



Global Justice

Winter 2009

Stephen Lewis event raises \$35,000



Committee members with Stephen Lewis (centre) – Ron Greening (CUPE 500), Diana Ludwick (CUPE 2348), Denyse Lambert (CUPE 500) and Sue Roth (CUPE 1063).

THE CUPE Manitoba Global Justice Committee has once again helped raise funds to address the impact of HIV and AIDS on people in Africa. The committee collaborated with community groups such as Friends of Uganda to host a dinner in October for 400 people with invited guest speaker Stephen Lewis.

Lewis spoke eloquently about the tragic situation in Africa and particularly about the orphans and their desperate conditions. He noted however that there are dynamic organizations and individuals who are doing a great deal to turn the effects of the disease around. In particular he noted the important role of grandmothers across Africa who remain pillars of strength for their families, communities and nations.

Guests included the Minister of Health Theresa Oswald, Members of the Legislative Assembly, the Deputy High Commission of Uganda and other leaders in the international development community in Winnipeg.

The funds raised will go to the Stephen Lewis Foundation to help Ugandans affected with the disease. The Foundation has already distributed over \$25 million for water, food, health, education, sanitation and housing projects in Africa.

In 2005, the committee members raised \$50,000 for another project in northern Uganda, to help children and families rebuild their lives after the trauma of civil war.

Global Justice is published by the Canadian Union of Public Employees and is available online at www.cupe.ca/globaljustice. Send suggestions to rspence@cupe.ca

CUPE

CUPE meets with Mozambique Labour Minister



Union and NGO representatives met with the National Labour Minister of Mozambique Madame Helena Taipo at the CLC offices in Ottawa. Unions were invited for a discussion of the labour challenges facing Mozambique. It was refreshing to hear her strong defense of the rights of workers and the leadership she has taken to pass legislation to improve their lives. Of special interest to CUPE members is the work her ministry has done to establish unions in the public sector for the first time.

CUPE supports relief efforts in Cuba and Haiti

IN EARLY SEPTEMBER 2008, the islands of Cuba and Haiti were pummeled with two Category 4 hurricanes: first Gustav then Ike. The devastation was severe with homes destroyed or damaged and crops ruined. In Haiti, 600 people died and at least 850,000 people were affected. In Cuba, 2.6 million people, nearly a quarter of the island's population, were forced from their homes with over

440,000 homes damaged. The Cuban death toll was minimal, with four lives being lost in the storm.

CUPE responded to the call for assistance and donated \$15,000.00 through Oxfam-Quebec for relief in Haiti and \$15,000.00 through CoDevelopment Canada in their appeal from our sister union in Cuba – the National Union of Public Sector Workers (SNTAP).

CUPE steps up the fight to stop the Canada-Colombia Free Trade Agreement

CUPE IS WORKING with CLC affiliates on a major campaign to convince the Canadian government to step back from implementing a free trade agreement with Colombia. Brother Paul Moist and other union leaders have taken every opportunity to speak out in opposition and to press for an end to the repression against the social and labour movement in Colombia. A recent letter from CUPE, CUPW, PSAC and NUPGE urging President Uribe of Colombia to end the violence against indigenous peoples and others has been circulated widely in Colombia and elsewhere in Latin America.

On a positive note, CUPE's support for the sugar cane workers has had a positive effect. These workers recently ended their strike after 56 days when companies employing 75 per cent of the workers agreed to their major demands. CUPE along with many other unions sent messages of solidarity and financial support to the workers during their struggle.