an unfunded liability.

I am pleased to advise you that the trustees have approved the granting of the career update, indexing of the pre- January 1, 1997 service from \$47.06 to \$48.24 and granting of the indexing for retirees.

The point that will interest you the most is that the trustees, through their planning strategy have also been able to approve the movement of the 1.35% to 1.4%.

All improvements will become effective January 1, 2005 and without creating an unfunded liability. So if you are planning for your retirement hold on until after that date.

The granting of these improvements signifies that our strategy is working and if all of the factors continue, the improvements to the basic plan should be able to continue.

The increases in the post January 1, 1997 service will require further monitoring in each of the following years.

What this means is that since the new pension plan has been implemented the past service (pre-January 1, 1997) has increased by \$8.24 since January 1, 1997 and the post January 1, 1997 has increased from 1.3% to 1.4% of career earnings.

While you see these as immediate improvements there have been the amendments required under actuarial regulations and the improvement from the Life Guaranteed 5 years as

the Normal Form of benefit to the current Life Guaranteed 10 years as the Normal Form. This amendment has increased the benefits under the table by approximately 2.5% in most classifications.

As a final note, there will be Pension Seminars held in Parksville, Vancouver and Prince George during the first week in November so stay tuned for the exact dates.

Aliant Workers on the March

Halifax -- Thousands of Aliant workers and their allies marched through the downtown streets here yesterday in a massive show of solidarity as they head into their 9th week of strike against the phone company.

The 4,300 workers are members of our union in New Brunswick, PEI and Newfoundland and the Atlantic Communication and Technical Workers Union in Nova Scotia. CEP and ACTWU bargain together as a Council.

Atlantic Region administrative vice president Ervan Cronk, chief CEP negotiator at Aliant, and CEP media vice president Peter Murdoch were keynote speakers at the rally.

You can view a Global TV news report on the strike and rally by going to the CEP National web page.

Bell Workers Accept Contract

August 16, 2004

Some 7,000 technicians employed by Bell Canada have voted to accept the company's last offer for renewal of their collective agreement.

Members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada, the technicians work in dozens of locations across Ontario and Quebec. The vote was counted today (Aug. 16) by a committee selected by local unions.

"This vote to accept reflects the fact that the last company offer, which came following our strike deadline, was much improved," said CEP Ontario administrative vice president Joel Carr.

"Those improvements included the withdrawal by the company of concession demands, 12.1% wage increase over four years, the potential to negotiate further pension improvements during the life of the collective agreement, the guarantee of a defined benefit pension for existing employees, the reclassification of hundreds of employees and 200 new job openings and new hires," Mr. Carr said.

Surveys Exited?

By **ANDREW MacLEOD**

(Posted on *web.bcnewsgroup.com* on July 28, 2004.)

It has now been eight months since the provincial government released its last report on what happens to people after they leave welfare. Representatives of the Liberal government repeatedly justified cutting welfare rates and tightening eligibility requirements after they took office in June, 2001, by saying most people leave welfare for work and get more money working than they would on income assistance. The exit surveys were supposed to confirm that was happening. But with the human resources ministry no longer releasing the reports, some wonder whether the government didn't like what the surveyors found.

In April 2002, the government began contacting former income assistance recipients who had left the welfare rolls six months earlier, in September 2001. That first report, released in October, 2002, says the surveys would be done four times a year for three years. The human resources ministry released the results of five more surveys-the last came out in November, 2003-then stopped. According to the schedule published in the last report, two are now overdue. It doesn't look like the July edition will be published by the end of this month, either.

The last available exit survey looks only at people who were off welfare before January, 2003, so the government has apparently not followed through on its efforts to track people who've left welfare over the past 18 months.

During the April 1 debates on budget estimates, NDP MLA Joy MacPhail noted the surveys are missing. "In fact, the ministry has stopped giving its exit reports, as far as I know, about people moving from welfare to work," she told the house.

Human Resources minister Stan Hagen told her at the time that the ministry had done a seventh exit survey, but he didn't know if it was up on the ministry's website yet. "It will be posted," he promised. That was almost four months ago and it's still not available.

In an interview this week, human resources ministry spokesperson Richard Chambers contradicted Hagen's claim that a seventh survey had been done, saying, "There haven't been any done since November, so we haven't been able to publish any since then."

Hagen was unavailable to explain why no more surveys had been done, but Chambers says the agency that did the surveys, the Centre for Education Information Standards and Services (CEISS), closed in April.

CEISS was an arm's-length government agency that mainly served the advanced education ministry. "In my view," says Alan Rycroft, a former communications consultant for CEISS, in an e-mail to Monday, "it is most unfortunate that this government disbanded the talented group of people at CEISS, where synergies led to excellent results and cost efficiencies for the entire B.C. education system."

When CEISS closed, its services were transferred to various other agencies. According to a list published on the advanced education ministry's website, BC Stats picked up the "BC College and Institute Student Outcomes Project," for instance. The advanced education ministry took on the "Post-Secondary Central Data Warehouse." The Human Resources Database, which tracks information about people working in B.C.'s public university colleges, colleges and institutes, is now administered by the Post-Secondary Employers' Association.

The human resources ministry's exit surveys aren't included in the list on the website. Jacqui Stewart, the director of the advanced education ministry's planning and data management branch, says, "They had to wind up and turn it back to the entity they were working with . . . They would have given everything that was needed back to the ministry."

An employee in the human resources ministry's research and economic analysis branch says that branch never had anything to do with the exit surveys. They were, the employee says, a project belonging to the communications department, which takes us back through the ministry to Chambers.

"The plan is we want to continue to track and have available research to us on what happens when people leave income assistance," Chambers says. "When CEISS ceased to be able to provide the service to us we wanted to take time to look at the models and see what sort of method was appropriate for us."

He couldn't say how long it would take to start doing the exit surveys again, or to put a new system in place. "I don't have a time frame for that," says Chambers. "In due course a decision will be made."

The government is right to drop the exit surveys, says David Schreck, a former NDP MLA and party strategist. "They were only used for political purposes," he says. "Nobody would consider them serious work . . . They were a complete and total waste of money."

The biggest problem with the surveys is they relied on phone interviews. The surveyors found that when they attempted to contact the people at the same phone numbers they'd had when they were on welfare, more than one out of every three numbers was now out of service. In addition, many people were otherwise unavailable or refused to be

interviewed. The surveyors missed more than 35 percent of the people for whom they were looking.

The government should acknowledge the problems with the surveys, Schreck says, "then undertake to do some serious research."

Meanwhile, the Liberals keep insisting most people leave welfare for work. "There are now nearly 90,000 fewer British Columbians dependent on income assistance because they are benefiting from government's emphasis on employment," said Hagen during the budget estimates debate. That number is down from about 250,000 when the Liberals took office. Premier Gordon Campbell made the same assertion on June 10 in Vancouver at the Metropolitan Hotel on Howe Street, adding that two-thirds of the people who've left welfare are working.

Neither Hagen nor Campbell said where he was getting the statistics, but human resources spokesperson Chambers says, "They're basing it on projections from those exit surveys."

Says Schreck, "You repeat a lie often enough and some people will believe it." M The government found it hard to locate former welfare recipients--and now the welfare exit surveys are missing too

Clocks

A B.C. man died and went to heaven. As he stood in front of St. Peter at the Pearly Gates, he saw a huge wall of clocks behind him.

He asked, "What are all those clocks?"

St. Peter answered, "Those are Lie-Clocks. Everyone on Earth has a Lie-Clock. Every time you lie, the hands on your clock will move."

"Oh," said the man, "whose clock is that?"

"That's Mother Teresa's. The hands have never moved, indicating that she never told a lie."

"Incredible," said the man. "And whose clock is that one?"

St. Peter responded, "That's Abraham Lincoln's clock. The hands have moved twice, telling us that Abe told only two lies in his entire life."

"Where's Gordon Campbell's clock", asked the man.

"The Premier's clock is in God's office. He's using it as a ceiling fan."

Notice

For people wanting assistance with their WCB claims, Don Klie will be at the Union Hall all day most Fridays. For the weeks that the newsletter is published he will be at the Union Hall all day Wednesday. To ensure availability please call the Union Hall in advance - 632-3231 or call his cell 632-1352.

Employee and Family Assistance Program - EFAP

The services of professional counselors are available to all employees of Eurocan through the **EFAP**. Anyone needing psychological or psychiatric counseling, financial counseling or help in any matter can contact the offices of Wilson Banwell in Vancouver, toll free at **1-800-663-1142**.

The Kitimat office is located in Century House at #330 370 City Centre and the phone number is **250-632-5564**.

There is no charge for these services and all sessions are strictly confidential.

If you want advice about these services you can contact them directly or talk to one of our **EFAP** union representatives: Gary Ewanski, Mary Murphy or Pete G. King (pipefitter).

Adages

Internet/CALM

A conscience is what hurts when all your other parts are feeling good.

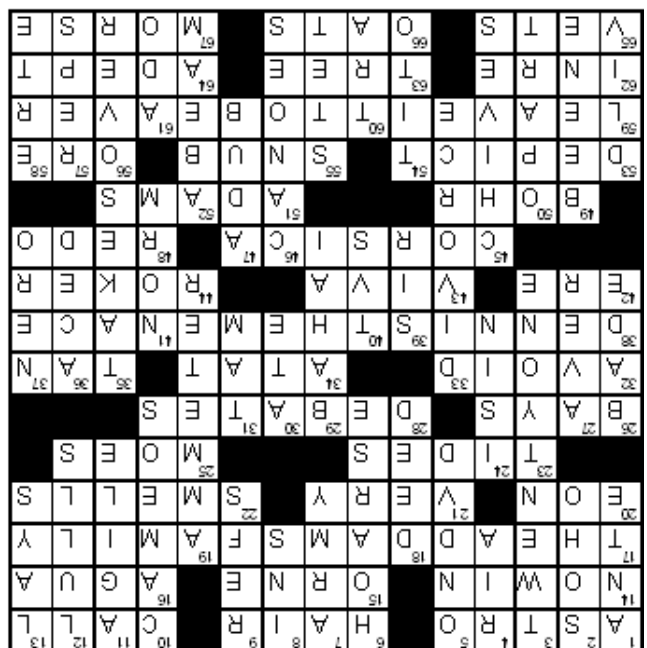
The faintest ink is more powerful than the strongest memory.

There is always some madness in love. However, there is always some reason in madness.

You can only go as far as you push.

There's no place like home.com.

EDITED BY TIMOTHY E. PARKER
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By Anita Ward
"CLASSIC"

“CLASSIC!” By Anita Ward — Edited By Timothy E. Parker

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