



# Local 298 Newsletter

Issue #5 Volume 8

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May 2004

Health Care Cuts and Privatization + Six Bucks Sucks + Cuts to Pharmacare + Legislated Strike-Breaking + Torn-Up Labour Contracts + Public School Cuts + Single Mothers Cut Off Welfare + Legal Aid Cuts + Massive Layoffs

Increased User Fees + Increased Sales Tax + Massive Tax Cuts  
for Wealthy & Corporations + Cuts to Lesbian & Gay Youth Groups

## Prepare the General Strike!

Post-Secondary Tuition Hikes + Labour Code Revisions + Small  
Communities Devastated + Pollution Regs Slashed + Much More

Disabled Benefits Cut + Privatizing BC Hydro + Courthouses Closed + Cuts to Women's Centres + Racist Treaty  
Referendum + Cuts to Ombudsman, Human Rights Commission, Child Advocate + Medical Premiums Hiked

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## Editorial

**KILL BILL 37**

By Don Klie

Since 2001 when the Liberals formed the provincial government and started to bring in legislation that tore up union contracts and change all of the benefits that we as a society had put in place several people and groups had been waiting for the right time to call a protest general strike. The Campbell government believes that their overwhelming win at the polls gave them justification to implement any legislation or program that they deemed necessary.

As law-abiding citizens those of us who hadn't supported the Liberals (and that name is just a "flag of convenience" because they are the most right wing government in Canada) went along with everyday life. Labour organized several protest rallies. Other groups did their fair share as well (remember the privatization of the Coquihalla).

Several people started to prepare for a general strike. The BC Federation would not hear of it. I believe the reason given was what Dave Coles told us at one of our meetings held at our union hall sometime in 2002 – the membership doesn't want a general strike.

I must admit there weren't a lot of our members getting vocal or involved in demonstrations or demanding that we shut the province down.

Not until the HEU situation presented itself.

Up until that time organized labour had followed a plan to organize locally. Raise awareness locally, get involved locally and basically get ready for the next election.

But what happens in the meantime?

One of the first things that the Campbell government did was break the HEU contract by ripping out the contracting out protection clauses of their agreement. That allowed for thousands to be laid-off and replaced with private contract firms, all paying lower wages and benefits at the same time making a profit. If and when a labour friendly government (the NDP?) gets back into power do you think there will be enough money in the budget to cancel all those contractor contracts and bring back those well-paid union workers?

Will the new government simply be able to raise the taxes that were cut when the Liberal government came to power? What about all the debt that the Liberals have created by their cutting of taxes? What about all the projects that they have started (2010 Olympics, road construction, etc)?

There won't be any extra money around to reinstate all of the people, benefits or programs that

were dropped or reverse all of the damage the Liberals have wrought.

So, there were several people who believed that the government had to have its hands slapped. A general strike would send the message that you can only push us so far and then we won't take anymore.

But, a general strike is not an easy thing to pull off. It requires planning, strategy and an issue that is easy for everyone to rally around.

Can you imagine everyone going on strike because the government changed apprenticeship and trades training and qualifications? Or how about the changes to the WCB (how many people have actually had to collect WCB benefits)? Who wants to go on strike to reverse the cuts made to those people on welfare?

Not very sexy. Not very inspiring. Who cares?

But then along came the hospital workers' situation. The whole province was watching; hell, the whole country was watching. The issue was simple – repeal Bill 37 (**KILL BILL 37**). That's all that was needed. Once the government repealed the bill a mediator/arbitrator would be appointed and in the end the hospital workers wouldn't like the contract but at least they could live with it. The government would know that they couldn't continue to abuse workers. There would be peace in lotus land.

But in order for that scenario to play out, to get the government to back down, a general strike was necessary. The resolve to the general strike would be the repeal of Bill 37 and the lifting of any fines or legal sanctions imposed. The government could simply legislate all of that away or, of course, none of us would go back to work.

How long would the strike last no one knows. Campbell is stubborn and probably a bit stupid. How bad would the province be battered? Who would be blamed for the result?

But the support was there. I have never seen so many people keen to take on the government, to participate in a general strike. Union members were calling me to ask what they could do for the hospital workers. People were ready to walk. The teachers and other government workers were ready to go because they know they will be next and maybe the stars won't line up quite as well.

After the settlement was reached people at work could only shake their heads and wonder why labour didn't join together to shake this government to the core. Most thought the deal was still too bad. It appeared very little had been accomplished. The troops were demoralized. The NDP leader didn't help things by virtually agreeing to all that was contained in Bill 37.

Further on in this newsletter there are articles that explain the positions of both sides of the argument – should there have been a general strike or not. I will let you decide for yourself.

In the meantime keep the faith.

**Solidarity forever, Don Klie**

## Executive Officers For 2004

		<u>Tel #</u>	<u>Work Local</u>	<u>Job Title</u>
<b>President</b>	Don Klie <b>home</b> - 632-7571 <b>cell</b> - 632-1352 <b>work</b> - 2367			Pipefitter
<b>1<sup>st</sup> Vice President</b>	Frank Verde Sr.	632-2924	2213	Shiploader/Labourer
<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President</b>	Jack McCamy	632-5658	3513	Spare Board
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Mary Murphy	632-5201	3451 or 2568	First Aid/Stores
<b>Recording Secretary</b>	Gary Ewanski	632-2743	2213 or 3519	Shiploader/Labourer
<b>Inside Guard</b>	Andy Sanwald	632-4131	3510	Spareboard
<b>Outside Guard</b>	Pablito Mendoza	639-9187	3466	Instrument Mechanic
<b>Trustees</b>	Gary Drake 3yr	632-2905		Lubrication Mechanic
<b>Trustees</b>	Ed Da Costa 2yr	632-7796	2356	Raw Materials
<b>Trustees</b>	Dan Belleville 1yr	632-5935	2367	Pipefitter
<b>Chief Shop Steward</b>	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  
 Steve Welsh 2yr

**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

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

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!

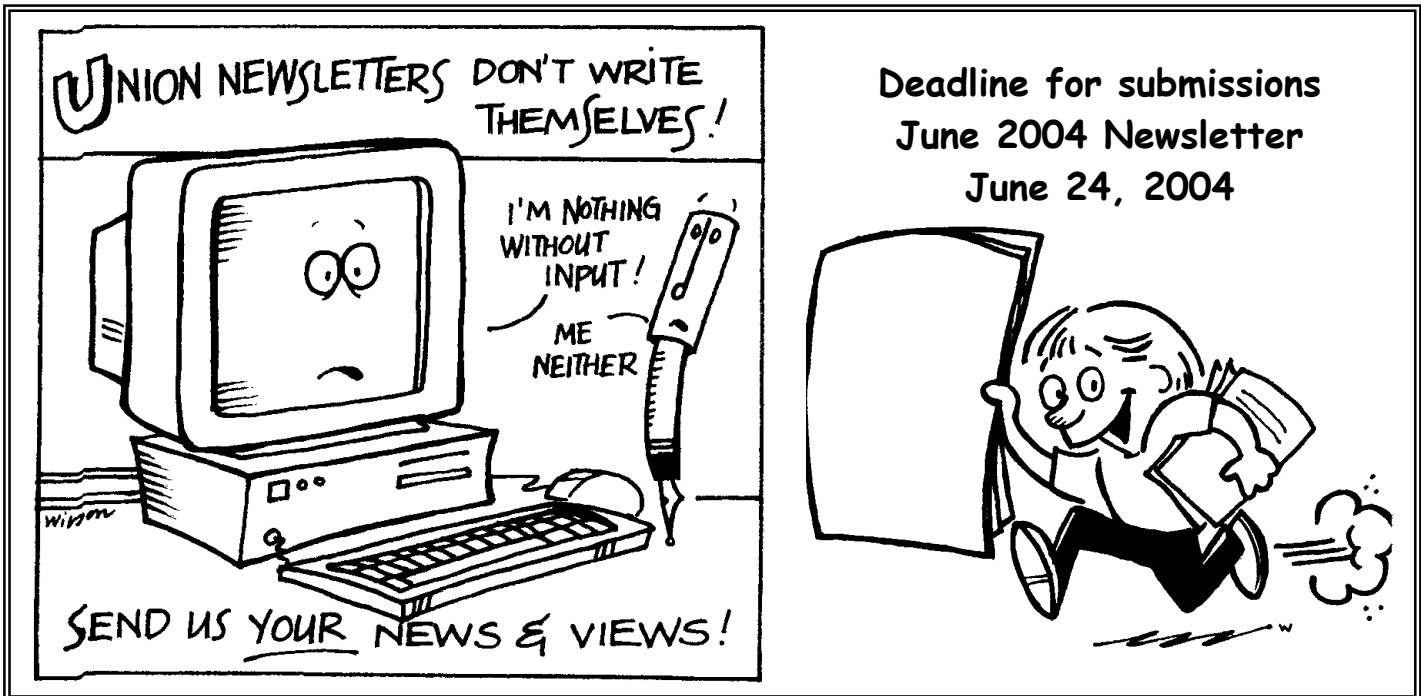
This newsletter is solely for the entertainment and information of the members of CEP Local 298.

### Union Office Hours:

9:00 am to 5:00 PM  
Monday to Thursday  
Closed Friday, Saturday  
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



## President's Report

## Caucus Sends Clear Message To Industry – The Union Will Support Its Members In Negotiations

By Don Klie

### Caucus Meeting Report – April 19 and 20, 2004

Items on the agenda for discussion were Local Reports, Bargaining Reports, Commitment to Employment reports, Apprenticeship and trades, Safety Standards Pilot Project, Political Action, Life Insurance Report, Local 1129 Strike Support, Safety Conference Report, Pulp/Paper Trigger Rules, IWA Relationship.

A few of the highlights from Local Reports –

1. **CEP Local 514, Port Alice/Doman** will be shutdown on May 11, 2004 by court order. For several years members of Local 514 have experienced several short-term layoffs. However, over the past 8 months the mill has only operated 60 days. The parent company, Doman, is under bankruptcy protection and the court is now beginning to take action to address all of the creditors claims. Obviously on the list of creditors will be the members of Local 514 for such things as vacation benefits, pension contributions, severance pay, etc. Employees on LTD or who have retired are not affected however retirees still receiving bridging might be adversely affected. Local 514 and the CEP have put together a letter writing campaign that they want as many of our members and others to sign and send it to Premier Campbell with copies to Roger Harris (our local MLA) and John Duncan (MP for Vancouver Island North). *(A copy of the letter and explanation are included in this newsletter, Editor.)*
2. **CEP Local 603, Prince George Northwood/Canfor** had a number of similarities to our mill. They have recently announced a posting for 4 apprenticeships, one each for pipefitter, millwright, electrician and instrumentation. They have recently hired one each welder, instrument mechanic and electrician. They too have realigned the Recaust area and combined it with the Water Treatment area and, wait for it, cut 8 jobs in the process. Sound familiar? Canfor has embarked on an Asset Management Initiative Program and the union has agreed to participate. It involves workshops and decision-making sessions to improve the planning of jobs, safety and how repairs are made. It involves both maintenance and operations departments.
3. **CEP Local 1115, Quesnel/International Paper** – the Company is trying to institute dual trades through the practice of allowing journeymen to apply for apprenticeships in other trades, which a number of other Locals including our Local allow for. (To date in our mill there has only been one person who has actually served two apprenticeships while working at Eurocan. A few Locals only allow a person to take one apprenticeship while working at the mill. Our Company has hired several individuals who have qualifications in two trades.) The position of the caucus is that our contract doesn't allow for dual-trades positions; that is, when a person is hired on or in a particular trade even though they might have the second ticket they are employed only in that particular trade. However, with flexibility an individual will "...safely utilize all of their existing skills and maximize their productivity and use new skills to enhance their effectiveness." Local 1115 is currently negotiating a 10-hour shift agreement for the maintenance department while at the same time trying to negotiate a 37 ½ hour reduced workweek under the Commitment to Employment Letter of Understanding that was part of the pattern agreement.
4. **CEP Local 1119, Howe Sound/Port Melon** reported on the Equivalent Standards Agreement Pilot Project the Company has with the government *(more information on that at the end of this article)*. They noted that they currently have 24 apprentices. Their mill will not be hiring any summer students this year.



5. **CEP Local 1123, Elk Falls/Norske** noted that their Local is currently working on a letter of understanding that would see vibration analysis become a union position (in our mill there are currently two union members doing this job and one staff; in the past there were only two staff people doing this job with the millwrights doing some of the data/readings collection). Their mill will be hiring 50 summer students and the Local is hopeful that in September the mill will be hiring more full-time employees to make up the shortfall in manning that many areas of the mill are currently experiencing. Local 1123 currently has 59 apprentices with 20 more starting sometime this month.
6. **CEP Local 1133, Prince George Pulp and Paper/Canfor** noted that due to bearing failures resulting in rolls falling into the basement of the paper machine dryer section their members have been refusing to enter while the machines were going. The WCB has been called in to investigate the situation and the Local is waiting for a report to be issued. Many in the Local are adamant that they will not go into the basement of the dryer section while the machine is running regardless of what the WCB rules.
7. **CEP Local 789, Annacis Island, Vancouver/Domtar** (also known as DUMtar) are still getting settled after their almost 2 ½ month strike. During the strike the Company notified the Union that it was permanently shutting down one of their paper machines. So far 41 jobs have been axed with 30 people voluntarily taking the severance package. 20 jobs have been spared so far. Several staff have been let go, so much so that there apparently are no staff available do work out the shift schedules. Many employees are not being informed of where or when to report for work (sounds very familiar to what we experienced here. You would think that the way the companies coordinated their wage negotiations that they would also talk about the negative side affects of laying off too many people and the lessons they learnt from it. Maybe they're not willing to discuss their mistakes with others, just like they try to hide their mistakes here). It was also noted that they got what is referred to as the Scott Paper trigger in regards to the early bridging benefit which is basically no trigger at all meaning that bridging starts at 60 (*it might have something to do with wanting to encourage their older employees to retire sooner so that they can hire younger employees or so that they don't have to cut/layoff any more they the Company wants; or it could mean they don't want to have to continue to pay*

*the \$500 on a quarterly basis when the price trigger kicks in).*

8. **CEP Local 855, Hinton, Alberta/International Paper/Weldwood** reported that their negotiations were not going well so much so that many members on the floor are so discussed that they are refusing to work overtime. It was noted that there are around 100 grievances going through the process and that 4 are currently at arbitration. They stated that they have twice filed unfair labour practices in recent months against the Company. The Company gave notice that they would no longer be paying special fees when contractors were on site (similar to our Code of Ethics). The Company was also re-organizing/re-designing the fibre-line; turning 8 job classifications into 3 and providing "super rates" for the three jobs and implementing job rotation – a few weeks on each job (apparently the intent is to "utilize" the available people to do whatever job the Company wants and possibly in the future reduce jobs; our Company might be looking at the same thing with Raw Materials).



9. **CEP Local 1129, Burnaby/NORampac** are on strike. They reported that the Company has been very aggressive in managing sick and injured employees' claims and have taken any opportunity to either get the employee back to work or cut off benefits. At one time the Union was having some success with arranging accommodations for disabled members but most recently the Company has just been saying "nothing is available" and terminating the

employee. Local 1129 has 8 grievances going to arbitration and financially it is a quite a burden for a Local with only about 100 hundred dues paying members. Contracting out has gotten out of control with the Company announcing in January that the past practice of notification was null and void.

## Bargaining Report

On the bargaining front there are only two Locals that have yet to conclude negotiations, Local 1129 and Local 855. The two companies involved have tried very hard to get their unions to accept some form of cost sharing with health and welfare coverage and other concessions. Both companies apparently want to break the pattern and possibly set one for their other mills back east and down south. "NOrampac" is similar to "DUMtar", both being companies from back east. International Paper is headquartered in the states and is relatively new to B.C. and Alberta and dealing with the Pulp and Paper Caucus. Both of the Locals were outside caucus prior to 1994 but since pattern bargaining has been in place both have participated in caucus meetings. Local 1129 has officially become part of caucus even though their contract is slightly different than that of the original caucus members. Local 855's contract is significantly different in a few areas and while they are not officially members of caucus they always participate in the meetings and in any financial support that was decided on, especially the two Fletcher Challenge strikes and the most recent situation at Local 789. Also, Local 855 is trying to achieve a no concessions agreement with improvements in line with the pattern agreement. The caucus voted to provide extra financial support to the sum of \$150 per week per member on strike for both Locals (although Local 855 has yet to go out). Another motion carried to also help re-pay the health and welfare benefits.



Local 789 commented that they were surprised when "DUMtar" agreed to settle the strike. They believed that the extra strike support really helped both with the morale of the members and it sent a message to "DUMtar" that the caucus members were going to support them for as long as needed. Local 789 said they believed the employer got discouraged everyday going through the picket line seeing the members having such a good time on the line – there were pancake breakfasts, parties on a regular basis, and a New Year's Eve party on the picket line fireworks and all.

As an aside, Mike Fenton, President of Local 789 talked to me privately to explain that the reason his Local didn't send us any financial assistance during the strike (remember some of our members raised that as an issue during our discussions on the motion to participate in the supplemental strike support for Local 789). It was because by the time they got a chance to vote on the issue (membership meetings don't occur during the summer months) and making out the cheque we were already back at work and telling all the Locals to forward the money directly to Local 404 at the Carnaby mill and so that is what they did.

## Commitment to Employment

The pattern agreement contained a Letter of Understanding regarding Commitment to Employment and both sides agreed to discuss means to preserve and enhance employment during the term of the Agreement. Committees were to have been formed and recommendations made by March 31, 2004. By and large most of the locals and companies have not made any progress. Most employers have done the same as our, that is, they have announced that they want to reduce manning. This at a time when all of the companies know that over the next 5 to 10 years close to half of their workforce will become eligible for full retirement. It will take all of that time and possibly more for the companies to man up and properly train the replacement workforce. A few of the locals have indicated that they are trying to negotiate a shorter workweek with the employer.

## Safety Conference Report

The conference is tentatively scheduled for November 7-9, 2004. The first day of the conference will be for all Western Region CEP locals from all sectors. This will be the first time for an all sector safety conference. The second two days will include the employers. Suncor, Sasktel and Canwest have also agreed to participate and the pulp and paper employers have agreed to this format. Most knowledgeable caucus members agreed and advised

the organizing committee to allow for at least two days for the Union-only part of the conference as past conferences have taken up two days. And, with the addition of several more locals from different industries being involved there will definitely be a need for more time. There was a complaint from the companies that last year's conference didn't give them anything to take away from the conference (I disagree). Canfor, as a company has its own sector safety conference and had almost pulled out of participating in this conference.

## Pulp and Paper Trigger Rules

Recent trends in the pulp and paper markets are looking good for the price trigger to kick in the near future. Each time the price trigger is paid it will be put into a trust fund setup by the company. The first three trigger payments – set to trigger for each quarter that the RISI Eastern US Benchmark NBSK price averages over US\$700MT – will be earmarked to pay for one year of bridging for employees who retire early at the age of 60. The rest of the time the money will be in the hands of each local to be used for improving benefits of active or retired employees. It has been calculated that one hit of the price trigger would fund the bridging payments for 5-10 years depending on the number of retirees collecting. The caucus has agreed that the benefit will be retroactive to all employees who were eligible to vote on the contract. That is, an employee who was employed as of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2004 and retired during his 60<sup>th</sup> year would be entitled to receive the appropriate bridging payments retroactively once the first price trigger pays.

## Political Action

Mike Fenton, President of Local 789 is the CEP's representative on the CLC's campaign to focus and raise awareness among union members and the public at large for the NDP. Obviously in B.C. this campaign is most urgent with all of the destructive legislation the Liberals have wrought. And with a federal election about to be called the NDP will be looking for support. Over the past few elections, both federally and provincially the unions' support for the NDP has been severally eroded, some of it justifiably so. (In B.C. the NDP did little to keep the confidence of union members, that is, until it is compared with the Liberal government's performance.) However, it is no sure thing that the B.C. Liberals will be replaced come next May. It is paramount that unions start now to organize the vote and join local NDP riding associations so that the NDP's message will be more of the union's message than it has in the past.

## Disability Management

Our Local has been one of the few locals to actually go through the Consensus Based Disability Management Audit. The following was the report submitted to caucus.

*On the Disability Management front the Company recently brought in Diversified Rehabilitation Management, a company sponsored by NIDMAR to perform a Consensus Based Disability Management Audit (CBDMA). This is in conjunction with a WCB program to evaluate a company's Disability Management program. If a company's program meets a certain standard the company will receive a 10% reduction in their WCB premiums. We have been told the reason behind this initiative is the result of government legislation to cut back on the WCB Vocational Rehabilitation (Voc Rehab) program. The WCB is unable to provide the level of coverage that they did in the past and therefore are cutting people off Voc Rehab after 12 weeks. The negative consequences for those who will be cut off benefits have been recognized by the WCB and so they are trying to encourage the companies to pick up the ball and provide this service in-house.*

*The Union and Company had equal representation in the audit. Some of the things learned in the audit were:*

1. *Sharing of information regarding the costs of benefits like WCB premiums and Weekly Indemnity premium versus the cost of bringing injured and disabled workers back into the work place is currently not happening.*
2. *We have good policies in place but no procedures written down as to how the policies are to be implemented.*
3. *Our program is based on the work of two people; one from the company and one from the union and if either one is not available there are no people ready to provide backup.*

*As always an audit provides a learning opportunity for those involved. This program also establishes a benchmark that the Company and Union can strive for. As of yet the final report has not been received but our committee members believe it was a good experience to participate in.*

It was reported at caucus that the private insurance companies are trying to force individuals to go back to work. Usually this takes the form of the insurance company exploring if the company has any light duty available. If light duty is available they



contact the individual and tell them that they will be cut off benefits, forcing the individual back to work. Light duty will no longer be an option it will be mandatory. It is the Union's position that the insurance company cannot force anyone back to work onto light duty. Weekly Indemnity is payable for as long as an individual is unable to perform the duties of his own occupation up to one year. LTD is payable for the first 18 months as long as an employee is unable to perform the duties of his own occupation and thereafter his inability to perform the duties of any occupation for which he is qualified by education, training or experience. There is no qualification for denying benefits based on the availability of light duty and whether or not an individual volunteers for it.

CEP Local 10B, Kamloops/Weyerhaeuser reported that they have refused to participate in the audit. The Company tried to do the audit around the time of negotiations, which were difficult, at the same time there were other Company-caused difficulties with the disability program.



“There’s nothing wrong with you...  
You can go back to work tomorrow.”

### **BC Federation President – Jim Sinclair**

Sinclair gave a short speech and took questions from the floor. He stated in his speech that we need to do more work to unionize the labour force in BC. Basically, we are losing ground. As the workforce expands our numbers remain constant but the percentage of unionized workers is going down. He attributed some of this directly to the changed

legislation making it more difficult to unionize and allowing companies more leeway to interfere with the organizing process. Before the Liberals were elected there was a net gain of 10,000 new union members a year but since 2001 the number being organized are only equal to the number decertifying. The BC Fed will be putting extra effort into both upcoming federal and provincial elections. The Fed wants to put \$2 per member per year into the campaign to support the NDP.

Before leaving Sinclair put in a pitch for us to help the HEU members should they be forced to go on strike. It was assumed the government would be intervening and there needed to be a show of overwhelming public support for the hospital workers (*more on that later*).

### **IWA Raid Against HEU**

While the HEU were under attack from government legislation and layoffs of hundreds of workers and the contracting of their jobs the IWA made their move. The IWA claim that they are sympathetic to the HEU's plight but someone has to organize those workers. Instead of allowing the HEU the opportunity to unionize the new contractors' workers the IWA went out and signed “yellow dog” agreements with the prospective contractor companies before any employees were hired. This type of arrangement has been used before by so-called “rat unions” like the Christian Labour Association of Canada. It was noted that the CEP has been holding joint public meetings with various IWA leaders to raise awareness regarding forest industry issues. There was a consensus at caucus that while there might be various IWA members and locals that are against the IWA's move into HEU territory our union cannot be seen to be working with “the devil”. Dave Coles indicated that after an already planned town meeting in Campbell River involving the IWA he would no longer do any joint ventures with the IWA until this current situation (raiding of HEU jobs) is resolved. Earlier this year the CEP submitted proposal to the IWA for a merger. The IWA has chosen to try to merge with the United Steelworkers of America. There are a number of IWA members and Locals that oppose this merger. The CEP is still exploring a merger with the IWA or some of its Locals.

### **Equivalent Safety Standards Act**

The Equivalent Safety Standards Act has replaced all Safety Acts in regards to Elevating Devices, Gas, Electrical and Boiler Codes. Also, all compulsory trade legislation has been abolished and replaced by this act. Everything will now be based on safety. Just exactly what safety standards are being

used I'm not sure. However, it will probably be along the lines of what the WCB has done with its accident prevention regulations; that is, national or American standards (e.g.: CSA, ANSI, ASME, etc.) will apply. Companies will be responsible for doing the right thing and should they fail then supposedly there will be a fine to pay. In the meantime, workers and the public will just have to trust industry and business to do the right thing, and hope they aren't injured or maimed.

Apparently, a pilot project on just how things will change is being tried at Howe Sound Pulp and Paper. The B.C. government and the Pulp and Paper Industry made the selection of Howe Sound. The union was reluctant to be involved in the project but decided to join in order to receive information about the project and to try to help steer it in a direction that meets our needs and concerns. To date the government representative responsible for the pilot project, Bob Wing, has not been very forthcoming with any information or requesting opinions and direction from the Union.

This initiative has the potential to affect how apprenticeship training and competency standards are determined. In last months' Newsletter the article on apprenticeship training by Dennis Urbanowski outlined some of the directions the government is going in and our concerns with those changes. Bob Wing, Co-chair of Heavy Industry Trades Advisory (HITAC), is in charge of the Pilot Project. The CEP will be trying to organize like-minded employers, as per the Letter of Understanding on Trades Qualifications signed in the last round of negotiations, to make sure whatever changes are made in the future are consistent with maintaining the principles of certified trades training in B.C. and the opportunity for workers to participate in the inter-provincial qualifications examinations.

## Living Benefit Provision

*(The following information was provided by Dave Schaub, CEP National Representative, and has been edited to provide information relevant to our insurance carrier, Maritime Life. Should anyone wish to read the entire document, which provides information regarding the two other insurance carriers most commonly used by Pulp and Paper industry, please contact the Editor.)*

A member of a CEP Local Union was determined by his medical practitioner to be terminally ill and as a result would be incurring significant expenses outside of those provided under the Medical Services Plan Of B.C. and Extended Health Benefits and would not have the resources to cover these expenses. Following some information

received, an inquiry was made of Great West Life, the Plan Carrier, to determine if the member would be entitled to a portion of his basic Life Insurance coverage as part of a "Living Benefit Provision". I was advised that this benefit was available under the application of specific conditions and subsequently inquired with two major carriers, Sun Life and Maritime Life to determine if this same benefit was available. I was advised that the benefit was also available from these carriers and most other carriers. The following outlines the specific provisions of the carriers and the Insurance Industry in general that must be met for the Living Benefit:

### Maritime Life

- A Plan Member can apply through their employer for a Living Benefit of 50% of the Basic Life Coverage up to a maximum of \$50,000.00 (*Sun Life allows for \$100,000*)
- The employee's life expectancy is deemed to be twelve (12) months or less (*Sun Life and Great West allow for 24 months*) and is supported by documentation from the employee's attending physician
- A Plan Member would be required to complete and submit a Long Term Disability Form along with the appropriate supporting medical documentation from the employee's attending physician
- The Policyholder (the employer) must approve of the advancement of the Living Benefit
- The employee must forward the original enrolment card to the Plan Carrier.
- In the event that the employee surpasses the life expectancy date there is not requirement of repayment but interest would simply accumulate up to the date of repayment.

If you have any questions on the Living Benefit you should contact your employer or carrier for Basic Life Insurance coverages.

### In Solidarity, Dave Schaub

*(Also, it was noted that anyone who retires from Eurocan could request that the life insurance coverage that each employee has be continued after retirement as long as the retiree agrees to pay the premiums – known as Group Life Conversion. Usually retirees don't get life insurance because of the cost of the premiums. But, one example of where an employee would want to maintain coverage is if they had a terminal illness and a short-term life expectancy. The retiree does not have to provide proof of good health or undergo any medical exams in*

*order to continue the coverage. Because life expectancy is very limited the retiree's beneficiaries would be entitled to the payout, currently at \$84,050, having had to pay only a few months premiums. In order to qualify for this continued coverage the retiree would have to apply for the conversion within 31 days of the official retirement date.)*

**In solidarity, Don Klie**

## What happened to Romanow report?

**Maude Barlow/Council of Canadians/CALM**

It's been a year since the much-anticipated Romanow Commission Report was tabled. The story dominated every media outlet for days, and Canadians positively greeted its recommendations with what pollsters called a "deep national consensus."

The report dominated the First Ministers' Summit held last February in Ottawa and formed the centrepiece of the new health "accord" announced at the closing news conference. The report was a great success, declared the federal and provincial health ministers and they promised that many of its key recommendations would be acted upon, including a recommitment to federal funding. The cameras packed up, the health ministers went home, and most Canadians breathed a sigh of relief that, finally, something was going to be done about the declining state of health care in this country.

A year later, Canadians are left to wonder what happened. After what many considered to be a wonderful exercise in democratic participation, a handful of the demands they made to their governments through the Romanow Report has been implemented. In some parts of the country, developments have moved the agenda the other way.

In his report, Roy Romanow affirmed health care as a fundamental right of citizenship and called for a recommitment to public, universal health care. He called for an expansion of home care and primary care. He called on politicians to take control of rising drug costs. He called for a full exemption for health care from trade agreements. He called for a large infusion of federal funds. And he called for a National Health Council that would study best practices and focus on accountability and transparency in the delivery of quality health care for all Canadians.

Perhaps most important, he said that health care is not a commodity and that for-profit services would be detrimental to Canadians. "It is a perversion of Canadian values to accept a system where money—

rather than need—determines who gets access to health care."

A year later, very little of the promised funds has been released to the provinces, although there have been hopeful statements of intent from Jean Chrétien and his successor, Paul Martin. Obviously, the lack of federal funds has prevented the implementation of the promised goal of finding new monies for primary and home care. In any case, these recommendations are at "provincial discretion," and unlikely to be followed in at least several provinces, even if federal funding is freed up. The National Health Council, whose mandate falls far short of the one Romanow envisaged, has not been established, although there are signs of improved federal provincial cooperation in this arena. Prescription drug costs, although lower than in the U.S., continue to be out of the reach of many Canadians. And Canada is still negotiating a full-services agreement at both the WTO and the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) that have not yet exempted health care.

There has been no action at the federal level to curb the proliferation of for-profit services in British Columbia and Alberta. While the citizens of Ontario have likely put a stop to the galloping for-profit services that flourished under the Eves government, Quebec's new premier is talking about opening up that province's health care system to the private sector.

Private spending on health care in Canada has grown by almost 100 per cent in the last decade. Private clinics now capture about 10 per cent of the MRI market—a dramatic increase in just four years since they were introduced. There are 250 large for-profit health corporations, more than 600 private home care agencies, and 140 private health insurance companies, many of them U.S.-based trans-nationals.

These for-profit services pose a grave threat to Canada's public health care system. Under the terms of NAFTA, the exemptions for public services such as health care are applicable only if the service is delivered entirely on a not-for-profit basis. We are playing with fire by allowing the creeping commercialization of our health care system when big hospital and HMO corporations south of the border are waiting. Already in Canada, there are elite think tanks, business leaders and right-wing politicians who see medicare as an anachronism incompatible with the rules of the global economy.

That's not what the people of Canada think. We know that because of what they told the Romanow Commission. But a year after its release, we are closer to destroying public health care in Canada than saving it, and that must keep Roy Romanow up at night.

• **Maude Barlow is the National Chairperson of the Council of Canadians.**

## Apprenticeship Report

## Apprenticeship Selection - And Rumours

By Dennis Urbanowski

Eurocan management has been spreading rumors that I feel need to be addressed.

Recently, I was approached by a union member who told me his boss told him that the Company wanted to take on a vehicle maintenance apprentice but the Union wouldn't them. In order to stop these damaging rumours from spreading I would like to tell you "the rest of the story."



The Company approached the apprenticeship committee telling us that they are prepared to take on an apprentice in the vehicle maintenance shop – under one condition – they want to bypass the apprenticeship selection process and hand-pick someone that they want for the job. The committee did say no to this offer for a couple of reasons – first, we do not want to set a precedence that would allow the company to say that they have selected apprenticeship candidates in the past without the Union's participation. And secondly, we want to select the best person for the job. If this person is indeed the best person for the job then the Company should have no problem following the process and he should be selected. The Company is clearly not comfortable that this would happen so they wanted to make a "special deal", something we were not prepared to get involved with.

I hope this puts these rumours to rest.

**In solidarity,  
Dennis Urbanowski**

## Trade Shortages Loom

Delegates from CEP and B.C. Carpenters Locals heard a bleak forecast for our economy at a conference on apprenticeship organized by CEP.

The looming shortage of skilled workers across Canada is due to the anticipated retirement of approximately 40% of CEP members who work in trades. Despite the loss of trades people, employers and governments have failed to allocate the money and resources required to train replacements.

Western Region Vice President Dave Coles told the Richmond, B.C. conference that no plan or process is in place to train new workers. As a result, CEP is now being forced to bargaining training provisions into collective agreements with these same employers."

Coles said the trades shortage, "needs to be recognized as a threat to our economy." He said, "we can't run industries without skilled workers and we will lose our competitive advantage – you can't de-skill the workforce and still have an efficient economy."

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## Vice-President of Canada's Largest Forest Union Not Amused

**Vancouver** - Prime Minister Paul Martin today announced that he has appointed former Canfor CEO David Emerson as the Liberal candidate for Vancouver Kingsway.

"I am appalled by this announcement," states CEP Western Region Vice President Dave Coles. "Not only is this another example of Liberal party patronage and utter contempt for the democratic process, but the notion that Emerson could properly represent the citizens of this riding is ludicrous."

"Vancouver-Kingsway residents are working class families, many of whom are immigrants," continues Coles, "I cannot imagine how he thinks that he can represent us. He should be running in the riding where he lives or at least in a riding where he might have a hope of understanding the lives of the people who live in that riding."

"It is my understanding that Mr Emerson lives in the riding of Vancouver Quadra, where Stephen Owen is currently the sitting MP. I guess it was easier for the Prime Minister to ask a woman to step aside than to ask Mr. Owen."

Sophia Leung is currently the sitting MP for Vancouver Kingsway. Coles and his extended family resides in the riding of Vancouver Kingsway.

## Joint Occupational Health and Safety Report

# Where To Spend All This Money

By Dan Belleville

Bruce Fisher gave his talk on the rail yard audit and was invited to attend at a later date with updates.

He said the railway crews were being trained, both for switching and to operate the locomotives. The Company has 18 months to come up with their own plans and rules on how Eurocan will be operating the rail yard (*the Ministry of Transport, or whoever looks after railways, no longer has a safety branch; each company is responsible to write up its own safety rules/policies/procedures and police them*).

The Company had brought in another rental loci but had to send it back because of all the problems.

Bruce said they would be hiring contractors to bring the rail yard up to the standards needed to operate safely. Asked if they would be having a rail crew to maintain the yard, he said the two people that are in the Yard Crew would be trained along with some Shiploaders. But, he also said we have to hire contractors to bend track because we don't have the equipment to do this. We will have to watch what is done because our people should be trained and doing the jobs before we hire contractors to do our job of maintaining the yard.

We reviewed one incident investigation that had occurred in the Papermill. As a committee we were concerned because there was only one and we felt the Company wasn't doing them again (*no incident reports mean no incidents or near misses, or maybe not*). We were told that was not the case. There were more but Patricia Urbanowski was away and Peter Cooch didn't know how to number them so they were on hold. (*You know how important your job is when they don't have a backup to replace you when you're on vacation. Pretty soon the Company realizes they really don't need you and axe your job altogether. OR, this just shows how important the Company thinks safety is. Incident investigation follow-up by the JOHS really isn't that important.*)

The March meeting minutes were reviewed.

Peter said he would organize a meeting with the Lock Out Committee before the shut down to go over some concerns.

Incident 03-001, liquor to the face, #2 Slaker, was being looked at by Mike McFarlane and nothing was settled yet. I'm to check with Dan Johnson-Watson to see if this hazard has been noted in the Job Safety Breakdown Procedure.

Chris Howe was not at the meeting to tell us when the Federoff Blank training was to take place.

Peter was to check with the WCB to see if we could download the regulations and store them on our computer in L-drive. This can be done; we just need to find out who can do it.

Harry Wilkinson took a group of people to the Houston, BC Canfor Mill to look at their powerlift equipment with dual pedals and swivel seats. Harry said they would try having an answer next meeting for us. They have to decide if it is worth doing the changes on the Linde powerlifts or going another route.

Adopting a tagging system for scaffolding – Chris was to take this to the next DAPC (Departmental Accident Prevention Committee for maintenance) and get their ideas. Peter asked why we didn't just order the tags and use Chinook's procedures; he didn't see a problem. But, he has told me that he has run into resistance to this procedure. I thought this was a good idea because scaffolding was staying up for too long and maybe platforms should be built.

SCBA – how often does a person need retraining and who needs this training was marked complete. I was wondering how this could be marked complete because I was not aware of any training being done. I've been told that we were switching from the SCBA system to the Scott system so where does that leave us?



"Our new statistical formula shows a decrease in workplace accident and illness."

Dr. Gary Corbett came in and did a Consensus Based Disability Management Audit. The preliminary results looked good but we haven't got the final results back yet. The Company has to score 80% or

better in order to get a 10% reduction in their WCB insurance premiums (*the report has come in and the Company got a 70% rating*).

Safety Day – the JOHS would like to have a Safety day on Saturday, May 15, 2004, from 11:00 am to 4:00 pm. This would include Eurocan employees and family members. We would have a barbecue, mill tours, ERT demonstrations and maybe suppliers having displays. We have to check and see if we need a food Safe Trained person on hand to be able to serve food.

JOHS Bulletin Board – the Company agreed to provide one for #1 Stores.

Canadian Society of Safety Engineers – CSSE – Safety Conference was scheduled for May 6-7, 2004 in Terrace.

Safety Improvement Fund – we went through all the ideas and took out the ones that we felt didn't fit into the set rules. Example: things that would be capital cost projects or things that had to be done even if we didn't have this fund. Also, we felt that projects that would take all the money for a couple of years would have to wait. We also felt that if we could it would be nice to hit several areas the first time. Well, the list has been shortened and we will be looking at each item more closely at the next meeting.

An Air Quality Committee was formed a while back and nothing has been done. Angus MacLeod was set to be in charge of this committee, but he said if the Company were serious about it someone from management would have to run it. Dennis Urbanowski was one of the people on this committee and he is also concerned about when things will get moving. This air quality issue was one of the main items that keep showing up on the Safety Fund Ideas.

Lighting throughout the mill was brought forward from the Steam Plant DAPC minutes. Peter and Bill Drinkwater said a meeting was held already by management about the lighting and it is being addressed.

The last thing I remember was about the safety work orders that are outstanding. I asked who prioritizes them and when are they done. One of the main safety hazards that were to be done was pinch points and guards, yet there are lots still unfinished. Emergency Eyewash Stations were to be completed by last June and reports were to be sent to the WCB. Yet there are seven outstanding work orders this month. To be fair Chris was not there to answer the questions and it was the first time I paid much attention to outstanding work orders. As I now know, as a committee it is our job to review them and see why they are not done and to help get them done if we can.

This is my report as I see it and can remember. If anyone has any thoughts on these items or need to find out more talk to anyone of the safety reps.

Remember, think safe, act safe and be safe each and every day. I want to be able to say to you, "Did you have a good and safe day?"

**Fraternally,  
Dan Belleville**

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## Lifetime ban

**BCGEU/CALM**

The Campbell Liberals have banned five women from the B.C. legislature for life.

The women were handcuffed, hauled away in paddy wagons, fingerprinted and thrown into jail. They were at the legislature for a meeting with Minister of State for Women's and Seniors' Services Ida Chong to try to secure funding for the province's 37 women's centres.

The B.C. government has cut \$1.7 million in annual core funding for the women's centres. Since then, at least half of the centres have closed or cut back on hours of operation and staff.

"This is nothing short of mean and vindictive," says B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union president George Heyman.

"There is absolutely no reason why these women should be banned from the legislature. They are not a threat to anyone. All charges against them have been dropped. They did nothing wrong, and should have access to the legislature the same as any other British Columbian."

The centres provide the hundreds of thousands of women in B.C. living in poverty or violent relationships with a wide range of services including information and referrals, support groups, crisis counseling, job entry programs, legal aid workshops, child care services, housing registries, stopping violence against women programs, clothing exchanges, food programs and advocate on behalf of women in need.

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## Controlling infection

**SUNspots/SUN/CALM**

A small hospital in Montreal has a team of orderlies that dispense a disinfectant gel to every patient in the hospital.

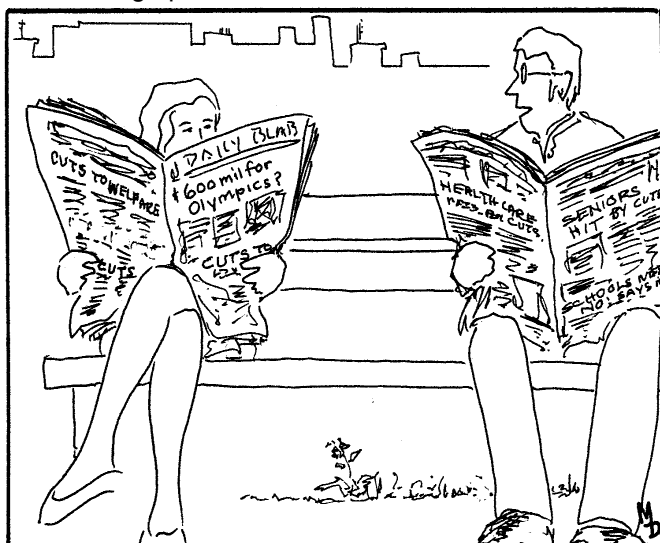
The team makes the rounds twice each day to prevent the spread of infections commonly acquired in hospitals. Severe infections have dropped by 80 per cent.

W.C.B. Advocate

## What An Appealing/ Appalling Situation!

The provincial government (Liberals) since coming into power has passed legislation in the forms of Bill 49 (June 30, 2002) and Bill 63 (March 3, 2003). This changed all the rules and greatly affects how workers are compensated for their injuries and how they can appeal incorrect decisions of the Workers' Compensation Board. There are transitional rules in place to determine whether your claim is under the old legislation, (Old World) or the new legislation (New World). As to be expected the New World provides reduced benefits in almost all areas. Here is a brief description on some of the changes:

- You will receive no more than 90% of your normal pay when temporarily disabled from a workplace injury or disease.
- You have 2 chances to appeal any decision. The Review Division, which is an internal review on its decision, and The Workers' Compensation Appeal tribunal (WCAT). Some decisions you can only appeal directly to WCAT.
- The Medical Review Panel is gone, so any medical issue at appeal can be decided by people with no medical credentials.
- Vocational rehabilitation benefits were striped almost entirely. Now If you suffer a workplace accident and cannot return back to your original job or employer you receive 12 weeks of assistance and then you are on welfare with no lost wage pension.



*"Strange that there's money available for Olympics but everything else gets cut!"*

- Bill 49 that the Liberals past in June 30, 2002 took away lost wage pensions. An example would be if you were earning 20\$ an hour before you suffered a workplace accident or disease and found a job that suited your permanent functional capabilities that paid 10\$ an hour the Workers' Compensation Board provides no benefit to make up the loss.
- And many more cuts, too many to list. If you have any question please don't hesitate to ask, if I do not know the answer I will find the answer for you.

At this present time the local has 11 cases that are active in the appeal stage, and 5 more pending. We also have 4 cases at the dispute resolution committee, (2 W.I and 2 LTD) which are members who were cut of benefits from Maritime Life Insurance Company. Don Klie and myself are Dispute Resolution Committee members for the local. The good news is in the last 10 Appeal Decisions from The Workers' Compensation Board the Local has been successful in 9.

**In Solidarity,  
Steve Welsh  
C.E.P. Local 298**

## Marking Charest's one year of bad decisions

CUPE/CALM

Thousands of labour and community activists took to the streets in April to mark the one year anniversary of Québec's Liberal government. More than 10,000 in Montréal, 7,000 in Québec City and hundreds of others in other towns protested one year of force-fed anti-union, anti-people legislation, arbitrariness and arrogance from the Charest government.

In one year, this government has unravelled 30 years of social progress. From opening the doors to large-scale contracting out and privatization of public services to raising the fees for the provincial child care program to the wholesale restructuring of the health care system, the Liberals have shredded Québec's social fabric.

Protest organizers took some solace in the fact that the government seems to have slowed its pace a bit, perhaps in response to the strong public opposition to its policies.

## B.C. workers defy back-to-work legislation

### The BC Liberals have no interest in negotiation and compromise

by Adrian Dix  
April 30, 2004

Health care workers in British Columbia are continuing to defy Bill 37, the back-to-work legislation that was passed in the legislature before dawn on April 28. The Bill slashes the pay of hospital workers by legislative fiat, cuts benefits and increases hours of work. It also paves the way for more privatization and contracting out which will lead to more wage cuts — as much as 40-50 per cent — and fewer benefits in the future. Workers remained out on in what their union leaders called a “protest,” while the Health Employers Association went to the Labour Relations Board in an attempt to force HEU members back to work.

The governing BC Liberals treated its dispute with the hospital workers and the Hospital Employees Union (HEU) as an exercise in political manipulation. Negotiating a collective agreement requires hard work and compromise. The BC Liberals have no interest in either. Instead, they rely on bullying tactics to get their way over the poorest paid workers in the health care system.

How did the government mislead the electorate in this dispute?

First, they portrayed themselves as a third party broker between the Health Employers Association and the HEU. In fact, they were directing one side of the negotiation. Health Authorities report directly to the Deputy Minister of Health Services. Their boards are made up of political appointees, many of them campaign contributors to the BC Liberals.

At one point this week, Health Services Minister Colin Hansen said of the HEU workers: “They don't seem to care that patients are suffering in this province.” He could have ended the dispute at any time by instructing the employers' association to freeze contracting out and privatization while negotiations took place. He had the power. He didn't care.

Instead, the government allowed the health system to deteriorate and patients to suffer to justify imposing management's contract demands. The Premier, the author of management's demands, then announces that he is bringing in legislation on the BCTV news. Some hero! Some honest broker!

Second, the Premier broke his word to health care workers. In 2001, the government ripped up

existing HEU contracts to allow contracting out, in spite of specific promise from the Premier months before, not to do so.

Third, the BC Liberals claimed to be guardians of the public purse in this dispute.

Yet, the government overturned restraints on wage increases for health care executives. Some health care CEOs have received salary increases of more than 100 per cent. And, in 2001, the B.C. government secretly increased the remuneration of Ministers, increasing their tax-free allowance by an average of more than \$10,000 a year for each member of the largest cabinet in B.C. history.

This is not the government protecting the treasury against a powerful union. This is the government financing wage and benefits increases for the privileged on the backs of hospital workers.

Fourth, the BC Liberals misled with statistics. Take for example, an important statistic in the government propaganda campaign against the HEU. The government establishes the average wage of health care workers in Canada by taking the sum of average provincial salaries. This gives PEI equal weight to Ontario, even though Ontario has 30 times as many health care workers. Such misuse of statistics allows the government to understate the average wage of health care workers in the rest of Canada.

Fifth, privatization and contracting out may prove to be a net loser for the system and the economy. When health authorities cut the salary of cleaning staff to \$10/hour or less through contracting out, most of the resulting savings revert to employment agencies and outsourcers in profits. Most of these companies are headquartered outside B.C. The new system faces increased administrative cost, staff turnover, decline in service quality and an outflow of funds from the B.C. economy.

Contracting out of cleaning services will likely turn into a health care sponsorship scandal directing money previously paid to workers over to companies who are BC Liberal contributors.

Finally, there is the human cost of these policies and the contempt shown for workers doing difficult jobs for little pay.

Take Joanne, one of the 6,000 HEU workers who lost her job this year due to contracting out. She now works full-time as a cleaner in a non-unionized care facility, cleans banks at night and offers cleaning services to private homes in her spare time. She estimates she works 66 hours a week, not counting traveling time between jobs — 50 weeks a year — to earn enough to hope to put her daughters through university. Her gross salary for working the equivalent of two full-time jobs is less than \$40,000.

The B.C. Liberal government has made it clear in its attitude toward hospital employees: if you work with your hands, if you struggle to support your family,

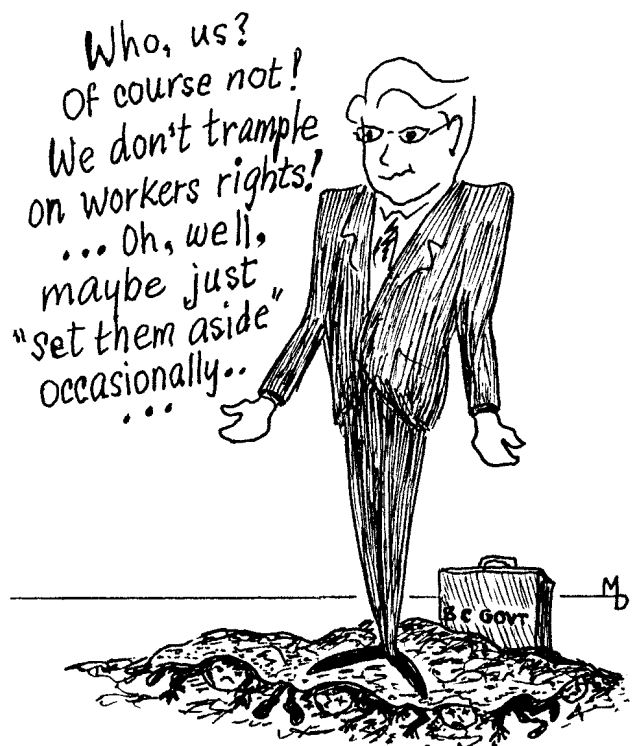


if you were unable to obtain the privilege of a university degree, if you do the work Gordon Campbell or Colin Hansen would never do at wages they would never accept, you simply don't count.

Hospital employees do necessary and difficult jobs in our health care system, ensuring public health and helping provide care for the sick. Their work is important, must be performed efficiently and should not be devalued simply because hospital workers are paid less in PEI. Is doing a hard, backbreaking job for \$33,000 ripping off the public?

The Hospital Employees Union has occasionally been described as "militant" by the government and the media. But whether you support the union movement or not, what other choice do workers and their union have in the face of contempt and bullying? The union's fight to protect public medicare and oppose the deterioration of service is, in the end, a fight for all of us.

*Adrian Dix writes from British Columbia. His columns appear bi-weekly in La Source and weekly in the Victoria Times-Colonist, where this column originally appeared.*



*This life we have is short, so let us leave a mark for people to remember.*

*Kip Keino, Kenyan runner, explaining why he adopted and educated 69 children orphans.*

## CEP Outraged

April 29, 2004

**Vancouver** - The decision of the provincial government to impose a concessionary agreement and back to work legislation on the members of HEU leaves the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union angry.

"Our union has had enough of this government attacking working people and the sanctity of collective agreements," states Dave Coles, Western Region Vice President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada. "The collective bargaining process in our province has been utterly violated by this government and by the imposition of Bill 37."

The provincial government has imposed settlements on several public and private sector unions, the most recent being the BC Ferry and Marine Workers Union. The government has also torn up the collective agreements of the HEU and the BC Teachers Federation.

"For Minister Bruce to appeal for calm is outrageous", continues Coles. "This government has continually poked a stick in the eye of working people and the time is coming soon for working people to respond."

## Labour Movement Stands Together

May 2, 2004

**Vancouver** - "This is a proud day for working people," states Dave Coles, Western Region Vice President. "When the labour movement stands together we can accomplish great things."

Mr. Coles was among the small committee of BC Federation of Labour representatives that worked for several days to help find a resolve to the impasse between the HEU and provincial government.

"We found a solution that will limit the damage to the workers and helps protect health care," continues Coles. "Now the struggle is to find a solution to the problems created by a government who cares nothing about working people."

"Health care is the number one concern of the citizens of this province," said Coles. "I'm enormously proud of my members and their commitment to supporting health care and supporting their sisters and brothers who provide excellent care in our public health care system."

"Our union is deeply committed to defending publicly funded, publicly delivered universal health care for Canadians," adds Coles. "We will do

whatever it takes to ensure government doesn't endanger this valued social program."

The Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada launched a campaign last year to force the defense of Medicare onto the bargaining table.

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(Email from Dave Coles Monday, May 3, 2004)

#### **Brothers and Sisters:**

This is a proud day for working people.

This is also a very proud day for CEP. I want you to know that your support in your workplaces and communities this past week has played an enormous role in achieving this settlement.

This wasn't just a political strike. It was a strike to protect health care workers. It was a strike to protect health care in this province. It was a strike for all of us.

Now our job is to remove these guys from government. They are ideologically driven. They hate unions and have absolutely no respect for working people.

The struggle to win the next election begins tomorrow. I know that you will be there.

**In solidarity,  
Dave Coles**

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(Email from Brian Payne the same day.)

#### **Dear Brother Coles,**

I awoke early this morning to read the wonderful news from British Columbia that, once again, union solidarity and membership determination have won the day. Congratulations to you and to all CEP Locals for the way in which you have stood with our brothers and sisters in the health care sector.

While the capping of the job losses due to contracting out is a significant victory, our members need to remember that the wage rollbacks and other actions of the Campbell government show utter contempt and disrespect for the collective bargaining process and, especially, for labour's struggle for equality for women workers.

On a personal note, Dave, you have shown the kind of leadership and cool headedness in this situation that does all of CEP proud from coast to coast and I know you were able to achieve this distinction only because of the tremendous backing you received from each and every one of the CEP Local officers in British Columbia. In solidarity,

**Brian Payne  
CEP President**

**May 4, 2004**

#### **Brothers and Sisters:**

I am fully aware that there are some HEU members that are truly unhappy with this settlement. However, this settlement was reached because the HEU provincial council ratified it. It was their democratic right to accept or reject the settlement and they chose to accept. For that reason, the BC Federation of Labour officers agreed to support it.

I can absolutely assure you that this government would not have agreed to meet with us if it were not for the overwhelming support from labour all across the province, from every affiliated union. It is a significant victory that we were able to force them to the table. This happened because of our solidarity as much as it was the 3 years of mean-spirited attacks on the citizens of this province by Gordon Campbell and his government. In addition to pickets by the HEU at health care facilities the following workplaces experienced shutdowns: 3 pulp mills, 3 saw mills, 1 plywood plant, rail, 1/3 of the Port of Vancouver, and the Grain terminal.

We can all agree that the legislated rollback of 15% is unconscionable, but what was achieved is very significant. We made the government back down on contracting out, retroactivity and retribution. We also gained \$25 million in enhanced severance for workers who lose their jobs. There is no doubt that without this agreement to limit layoffs to 600 over the next two years that there would have been thousands more jobs contracted out. This agreement has stopped the privatization of support services in the health care sector.

Every one of us is experienced in the collective bargaining process. We all know that we never get everything that we demand. We know that we do our best to get the best agreement that we can with the circumstances that we are facing. In my view, given the circumstances this was the best possible resolution.

The question has been raised about trusting the government and enforcing the agreement. It is the responsibility of each and every one of us to step up to the plate if this government tries to mess with this agreement. We must be on guard with our brothers and sisters in the public sector as they go into collective bargaining over the next few months. We must protect publicly-funded, publicly delivered health care and public education from attacks by the provincial government.

Please accept my sincere appreciation for your collective efforts over the past week. You have played a significant role and should be proud of your actions in standing with health care workers.

**In Solidarity, Dave Coles**

## After the Deal

Foes of the Liberal government weigh the pain, costs and opportunities created by a bruising labour dispute and a general strike that wasn't.

Tuesday, May 4, 2004

David Beers, Natasha Barsotti and Dee Hon  
TheTyee.ca

It was as if someone pulled the emergency brake on a fast moving train. The day after an eleventh hour deal averted a general strike, members of the HEU and other unions picked themselves up, feeling bruised and angry not only at the government but their leaders who negotiated the settlement.

But those leaders and other observers argue that the settlement made strategic sense, preventing a wreck that would have cost labour millions of dollars in fines and damaged its public support. As a result, they say, the growing opposition to the Liberal government is well positioned to remain on track and pick up steam for next year's election.

"Basically, everybody feels they've been screwed by the union, and that's putting it lightly," Karen Ferraro, a nutrition aide for 20 years, told *The Tyee* at St. Paul's Hospital in Vancouver on Monday. The negotiated cap on jobs contracted out, 600 over the next two years, failed to impress Ferraro: "That's not including the 8,000 they've already laid off."

Helen Chan, who works in health records at the hospital, echoed Ferraro and many fellow workers, saying she was feeling "upset, betrayed, disappointed, helpless, and angry at both the union and the government."

"It's understandable, the anger, but it is misplaced," said BC Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair, who helped negotiate the deal, which included the 15 percent cut in wages specified by Bill 37, but dropped a retroactive pay cut in the bill while adding a severance package of \$25 million for laid off workers. "What the government was saying was we'll take your money and fire you as well, a double insult," said Sinclair.

"Labour stepped up to the plate," and made the best deal under the circumstances, Sinclair said. "This was about stopping the bleeding so that you can be there the next time to fight."

### General strike 'dicey' politics

Had a general strike been called, the HEU would have faced over \$400,000 a day in fines, given a Supreme Court ruling that the union was in contempt of court for not returning when ordered by the legislature. And had unions been successful in bringing business as usual to a halt in the province, public sentiment may have quickly soured towards their cause, according to Evi Mustel, whose firm does a lot of polling around labour and health care issues.

"The heavy-handedness of the government" in the dispute swung public sympathy towards the HEU, Mustel said. But a general strike might have reversed the momentum.

"When people start to get really inconvenienced, that's where it starts to be a little dicey," says Mustel. "Maybe one day, people would have tolerated it. But anything beyond that, especially kids being out of school, and transit being down, my sense would be the public wouldn't be tolerant of that for too long."

"I don't think that anyone is happy," said BC Teachers Federation president Neil Worboys, who says the union negotiators were in tough position. "This was not collective bargaining. This was a situation where the union was doing the best they could to make sure the least harm was done, stop the flow of unfettered privatization in the health care system, and cap lay-offs over the next two years."

Members of the BCTF were poised to shut down schools had the general strike gone forward. Like the HEU, they had seen "our agreement ripped up", said Worboys. "We mobilized 42,000 teachers over the weekend, not an easy thing to do, and were prepared to protest if there was no agreement acceptable to the HEU."

Worboys said the way the dispute played out "galvanized the labour movement," adding, "our members are strengthened by what has happened and it stands us in good stead as we continue."

### Did Liberals bumble?

The president of CUPE BC, Barry O'Neill, whose members also were ready to support a general strike, called the agreement "the very best of a bad situation" and suggested the Liberal government created the crisis on purpose. "They are down dramatically in the polls and what you do is deflect responsibility of running the province on to someone else, pick on who in the public's eyes are most vulnerable and controversial." But the strategy has backfired, he said, because "people have woken up to this game; what was exposed here was government's ruthlessness."

How to regroup and build on that shift in public emotions is the next concern among labour activists and political foes of the Campbell government.

"My hope is that people will direct their anger where it needs to be directed – towards Gordon Campbell and the Liberals," NDP Leader Carole

James told The Tyee. Her party has seen a surge in membership over the past few weeks, sources say, though the NDP did not share specific numbers.

"My hope is that people will get involved in community groups, continue to protest even though action is ended, support other groups, and encourage people to join the party, encourage people who are thinking about running," said James. "I hope people pull together and fight the good fight on May 17, 2005."

While many observers, including Vaughn Palmer in today's Vancouver Sun, have portrayed the Liberals as bumbling in handling the dispute, others see the government playing a strong hand shrewdly.

"Far from misjudging the results of their brutal legislation ordering HEU back to work, I believe that the Liberals knew exactly what they were doing," said Michael Fellman, an SFU history professor and political commentator. "The alternative, binding arbitration, which they settled for with the ferry workers, usually leads to contracts of more or less the status quo, based on previous and comparative contracts. The Liberals were more ambitious this time—they wanted a major roll back. So they added the wage pay back and the total lack of a cap for outsourcing jobs, along with the wage rollback they really wanted, knowing that they would one, provoke a major uprising, and two, create a fallback position where they would appear reasonable, by subtracting the cap and payback provisions, keeping the whole rollback."

### More bargaining ahead

That sets the stage for the next many rounds of bargaining with public sector unions, said Fellman. "The Liberals thumped a weak, mainly woman's union of unskilled labourers, and served notice to CUPE and the other bigger and stronger public sector unions that rollbacks were now the order of the day. They reckoned that they had no labour votes at any event, and that the general public would approve of their 'tough' stance come re-election time."

"They were willing to play the most brutal politics," continues Fellman, "not believing, after all in collective bargaining in the public sector, and serving their larger agenda of slashing public services while cutting taxes."

The hardball tactics of the Liberals presented union negotiators with a nasty range of risks, figures Fellman. "You cannot blame Sinclair—he must keep the overall interests of unions uppermost in his mind, and jail terms for HEU workers, and chaos in the province would blow up in labour's faces."

At St. Paul's hospital, workers were still wrestling with raised emotions and expectations, and the big wage cuts their leaders were forced to negotiate.

"We're just the first union to be attacked. If they take us down successfully, other unions will be next," said one worker who asked not to be identified.

"I think a lot of people are discouraged by the deal," said phlebotomist Gizelle Roussy. "We deal with people's lives everyday. We take on a lot. I don't think we're overpaid. We just want to make a difference. Who's going to provide that care? If you pay peanuts, you're going to get monkeys."

*David Beers is editor of The Tyee. Natasha Barsotti and Dee Hon are on staff. <http://www.thetyee.ca>*

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## Don't Mourn, Organize

By Gene McGuckin

<http://www.generalstrikenews.ca/>

**07-May-04:** A few short days ago tens of thousands of British Columbia workers were ready to confront their employers and the government of their employers by walking off the job in support of health care workers and in defense of the future of this province.

Make no mistake! Those non-HEU workers, union and non-union, who had been walking the lines at hospitals and other care facilities, those who had been honking their support at the defiance of Bill 37, knew what was at stake. Those in other unions—private sector as well as public sector—who hit the bricks as early as Friday, April 29, also knew the stakes. And they knew they weren't going to get the call to action from their provincial trade union leaders. Rather, their actions forced the leaders to race out in front so as not to be too obviously left behind.

Most of those workers will continue to know what they knew on May 2. But due to the actions that day of a handful of union bureaucrats, too many workers are now drawing other "lessons" from the sell-out, a sell-out which ran directly opposite to two votes by HEU members (one in April 2003 and the other just before the strike) and which also violated resolutions passed at the 2002 and 2003 BC Federation of Labour Conventions.

Too many workers and their community supporters are in danger of "learning" that struggling together for what is right is a waste of time because the whole fight can be called off by trade union "leaders" acting in completely cowardly and undemocratic ways. Many workers and non-workers "learned" this in the sellout of Operation Solidarity in 1983. The legacy of that defeat demoralized and demobilized unions and community groups for years. And it poisoned and weakened a generation of struggles.

We must try, try like the devil, to keep each other from “learning” that “lesson” this time. How?

First we have to develop, and spread around, and elaborate an analysis of why the sellout happened. It’s crucially important that we seriously try to understand why this happened, rather than just venting our anger and outrage, rather than simply saying that the bureaucrats are rotten or they got paid off or they all want cushy jobs in politics.

Second, we have to start looking at what we can do to avoid a bureaucratic sellout the next time. Because there will be a next time. The corporate agenda has not been completed in BC yet. Obviously, many people have to contribute to these two tasks before they are adequately completed. Below is my initial contribution, offered with a sense of urgency that we begin this process before people’s anger and outrage turn to numbness and demoralization.

Why Did the Sellout Happen? Union bureaucrats are calling it a “victory.” They always call defeats they have allowed or collaborated in “victories.” If they called it a “defeat,” there would be a lot of pressure to draw a balance sheet on what went right and what went wrong, so that we wouldn’t make the same mistakes the next time. But hey, if it was a win, no need for a balance sheet. We did it right, right? Wrong!

So why did ALL the top leaders of all the unions involved back this sellout?

- Their sole strategy for defending against the corporate agenda, etc. is to elect the NDP.
- To do that they believe the NDP has to win over many easily-spooked middle-of-the-road voters.
- Radical action by union members would tarnish the NDP in the eyes of these middle-of-the-road voters, driving them to support the Liberals or simply not vote.
- Trade union bureaucrats believe they are essential to the well-being of the union movement because they are specialists, they are in the know, they are experienced, etc. This justifies their salaries, their need to keep things from the members, and their occasional regrettable duty to go along with strike-breaking legislation without even consulting their members.
- As a corollary, this self-perceived elite status also makes the bureaucrats very distrustful of workers making decisions and carrying them out without leadership direction. The workers must be protected from themselves because they are not experts and because they tend to get carried away by emotion.
- Oh and just by the way, if workers start to do radical things and learn by experience how to

organize and fight, they might not need the high-paid bureaucrats. Then what would the latter do? Go back into the ranks?

- There was undoubtedly a fear that court-levied fines and possible jailings would have weakened the HEU and maybe other unions.

These analytical points make no judgment on whether supporting the NDP is a good idea for workers or not. It’s another debate that we need to have among workers, but it doesn’t need to—and shouldn’t, in my mind—muddy the debate we need to have.

Is electoralism the ONLY strategy open to workers? Does radical strike action by workers strengthen or weaken their struggle. Does such action strengthen or weaken support for progressive alternatives at the ballot box.

Would you rather have the French Social Democratic government elected after the 1995 general strike or the British Labour government of Tony Blair elected after decades of union defeat and demoralization?

Or to bring it home: would you rather have the Dave Barrett government elected on a tide of protest and struggle or the Mike Harcourt government, elected because the Socred alternative was too ridiculous to vote for?

### What Is To Be Done?

The first thing we all have to do is to keep the resistance going as strongly as possible—in words and action.

But I would argue that we have to make a big change in how we have all been fighting, in dwindling numbers, over the past three years. We have to get away from having a thousand groups fighting a thousand small battles with small actions, small meetings, a few leaflets here and there.

What galvanized so many of us in the HEU struggle was that it had a bearing on all of us and IT WAS UNITARY.

Were it not for the sellout, we could actually feel and taste what it would be like to have hundreds of thousands of us taking on the government and bosses all at once, all together.

As much as possible, in communities, regions, and the province as a whole, we have to strive toward unitary fights.

If we can win some of those, it will keep the fighting spirit alive in many folks for later battles. Second, we have to find a way to keep the bureaucrats from derailing a struggle once it’s underway. In doing this, I hope we have all learned that the trade union bureaucrats are not the trade unions or the trade union members.

That was a dead wrong and highly counterproductive confusion coming out of 1983. In a way the bureaucrats helped clarify this distinction this time, because they did not call out the non-HEU workers against Bill 37. Local unions went out in spite of getting no call, in spite of two years of bureaucrats saying the workers are not ready, a general strike would never work, concentrate on the next election. If the sellout had not happened on May 2, the mushrooming walkouts planned for May 3 might have gotten completely beyond the bureaucrats' control.

The short answer on how to keep a handful of bureaucrats from derailing us again is to talk about it with fellow workers and community members, make it clear that this is what happened before the spin doctors rewrite the history, and adopt a blood oath that next time, "The leaders will abide by what the members decide!" At the next level of complexity, we have to develop what Soviet dissidents used to call "horizontalism."

Instead of each union local and each community group depending on its own leaders for information and direction of what should be done, we should have ways for rank-and-file members of one union to maintain lines of information and, possibly, joint decision-making with rank-and-file members of other unions.

We also need similar links with community groups and activists. These would be different than the community coalitions we all set up around the province three years ago. Or perhaps, more accurately, they would be what a lot of those organizations have become—small groups of activists. But what about large groups of activists?

What would it take to get city-wide or town-wide shop stewards' meetings together every couple of months? How many Prepare the General Strike Committees (or like-minded groups) can we set up around the province?

How would we maintain them so they don't wither during low-activity periods? How could we re-activate them and re-galvanize them in a big struggle—locally, regionally, provincially.

How (and this is a big one) could we fund them so they are not beholden to the BC Federation of Labour or this or that group of local trade union bureaucrats?



## IWA Health Care Deals Betray Women Workers

When the B.C. Liberals stripped hospital support staff of their rights, they found an odd ally in the woodworkers' union.

Thu., Apr. 29<sup>th</sup> 2004  
 Marjorie Griffin Cohen  
 TheTyee.ca

By June, 6,000 health care service workers will have lost their jobs as government health care authorities contract out the work the workers once provided. So it should come as no surprise that the provincial government also legislated striking Hospital Employees Union members back to work on Wednesday, following a three-day strike. The Liberals also cut their wages by 11 percent and increased hours of work in an imposed two-year contract.

The B.C. government's previous legislation promoting health care privatization was also deeply troubling. It is destroying the pay equity gains that women doing support work in the health care sector have made during the past 30 years. The effect on wages and conditions of work has been stunning: wages in the areas that have been privatized have been cut almost in half and most benefits have been eliminated or drastically reduced.

That the Liberal government has done this is unsurprising. That a union should aid them is a grave disappointment.

The whole process of wage reduction has been facilitated by the unscrupulous activities of a male-oriented union, the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA), which has taken advantage of the attempts by government to undermine the role of the Hospital Employees Union. Eighty-five percent of HEU's 40,000-odd members are women. It is also a union that represents a larger proportion of immigrant women, visible minority women, and older women than is present in B.C.'s working population

### Pay-equity gains reversed

In the absence of the pay equity legislation that exists in most other Canadian provinces and territories, pay equity in B.C. has been achieved primarily through the efforts of unions and the requirement, through the NDP government of the 1990s, that the public sector raise wages of low-income workers.

These pay equity gains, however, are being reversed through privatization. In 2002, the Liberal government passed Bill 29, which unilaterally altered collective agreements between health care employers and unions and removed job-security and contracting-out provisions. Bill 94, passed in 2003, prohibited collective agreements with private health-care contractors from limiting the ability to contract out.

The goals of the legislation were very explicit: to provide business opportunities for private corporations and reduce compensation for health-care support workers. Thousands of health care support workers have since been laid off as health authorities privatized housekeeping, security, laundry, and food services work. Most of them are women, many are from immigrant and visible minority backgrounds.

### International corporations benefit

The largest out-sourcing contracts, for housekeeping and food services, are with the three largest multinational service corporations in the world – Compass, Sedexho, and Aramark, based in the U.S., Britain and France.

Multinational companies bidding for health support service contracts are not required to hire HEU workers or recognize the union's successorship rights.

To further limit the HEU's ability to organize these workers, the multinationals took the unprecedented step of approaching other trade unions with "voluntary recognition agreements." These allow the terms and conditions of employment to be established by mutual agreement between the union and company *prior to hiring the workforce*.

The overwhelming majority of the B.C. Federation of Labour affiliates recognized the HEU's right to organize this work, and refused to co-operate with the outside contractors. There was, however, one notable exception, Local 1-3567 of the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA), which signed "voluntary recognition agreements" with Sedexho, Compass and Aramark.

### IWA ignorant of women's issues

Historically, the IWA has been primarily a male, forest-industry union with no experience in the hospital sector. The IWA's experience with women's issues, as one might expect, has been very limited.

The severe wage reductions contained in the Aramark /IWA contract are clearly unorthodox, if not exploitative, particularly for workers in a province with such a high cost of living. A housekeeper's wages will start at \$10.25 an hour with no guarantee of full-time work. Thirty hours of work a week would deliver annual earnings of \$15,980; 40 hours would deliver \$21,315.00. Wages for housekeepers (cleaners) have decreased by 44 per cent from the HEU

contract levels. This is 26 percent less than the national average for this same work.

Under these new rates, B.C. will have the lowest pay in the country for every job category in hospital support work—and by substantial amounts, between 14 and 39 percent. Even relatively low-wage provinces like Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island, and New Brunswick pay considerably more an hour than the wages negotiated under the Compass/IWA contract. These wages are so low that they place the purchasing power of housekeepers, for example, at about what it was 35 years ago.

This represents a tremendous loss for women's work by any standard. It is even more disturbing when one compares the IWA-Aramark contract to a standard IWA contract. Under the IWA master agreement (2000-2003), janitors are paid \$21.92 an hour, which is 2.1 times greater than the wage rate negotiated for hospital cleaners.

In this context, the Aramark-IWA agreement is not only a setback for pay equity, it is also a complete rejection of the concept that women and men should be paid equally for the same work — an understanding that has been in place in Canada since the 1950s.

### Double standard deeply troubling

Even as far back as the IWA master agreement of 1983-1986, wage rates for cleaners were not as low as the level negotiated for the women working at VGH. In the mid-'80s, almost 20 years ago, the IWA negotiated \$13.48 an hour for its janitors (male) — \$3.23 an hour more than it is willing to negotiate for its cleaners (female) today.

While the reduction of wages to about half of their existing levels is the most dramatic and obvious change under the IWA-Aramark contract, additional concessions to the employer radically change other aspects of compensation for health care support work. For example, pensions have been eliminated, vacations are reduced to those mandated by the Employment Standards Act, and there are no provisions for parental or maternity leave.

The government's attack on health-care workers provides a precedent that will have far-reaching repercussions. When public sector wages and working conditions deteriorate significantly, it sets an example for the private sector. If the government reduces women's wages, it is a signal to the private sector that they can do the same. Actions to roll back pay-equity gains become endemic across the country.

B.C. has been condemned by a U.N. committee report looking at discrimination against women. It specifically noted the large poverty rates for single mothers, Aboriginal women and women of colour, as well as the negative impact government cuts were having on women and girls. The privatization initiatives such as the ones in health care appear to deepen an already disturbing trend. Not only will women's wages in some sectors deteriorate relative to men, but they are also likely exacerbate an already large and growing gap between different classes of women workers.

*Marjorie Griffin Cohen is a political science professor and chair of the women's studies department at Simon Fraser University. Last year, she was hired by the Hospital Employees Union to research pay equity issues in the health care sector. <http://www.thetyee.ca>*

# 75th Anniversary Winnipeg General Strike

## Douglas-Coldwell Foundation/CALM

A pivotal development in the building of the democratic socialist movement in Canada took place in May and June of 1919.

When negotiations broke down between management and labour in the building and metals trades, the Winnipeg Trades and Labour Council called for a general strike. At stake were the principles of collective bargaining, better wages and the improvement of dreadful working conditions.

Within hours, almost 30,000 workers had left their jobs. The almost unanimous response by working men and women closed the city's factories, crippled its retail trade and stopped the trains.

Public sector employees, including police officers, fire-fighters, postal workers, telephone operators and employees of waterworks and other utilities, joined the strike in an impressive display of working class solidarity.

Opposition to the strike was organized by a group that called itself the Citizens' Committee of 1,000. It was funded and supported by Winnipeg's most influential manufacturers, bankers and politicians.

Rather than giving the strikers' demands any serious consideration, the Citizens' Committee, with the support of Winnipeg's daily newspapers, declared the strike a revolutionary conspiracy by foreigners. The federal government moved to intervene soon after the strike began. Conservative senator Gideon Robertson, Minister of Labour, and Arthur Meighen, Minister of the Interior and acting Minister of Justice, went to Winnipeg to meet with the Citizens' Committee.

They refused requests from the Central Strike Committee for a similar hearing. On their advice, the federal government swiftly supported the employers. Federal employees were ordered to return to work immediately or face dismissal. The *Immigration Act* was amended so that any striker who was an immigrant could be deported, and the *Criminal Code's* definition of sedition was broadened.

On June 17, the government arrested 12 strike leaders and supporters. Among them was J. S. Woodsworth who had returned to Winnipeg to become editor of the *Western Labour News*.

Four days later, members of the Royal North West Mounted Police charged into a peaceful crowd of strikers demonstrating in the centre of Winnipeg. They injured 30 strikers and killed one. Bloody

Saturday, as that day came to be known, ended with federal troops occupying the city's streets.

## Independent Labour Party

Acquitted of charges laid against him during the Winnipeg General Strike, Woodsworth soon became involved in organizing the Manitoba Independent Labour Party.

With a platform modelled on that of the British Labour Party, the ILP succeeded in electing Woodsworth to the House of Commons in 1921 for the riding of Winnipeg North Centre.

Rejecting violent revolution and any association with the new Communist Party, with its ties to the Bolshevik rulers of the Soviet Union, Woodsworth became a master of parliamentary procedure and used the House of Commons as a public platform. In so doing, he helped establish the Canadian multi-party system.

He documented the government's hostility to labour, its timorous approach to the League of Nations, its refusal to enact social security measures, and its support of the banks and large corporations. In 1926, he was able to bargain his vote (and that of one colleague) in return for a promise from the minority Liberal government to enact an old age pension plan. Introduced in 1927, the plan is the cornerstone of Canada's social security system.

## Haggard Opportunism Disappoints CEP

**April 28, 2004**

**Vancouver** - The decision of IWA President Dave Haggard to seek the Liberal Party nomination for New Westminster - Coquitlam leaves the Vice-President of Canada's largest forest union disappointed.

"I think this is a sad day for the IWA," states Dave Coles, Western Region Vice President of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada. "IWA leaders and members have played an enormous role in the New Democratic Party and this is a betrayal of those efforts."

"For Haggard to leave the party that created publicly funded health care for the party that is bleeding it dry is just beyond the pale."

"And for him to now stand holding hands with [Past Canfor CEO] David Emerson is a sight none of us could have imagined. Union voters will not be impressed with this complete about face and will see it for what it is."





**CAMPAIGN  
UPDATE  
April 19, 2004**

**What's new in Port Alice!**

On April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2004, the Supreme Court of British Columbia cited that Doman Industries has to file a Plan of Arrangement on or before April 30<sup>th</sup>. In the event that that does not occur a series of actions under the CCAA protection will commence, starting with the Order to conduct a meeting to vote on the Brascan – Tricap proposal. This proposal clearly states that the Port Alice mill is not part of any Restructuring Plan and will close effective May 11, 2004 following the current 37 day operating plan.

The mood in the community is upbeat that there will be an operating group found to purchase and operate the mill in a profitable manner. In the meantime CEP Local 514, the National Union and representatives of the Village of Port Alice continue to press for answers to a secured fibre supply for the mill as well as assurances from the Provincial and Federal Governments that Doman or the Brascan – Tri-Cap group of creditors will be held responsible for the environmental clean up and site restoration costs. These costs have been estimated to be in the area of \$50 million to over \$100 million. These assurances must be received so the taxpayers of this province do not get stuck with this burden.

CEP Local 514, with assistance from the Western Region office, have commenced an action plan that will see members forward correspondence to the Premier, MLA and MP to keep the issues of a secure fibre supply and environmental site restoration in the forefront. We are seeking assistance from members of other CEP Locals throughout the province do to the same.

**We are asking that you sign the attached letter and return to your local Save Alice campaign volunteer. Your letter will be sent to Premier Campbell, with copies sent to your MLA and your MP.**

If you have any questions or are prepared to assist the Local Union, please contact Don Vye, President, CEP Local 514 at 250-284-3303 or Dave Schaub, National Representative at 604-682-6501 or 604-240-1422.

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April, 2004

Dear Premier Campbell:

I'm sure that you are well aware that Doman Industries is currently under CCAA bankruptcy protection and is attempting to secure a financial restructuring mechanism. I sincerely hope that you are also aware of the importance of the Port Alice pulp mill to the economy of northern Vancouver Island.

The pulp mill at Port Alice provides hundreds of direct jobs and thousands of indirect jobs. It provides the greatest share of tax revenue to the Mount Waddington Regional District. It is the only industrial workplace north of Campbell River with more than 100 employees. The permanent closure of this facility will be devastating.

In addition, the environmental cleanup required if a permanent shutdown were to occur will cost as much as \$100 million. This is something the government, i.e. the taxpayers, can ill afford.

I urge you, in the strongest possible terms, to do whatever it takes to protect the long term economic security of the people of northern Vancouver Island. I look forward to your response.

Yours truly,

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cc: Roger Harris, MLA North Coast  
John Duncan, MP, Vancouver Island North

## On the Line with 1129

Week Three (April 24 – April 30)

**SCABS.** That's the single issue that's permeated our picket line this week. In an absolutely disgusting display of disrespect NORampac manager George Dolmat has repeatedly threatened police action in order to get SCABS across our picket line. To date he has been successful. Not without a number of verbal altercations where members have turned up the heat to let both the scab and Dolmat know that we will not forget.

The first incident happened on Wednesday and involved the contractors who put up our security cameras. Read the following for a description of the incident from one of the Union picketers who was on site:

*"This morning, a truck and a van, (contractor looking) approached the picket line. When asked what they were needing, they said that Norampac hadn't paid them for their security camera installation and that they were there to get paid or remove their equipment. I said that they could park on our side of the picket line and walk in to get their money, and if that didn't pan out we could figure something out. It was stated that they were going in. At about that time George showed up, (like in three minutes), and said we had no right to stop them from crossing. I said that I wasn't stopping them, but that I was just having a conversation. George stated that traffic was getting backed up and I responded "I don't give a @#%\$".*

*Anyhow, they crossed. We kept a diligent eye on these two, who by the way are union affiliated, (their words), but it looked to us like they were re-aligning the cameras. I talked to one of them through the fence when he came to his van to get something, asking about the fact that it didn't look like he was taking his equipment. He stated that he had taken the transformers and that the cameras wouldn't work without them. He then went back to the parking lot camera and, (with me watching through binoculars), installed a new transformer.*

*The time finally came, (4 hours later), for them to leave. We beefed up the line, and with the help of our finance committee, (who were there to make up everybody's checks), we showed a strong front. George came out first, and with some sort of fluke, as Colin and Wayne were on their way back into the mill, asked them to hold tight. He approached me and asked if there was going to be trouble. I said "Your damn rights there's going to be trouble!"*

*He said that he could bring the RCMP, and I said go ahead, I'm just going to ask a couple of questions of these scabbers. We stopped them at the line and I asked the one guy which union he was affiliated with, He said IATSE.*

*I said that if he was a union person what the hell was doing crossing the picket line. No real response. I then went on my tirade of calling him a scab, and even worse a*

*lying scab. Expletives excluded. I went on him for about two minutes, with George in the background saying that what I was doing was verbal abuse. (I don't care what George thinks!). I told the IATSE boy that he was finished with Norampac for sure and if I get my way with every other union establishment in this province and hopefully beyond."*

The Local has taken steps to address this issue.

Firstly, the contractor has been reported to the B.C. Federation of Labour. You don't cross another affiliates picket line period. The Fed will be dealing with them.

In response to the company Local 1129 has filed a complaint with the LRB. We can't wait to hear what type of bullshit NORampac comes up with. We'll keep you posted bros.

On Friday, SCABMEISTER Dolmat was at it again when he convinced another contractor to go through our line. This time the contractor parked his van and walked through between SCABMEISTER and Gary Uppal. Upon his return we assured him that when we returned he wouldn't be working in our mill. Neither the SCABMEISTER nor Uppal thought we were serious. BIG MISTAKE! As for the contractor, he was visually shaken. He seemed to think that someone had given him the OK to cross. They did, it was the company. No one from the picket line did that's for dam sure. This can be corroborated by Local President Hart who was on the line at this time.

Every week we'll be updating you on our money being wasted by NORampac. After the third week we've been forced to piss away \$4,095. That's our share of WI/LTD costs that can't be collected. NORampac has thrown away \$41,000 to teach us this lesson. When you've made \$9 million in net profit for the first quarter of 2004 I guess you can afford to piss this much money away. Or can you?

The local has asked for and received a letter from the head plant bean counter Henry Slama stating that the benefits have been continued and the money received by Maritime. It didn't however state that the WI/LTD portion had been paid nor did any confirmation come from Maritime that they had received all this wasted money. Don't get us wrong bros, we think it's been paid. But we want documented proof.

The visits by other trade Unionists, past and present, continue. It was absolutely delightful to see past member Gordon Resvick and his wife Kathleen on the line. True to his unionist spirit, a case of picket pop was quick to appear. So to was the solidarity of Local 789 in evidence, with the appearance on our line of past brother Todd Florence. Local 433 had it's President attend our line as well, Brother Ben Inglis was warmly greeted by the striking members, so too Local 433's business agent Gordon Campbell (NOT THAT GORDON CAMPBELL). Remember to ask these brothers and sisters to sign our guest book bros. It so nice to be able to thank them on this site! Again, to any union member who has been on the line and not been mentioned here please accept our apologies for the oversight.

As we start to settle in for what appears to be a long dispute to put us in our place, the line hardens. The resolve builds. The Solidarity grows. And the continued contempt and disrespect by NORampac becomes self evident.

**NORampac gets NO concessions. OUI want The Pattern. NO more, NO less!**

“JOHN Q. PUBLIC” By Elizabeth C. Gorski — Edited By Timothy E. Parker

**ACROSS**

- 1 Olympus Mons location
- 5 Jazzmen's specialties
- 10 Order in?
- 14 With, to Chef Pepin
- 15 Pond sound
- 16 Cured Pacific salmon
- 17 Unassuming fellow
- 19 Support beam
- 20 Yankee pitcher of 1999
- 21 Harmonize
- 22 Chuck
- 23 On a bias
- 25 Sound from a hot tub
- 27 Actress Scala
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- 29 Some elephants or whales
- 32 Golden Horde member
- 34 Seat of power
- 36 Detaches gradually
- 37 Unassuming fellow
- 39 Sleeping problem
- 41 Howard of "Gandhi"
- 42 Skilled trades
- 44 Chicken \_\_\_
- 45 Initials of a crack team?
- 48 Picnicker's throwaway
- 49 Jug handle
- 51 Chase scene noises
- 53 River to the Caspian
- 55 Diller's spouse, affectionately
- 58 Must-haves
- 59 Old World palm
- 60 Unassuming fellow
- 62 Summers in Montreal
- 63 Chill, so to speak
- 64 Early light
- 65 Order out?
- 66 "Son of a gun!"
- 67 Pt. of CBS

**DOWN**

- 1 Singer Carey
- 2 Antipathetic

- 3 Wine and dine
- 4 Diver's gear
- 5 Sony competitor
- 6 Certain vbs.
- 7 Fuddy-duddy
- 8 Flora partner
- 9 It provides an overview
- 10 Irritated condition
- 11 Winter transport
- 12 Word after tax
- 13 Ankle bones
- 18 Informal noon meeting
- 24 Spelling of "Beverly Hills 90210"
- 26 "I think I'm going to cry!"
- 30 "\_\_\_ you be my neighbor?"
- 31 Lewis Carroll's "The Hunting of the \_\_\_"
- 33 Within walking distance
- 34 Not kosher
- 35 "... \_\_\_ saw Elba"
- 37 Where some prefer cream cheese
- 38 Fashion designer Saint Laurent
- 39 Blamed
- 40 Assess proportionally
- 43 Trip through the Serengeti
- 45 Record player
- 46 Funds
- 47 Acquiesce
- 50 "Bolero" composer
- 52 Clarinets and oboes
- 54 Leave Vegas empty-handed
- 56 "Ain't Misbehavin'" star Carter
- 57 Reach for
- 61 Hatchet

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