

## NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**December 2014 – March 2015**

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Dear Sisters and Brothers:

The New Year has been very busy in terms of issues and events that affect working people. A belated happy new year to each of you.

A small number of difficult strikes/lockouts continued in British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador. Our 43 municipal workers in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Newfoundland and Labrador, members of CUPE Local 2019 were locked out on January 13, 2015 over pension concessions. Our members stood strong and these proposals were withdrawn by mid-February.

On the national scene, the Supreme Court of Canada issued two important decisions affirming the right of RCMP staff to unionize, and the much anticipated Saskatchewan Federation of Labour case in which the Court affirmed that the right to strike is protected by section 2(d) of Canada's Constitution (more on these decisions inside my report).

On the international scene after over 50 years the United States took its first steps to normalize relations with Cuba, including the release from jail of the final three members of the Cuban Five. In Greece, the Syriza Party assumed power in January on an anti-austerity platform.

Oxfam International issued a new report on widening inequality which finds that the wealth of the 80 richest people globally has doubled since 2009. By 2016 the top 1% will own more wealth than the remaining 99% of the world's population.

In February, almost 500 CUPE delegates and staff gathered in Winnipeg for our 2<sup>nd</sup> National Human Rights Conference. Keynote speaker, Quebec NDP MP, Romeo Saganash urged our union to continue to speak out against racism and to continue our call for a judicial inquiry into the cases of almost 1,200 murdered and missing aboriginal women and girls.

As we begin 2015, let me again thank all CUPE activists and staff for your tireless efforts on behalf of our members and our broader goal of social justice for all.

## 1. National Scene

- **Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA)**

While Canada's Parliament has yet to debate the detailed text of the CETA, there have been a couple of hopeful developments.

The governments of Germany and France in January called for talks to re-open over their concerns with the Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) clause. The new Syriza government in Greece has previously indicated that it would veto the ratification of CETA.

The Conservative government in Newfoundland and Labrador have also threatened to turn down CETA over the issue of federal compensation for lost provincial revenue from fish processing.

- **Bill C-377**

The Bill which would provide extraordinary federal intrusion into the internal affairs of trade unions remains in the Canadian Senate.

All private member's Bills are dealt with in order after all government bills. C-377 currently sits number 12 in the order of business and will move down if new government bills emerge. If the Bill is called before the Senate, public hearings will be held.

It appears C-377 may not be dealt with prior to the Senate rising in June along with Parliament (there will be no further Parliamentary session after June until after the October election). We continue to watch this Bill carefully and are in constant contact with supportive senators.

- **Big City Mayors' Caucus Meeting – February 5, 2015 (Toronto)**

I was pleased to appear on a panel before the 22 members of the Big City Mayors' Caucus. The gathering, held in Toronto, focussed on the infrastructure agenda and the need for increased support from senior levels of government.

I provided the mayors with a copy of CUPE's 2014 research on revenue options for Canada's cities and towns.

- **Federal Election**

Our union's plans for the October federal election are well under way. In addition to having an NDP MP Guest speaker at each spring provincial division convention, we will host a breakfast session to discuss the issues and to identify volunteers for NDP campaigns.

We've developed a fact sheet for staff and activists outlining the Conservative/Liberal records in office along with the NDP platform commitments. We have a historic opportunity this year to elect, for the first time federally, an NDP national government; one that will focus on the interests of workers.

In recent weeks I sent thank you letters to the following NDP MPs who have indicated they won't re-offer in the upcoming election.

- Libby Davies (MP) – Vancouver East
- Yvon Godin (MP) – Acadie – Bathurst
- Chris Charlton (MP) – Hamilton Mountain
- Joe Comartin (MP) – Windsor – Techumseh
- Jean Crowder (MP) – Nanaimo - Cowichan

I offered CUPE's sincere thanks to these hard working MPs for their service to working people.

- **Federal Public Sector Bargaining**

The Harper government, led by Treasury Board President, Tony Clement continues to seek massive sick leave concessions from federal employees.

The government seeks to replace the current 15 day/year sick leave accrual system with a short-term disability plan, one that would provide less income support for employees off on sick leave.

Clement has incorrectly stated that movement away from accumulated sick leave credits would represent the federal government lining up with the rest of the public sector. This is not true and I have shared with the PSAC, our own research, which indicates that in the municipal, school board and health care sectors, sick leave accumulation remains the predominant provision.

We must all support all federal unions whose members maybe forced on to picket lines over this issue.

- **CP Rail**

In mid-February the Harper government threatened back-to-work legislation one day into a Teamsters strike. The Parties agreed to mediation/arbitration. This is yet another example of a fundamental disrespect for workers bargaining rights by the Harper government.

- **The Canadian Network of Women's' Shelters and Transition Houses**

Our union supports many progressive groups and non-government organizations (NGOs).

Included in this is the Canada Network of Women's' Shelters and Transition Houses, an umbrella group representing over 350 shelters across Canada (a number of which are represented by CUPE).

Their Sheltersafe.ca initiative sees the creation of Canada's first electronic map for available shelter resources for women and families seeking safety from violent domestic situations.

CUPE's \$10,000 donation to this most worthy endeavour is an important step for our union to live up to the many resolutions we have adopted over the years on this important matter of violence against women.

## 2. Supreme Court of Canada (SCC)

- **Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL) vs. Saskatchewan**

Labour rights under Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms continue to evolve as the SFL decision affirms that section 2(d) of the Charter (Freedom of Association) protects workers' right to strike.

In striking down the government of Saskatchewan essential services legislation, the Court gave the parties one year to come up with a law that respected essential public service and workers rights to free collective bargaining including the right to strike.

Justice Rosalie Abella, writing for the majority, said:

***“The right to strike is not merely derivative of collective bargaining; it is an indispensable component of that right. It seems to me to be the time to give this conclusion constitutional benediction.”***

The Court found that where the public interest demands comprehensive essential services that interfere with collective bargaining, including the right to strike, a process must be put in place for a “meaningful dispute resolution mechanism”. The Court found that the Saskatchewan legislation failed on this count.

The decision canvasses and builds upon past decisions including the BC Health Services case (2007) and the RCMP case (2015) and the clear trend towards application of Charter protection to trade union rights, in this vein the Court said,

***“Clearly the arc bends increasingly towards workplace justice.”***

A momentous decision for which we are indebted to the key role played by CUPE Saskatchewan's health care workers and our external counsel (and former CUPE staff lawyer) Peter Barnacle.

The Court dismissed the portion of the case which challenged Saskatchewan's elimination of automatic certification from the province's Trade Union Act.

- **Meredith vs. Canada**

This case considered the Conservative federal government's Expenditure Restraint Act (ERA) which rolled back RCMP salary hikes (among others).

The Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) held that the ERA did not contravene section 2(d) of the Charter (Freedom of Association) because the wages were rolled back to an increase consistent with rates achieved in agreements achieved through collective bargaining with other groups.

CUPE Local 675 (Radio Canada employees in Quebec) intervened in this case seeking a declaration that CBC had to comply with the October 2007 collective agreement it had negotiated with Local 675. The Supreme Court of Canada found in favour of Local 675 resending their case back to the Quebec Court of Appeal for disposition. Congratulations to CUPE Equality Representative, Sister Annick Desjardins who argued this matter on behalf of Local 675.

- **Mounted Police Association of Ontario vs. Canada**

The Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) reversed a previous decision and struck down provisions of the Federal Public Service Labour Relations Act which prevented RCMP members from joining an independent trade union of their choice.

The SCC found that the present system did not provide RCMP members with a "meaningful process of collective bargaining", thereby violating their workers', section 2(d), Charter rights (Freedom of Association).

In summary, the Charter is evolving in the realm of trade union rights and this Supreme Court continues its trend towards evolving interpretations some three decades into the Charter era.

### **3. National Conferences**

- **National Human Rights Conference – February 5-8, 2015 (Winnipeg, Manitoba)**

About 500 delegates, guests and staff attended CUPE's 2<sup>nd</sup> National Human Rights Conference in Winnipeg in early February.

Delegates in both plenary and workshop sessions focussed on bargaining equality, winning equality through political action and engaging members and the broader community. An incredible array of speakers from outside of our union addressed delegates, including:

- Romeo Saganash, NDP Member of Parliament – Quebec
- Alexa Conradi – Quebec Federation of Women
- Niigaanwewidam James Sinclair – University of Manitoba
- Kevin Chief – Minister of Jobs and the Economy (Manitoba NDP)
- Kent Wong – UCLA Labour Centre

A special highlight was the visit to the Canadian Museum of Human Rights which opened last year in Winnipeg. In summary, delegates formulated a clear path forward for CUPE to continue the pursuit of equality in bargaining, in our communities and on a global basis.

#### **4. Collective Bargaining / Strikes / Lockouts**

There were four CUPE disputes involving job action in this last quarter of 2015. Two of these disputes are on-going and two have settled.

- **CUPE 608 – Naramata Centre (British Columbia)**

Our dispute at this facility continues with no end in sight as members enter the tenth month on the picket line. Despite their mounting frustration with no progress members are solid on the picket line. Repeated efforts to speak with the Moderator of the United Church of Canada and the Moderator of the British Columbia Conference of the United Church continue to be met with silence. Local 608 has a common employer application with the British Columbia Labour Relations Board which we are hopeful will provide positive results.

In early January the Naramata Centre Board officially notified that they were closing the facility. Discussions are on-going in an attempt to ensure that should the facility open once again CUPE continues to hold bargaining rights. As well Local 608 is seeking enhanced severance for their members who have given many years of dedicated service. The employer contrary to the policies of the church has offered little in the way of support.

- **CUPE 7000 – Southern Railway of British Columbia (British Columbia)**

After rejecting the employer's final offer in a supervised vote the 126 members of Local 7000 were locked out on January 5, 2015. At issue is the employer's concessionary stance at the bargaining table when they would come to negotiate. Over a six month period the employer agreed to meet on only six occasions.

The employer has refused to address health and safety issues that have been created as a result of imposed overtime that leads to fatigue. The employer proposes a two-tier approach to post retirement benefits with a view to eliminate this benefit for all new hires. They have offered a below inflation wage increase in a seven year deal.

- **CUPE 3902 – University of Toronto (Ontario)**

Teaching Assistants at the University of Toronto rejected a settlement proposal that fell far short of their demands and as a result these 6,000 members hit the picket lines on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The sole issue remaining in dispute is the funding package which the governing council of the University refuses to move on to date.

- **CUPE 3903 – York University (Ontario)**

Three units representing 4,000 teaching assistants, contract faculty and others took strike action on March 3<sup>rd</sup> after the employer failed to address key demands of Local 3903. The Local is trying to address the low-paid, insecure and precarious employment that dominates York University.

PROVINCE	LOCAL	EMPLOYER	# OF MEMBERS	STRIKE BEGAN	DURATION (days)
British Columbia	608	Naramata Centre	30	May 15, 2014	ongoing
British Columbia	2262	City of Castlegar	34	Nov. 8, 2014	90 days
British Columbia	7000	Southern Railway of B.C.	126	January 5, 2013 (locked out)	ongoing
Newfoundland and Labrador	2019	Happy Valley-Goose Bay	43	January 13, 2015 (locked out)	34 days
Ontario	3902	University of Toronto (TAs)	6,000	March 2, 2015	ongoing
Ontario	3903	York University	4,000	March 3, 2015	ongoing

- **CUPE 2262 – City of Castlegar (British Columbia)**

The 34 members of Local 2262 took job action to fight concessions and protect job security. After 90 days on the picket line the Local achieved a six year deal with increases of \$0.35 year one, followed by two years of 1.5% increases and a further three years of 2% increases. Important to the Local was achieving clarity around exempt positions and work of the bargaining unit. They now have clear language around this issue. As well they have resolved the contentious issue of paid time to investigate grievances.

- **CUPE 2019 – Happy Valley-Goose Bay (Newfoundland and Labrador)**

The Town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay locked out the 43 members of Local 2019 on January 13, 2015 after they refused to agree to a two tier pension arrangement which would see all future employees moved into a defined contribution pension plan. The existing defined benefit pension plan is in a good financial situation such that this proposal was driven by ideology and nothing else.

After 34 days on the line the members are headed back to work with the defined pension plan intact for all current and future employees. The agreement also provides for an 11.5% wage increase over three years and a \$1,500.00 signing bonus.

## **5. Regional Services Division Updates**

### **Airline Division**

Our Air Canada Component completed elections for the five local executives on February 24. Re-elected presidents are Denis Monpetit at the Toronto local, Anna Clauser at the Calgary local, and Guillaume Leduc at the Montréal local. Earlier, Brother Michel Cournoyer was re-elected as Component President, Brother Antonius Lam was elected Secretary-Treasurer, and Sister Edith Gagnon was elected Component Vice-President. Both Alison Kjertinge at the Vancouver Air Canada local (newly elected) and Alejandra Ding at Rouge were acclaimed. Congratulations to all!

Final preparations to commence bargaining with Air Canada this spring are underway. The airline is in better shape and the past pension deficit is gone, so our members look forward to a positive round of bargaining.

### **Hospital Employees Union (HEU) - British Columbia**

HEU recently concluded their 2<sup>nd</sup> Independent Private Sector Bargaining Conference, where 130 HEU activists set priorities for negotiations with private long term care, assisted/independent living and addictions support facilities. The theme of the two day conference was “United for Better Care”.

HEU members face more challenges from the Interior Health Authorities plans to privatize in-house laundry services and the potential contracting out of 175 family-support jobs in 11 communities.

### **British Columbia**

Lockouts at Naramata Centre, Local 608 and Southern Rail, Local 7000, see our union very busy on the picket lines and before the British Columbia Labour Relations Board over a host of legal matters.

Lower Mainland members are very busy in the referendum on a one-half percent increase in the sales tax to fund public transportation enhancements in the Vancouver, Lower Mainland region. While not our preferred method of governance, CUPE British Columbia supports the referendum question to increase support for transit infrastructure.

## **Alberta**

The falling price of oil and the floor crossing of the majority of the Wild Rose MLAs to the governing Progressive Conservatives have combined to create conditions for an almost certain early election this spring.

With the Wild Rose and Liberal parties leaderless, there is room for the Alberta NDP under the new leadership of Rachel Notley, to make gains in the upcoming election, perhaps even official opposition status.

CUPE Alberta in cooperation with our pension coalition partners will ensure that the Local Authorities Pension Plan (LAPP) remaining a good Defined Benefit plan is a front and centre election issue for any politician who knocks on a CUPE member's door during the campaign.

## **Saskatchewan**

CUPE Saskatchewan continues to respond to the Wall government privatization agenda. P3s are front and centre in Saskatchewan, including a number of decisions which will affect our health care members.

On a positive note, participating unions have arrived at an agreement with the City of Regina which preserves the Defined Benefit pension plan, this agreement must now be approved by the Provincial Superintendent of Pensions.

## **Manitoba**

CUPE Local 500 supported a recent motion at Winnipeg City Hall in which the city undertakes to study the performance of private snow clearing operators with the feasibility of bringing more snow clearing services back in house.

CUPE NDP activists were very involved in the recent NDP leadership campaign which saw Greg Selinger re-elected as NDP leader.

## **Ontario**

Biggest news out of CUPE Ontario this year is Sister Candace Rennick, Secretary-Treasurer, giving birth to her son, Jackson in early February. My sincere congratulations to Candace and her partner, and of course Jackson, the newest member of the CUPE family!

Ontario school board workers met in conference to formalize plans for bargaining this year. With 55,000 members, Ontario school board workers represent the largest single bargaining table with our National Union. We of course, will do our utmost to assist these members in achieving a fair settlement.

Implementation of Ontario's Social Assistance Management System (SAMS) has been a disaster. Many problems, too many to mention, have caused great suffering to Ontario's vulnerable citizens in need of assistance. The implementation has been equally disastrous for CUPE members who have been charged with the responsibility of administering a broken technology with huge cost overruns. CUPE Ontario has been joined by municipalities in requesting the government to return to the previous service which met clients' needs.

CUPE Ontario has made a formal submission regarding the proposed Ontario Registered Pension Plan (ORPP).

## **Quebec**

Municipal workers in Quebec have launched a legal challenge in response to the adoption of Bill 3 which removes the right for workers to negotiate their pension issues.

The Quebec National Assembly has also recently adopted Bill 10 which will force representation votes resulting from health care restructuring. The votes will most likely occur in 2016, upon conclusion of Common Front bargaining.

CUPE Local 675 members scored a victory in the Supreme Court of Canada when federal wage restraint measures were applied to Radio-Canada staff without proper consultation. Congratulations to CUPE Equality Representative, Sister Annick Desjardins for her hard work on this important file.

Brother Marco Lutfy, Regional Vice-President on our National Executive Board has stepped down; I want to thank Brother Lutfy for his dedicated service as a Quebec Regional Vice-President on our National Executive Board. I also congratulate Brother Benoit Bouchard (CUPE Local 4250, Quebec Hydro) upon his election as Regional Vice-President of Quebec to replace Brother Lutfy.

## **Prince Edward Island (PEI)**

The announced retirement of PEI Premier Robert Ghiz, will see a new premier sworn in this spring. On February 21, 2015 PEI Liberals elected Wade MacLauchlan as their new leader, and Premier. A former head of the University of Prince Edward Island, our provincial leadership has met with Mr. MacLauchlan to discuss issues of importance to our members on Prince Edward Island.

## **New Brunswick**

The number one issue facing our members in New Brunswick is the austerity agenda and the province's plans to deal with a \$600 million deficit (a deficit brought about by radical tax cuts in recent years).

Provincial correctional officers, members of CUPE Local 1251 finally achieved a tentative agreement after over three years of bargaining, outstanding issues, including wages, will be decided by interest arbitration.

CUPE 1418 (provincial social workers) President, Brother Steve Drost, has stepped down as Regional Vice-President for New Brunswick on our National Executive Board, due to heavy workload in his local. My sincere thanks to Brother Drost for his dedicated service to our National Executive Board.

## **Nova Scotia**

By far, the biggest issue for our union has been health care restructuring under Bill 1 and Arbitrator Jim Dorsey. Our five health care locals (835, 1933, 2435, 2525, and 4150) have merged into CUPE Local 8920.

While it is not clear where this will all end our local union leaders, our division leadership and our staff, all of whom have worked incredibly hard over recent months, and done our union proud.

## **Newfoundland and Labrador**

The lockout of 43 municipal workers, members of CUPE Local 2019 employed by the town of Happy Valley-Goose Bay ended successfully when the employer withdrew its pension concessions from the bargaining table.

Newfoundland and Labrador NDP Leader, Lorraine Michael has announced plans to step down as leader. Lorraine built our Party considerably and has been a great friend to CUPE, we wish her all the very best.

Former Fisheries Union (Unifor) Leader, Early McCurdy has announced his intention to seek the leadership of the Newfoundland and Labrador NDP.

## **6. Global Justice / International Solidarity**

### **Davos 2015**

The world's elite gathered again this January in Davos, Switzerland. As mentioned Oxfam International published a report on rising inequality throughout the globe, they also proposed that world leaders embrace a progressive agenda, one that includes:

- Clamping down on tax dodging by individuals and corporations.
- Increased investment in universal health care and education services.
- Shift tax burden from labour and consumption towards capital and wealth.
- Concrete steps towards a living wage for all workers and the establishment of a global goal to reduce inequality.

## **The Cuban 5**

In December US President Barack Obama announced plans to take the first steps towards normalizing US-Cuba relations. The remaining three imprisoned members of the Cuban 5 were released after 16 years of incarceration.

Our national union, including many individual global justice activists have written countless letters and attended numerous vigils and demonstrations calling for the release of the Cuban 5.

## **United States – Right to work laws**

The shift right in the November 2014 US mid-term elections is playing itself out with an expansion of right-to-work laws in Illinois and Missouri.

Our sister union, AFSCME held an emergency meeting of key leaders in December 2014 to discuss strategy to combat right wing laws including the expected elimination of automatic dues deduction for public employees in a number of states.

## **UN World Conference on Disaster Risk Reduction (March 14-18, 2015 / Sendai, Japan)**

In January we wrote Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs urging that our country's voice to recognize ambulance drivers, emergency medical technicians, health care professional and all other front-line workers as key stakeholders in the upcoming UN Conference.

Working alongside our global union, Public Services International (PSI), CUPE called for the following amendments to the UN document:

“Multilateral and bilateral donors should recognize the important role of first responders and frontline workers in disaster response and risk reduction, and help ensure that these predominantly public sector workers have the tools and training to do their jobs, in the interest of all.”

## **Honduras and Colombia**

In January, International Solidarity Officer Sister Kelti Cameron met with CUPE National Global Justice Fund Latin American partners in Colombia (SINTRACUAVALLE, NOMADESC), Nicaragua (MEC) and Honduras (CODEMUH).

The purpose of the visit was to consider how we may strengthen relations of solidarity with our partners to support our respective work protecting and strengthening the labour movement in Canada and in Latin American.

We now have a better understanding of the political, economic and human rights situation in the respective countries, and how this affects our partner's work as labour rights organizations and activists.

Public Service International (PSI) supported our visit with SINTRACUAVALLE in Colombia and will provide an opportunity for a follow-up discussion during the PSI Inter American Regional Conference (IAMRECON) in Mexico in April

## **Japan**

In January the Canadian Labour Congress received an invitation from the Japanese Trade Union Confederation (RENGO) to send a representative to a forum on the role of trade unions in delivering quality public services. This request was passed on to us as Canada's largest public sector union. I requested Research Representative Keith Reynolds to represent us at the February 24<sup>th</sup> forum.

Japanese public sector unions share many of the same problems faced by public sector union around the world. Trade union rights are restricted and austerity is used as an excuse for public service cuts.

Our representative from CUPE and a representative of the UK's Trade Union Congress (TUC) presented information on unions in our countries and how we are facing these issues. This was followed by a rally and march to Japan's parliament by 3,000 people who delivered a resolution to parliamentarians.

## **7. Organizing Report**

During the period of December 1, 2014 to February 28, 2015 CUPE organized 1,218 new members in 20 bargaining units. The largest unit organized was at King's College in Ontario covering 187 post-secondary workers. CUPE Local 7800 won a representation vote at Hamilton Health Sciences bringing in 250 new members formerly with CLAC. We welcome all of these members into the CUPE family.

Across the country we organized 693 members in health care, 169 members in municipalities, 18 members in social services, 63 members in K-12 and 305 members in post-secondary sector.

We are currently involved in 48 active campaigns that if successful would bring 10,687 new members into CUPE. At Labour Boards across the country we have 7 projects representing 499 new members waiting for certification votes to be conducted. There are 7 restructuring projects on-going that will result in representation votes affecting 1,934 CUPE members.

## **8. Personal / In-memoriam**

I offer my sincere condolences to the families of the following CUPE members, staff and retirees:

- Sister Radika Nankissoor, Maintenance, CUPE Local 1356 (York University, Ontario)
- Sister Veronika Sophie Weaver, CUPE Local 3479 (North Island College, British Columbia)
- Brother Dellis Partridge, School Bus Driver, CUPE Local 4946 (Peace River School Division, Alberta)
- Brother Harl Hawley, Pool Service Person, CUPE Local 30 (City of Edmonton)
- Brother Tom Mayo, retiree and former Servicing Representative, Newfoundland and Labrador
- Sister Jane Inkman, Clerical Staff (Cranbrook Area Office, British Columbia)
- Sister Diane Jones, Clerical Staff (Airline Division – Ontario)
- Brother Scott Johnson, building service worker, University of British Columbia, CUPE Local 116
- Sister Charlene Ellis, Air Canada flight attendant and activist
- Sister Isabelle Noseworthy, retired CUPE Newfoundland and Labrador activist
- Sister Shirley Spivak, retired CUPE activist, Grand Prairie Municipal Hospital, Alberta
- Brother Alain Bissonnette, CUPE Local 503 (City of Ottawa) – workplace fatality
- Brother John MacLeod, CUPE Local 1867 (workplace fatality)
- Brother Nilo Tamang Sanchez, CUPE Local 59 (City of Saskatoon)
- Monique Fleury, mother of Brother Charles Fleury

## **Retirements**

My sincere thanks to each of the following CUPE staff for their many years of dedicated service to our union.

- Edith Wolfe, Grande Prairie Office – January 1, 2015
- Joe Badali, B. C. Regional Office – February 1, 2015
- Robert Bellrose, Quebec Regional Office – February 1, 2015
- Colette Proctor, Ontario Regional Office – February 1, 2015
- Patricia Beaudoin, Rouyn Noranda Area Office – March 1, 2015
- Matthew Graves, Ontario Regional Office – March 1, 2015
- Heather Inglis, B.C. Regional Office – March 1, 2015
- Nicole Chénier, National Office – March 1, 2015
- Jim Squires, Cornwall Area Office – March 1, 2015
- Lise Therrien, Quebec Area Office – May 1, 2015
- Monique Drapeau, North Bay Area Office – June 1, 2015
- Susan Jansen, Victoria Area Office – January 1, 2016
- Mariette Danis, National Office – June 1, 2016

## **Conclusion**

As is evident throughout this report, already 2015 has been a very busy year for CUPE activists from coast to coast.

In January and February Brother Charles and I met with CUPE staff in all eight regions to listen to reports from our hard-working staff on the issues members face right across the country.

In March, we begin three months of provincial division conventions, with all 10 provinces meeting during this period. At each of these conventions we'll focus on the October 2015 federal election and the historic opportunity we have to elect our first ever NDP federal government.

In the words of our former Leader, Jack Layton, “Don’t let them ever tell you that it can’t be done.”

In closing, I salute all activists and staff; your collective efforts assist our members and help build a better Canada.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Paul Moist". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PAUL MOIST  
National President

:jv/ceu  
March 24, 2015 | 11:45 am