



CUPE CELEBRATES

A report on the actions, events and trends that shaped Canada's largest union in 2004



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INTRODUCTION

A CUPE promise made



At our 2003 national convention, we made a promise to each other. We said we would set a course of action – a strategic direction – that would guide our union through the struggles of the following years.

As we move into 2005, another convention year (our 22nd), we can look back and feel proud that we have kept our promise. We have tackled the tough issues, the difficult battles, of 2004. We have done it with the power that we can all count on to support our vast and diverse membership. And we have done it with a sense of solidarity that has never been more important to public sector working people.

This has been a year of threats to our jobs and the services we provide to our communities. It has been a year of fighting back on picket lines, in council chambers, in the courts and on the international scene.

We have faced some of the worst times in our 41 years. But we have come through. We have looked the employer in the eye when necessary and said “We won’t back down”. We have stood up to governments that would tear down our communities and wipe out the public sector. We have taken up the challenge of defeating those governments, and we will continue to do so.

We have worked hard to influence decision-makers at all levels to keep all communities strong and healthy. We have used our resources, our hard-earned dues and our hard-working activists and staff, to strengthen and protect our job security and to re-emphasize our place as protectors of our communities.

We have shown that we are Canada’s community union. We are there for our neighbours as never before. We are the guardians of a public legacy. We share the vision of a fair and just society where all people can count on public services without fear of them being sold off to the highest private bidder.

It has been a year of struggle, of successes and of great challenges. But CUPE has proven once again that it is not only Canada’s largest union, but among its greatest.

Handwritten signature of Paul Moist in black ink.

Paul Moist
National President

Handwritten signature of Claude Généreux in black ink.

Claude Généreux
National Secretary-Treasurer



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Our three priorities

To accurately assess our union's progress in 2004, we must first revisit the policy we adopted at our 2003 convention. At that meeting, we set three strategic priorities for CUPE.

1. Strengthen bargaining power to defend and make gains

- Develop a strategic plan to achieve greater coordination/centralization of bargaining in every sector.
- With solidarity pacts commit members to take action when another group of workers is under attack.
- Coordinate with other unions wherever we represent workers in the same sector.
- Develop a better exchange of information on bargaining and improved access to computerized information on collective agreement provisions.
- Build capacity to mobilize members to take action and to provide strike support to others.
- Increase affiliations.
- Organize in new, creative ways – particularly small workplaces.
- Identify CUPE-wide bargaining priorities.
- Take political action to support collective bargaining and to fight legislated attacks.
- Help CUPE district councils play a more active role in supporting collective bargaining, political action and strike support.

Did you know?

October 5 is
Communities Day,
a time to celebrate
the importance of
community services
and the public service
work of CUPE members
across Canada.

2. Increase day-to-day effectiveness as a union

- Study problems and weaknesses, then take effective remedial action.
- Develop the skills of local union/bargaining council leaders and activists.
- Develop staff skills to assist local unions and bargaining councils in union building.
- Develop programs to increase the participation of women and members of other equality-seeking groups at all levels.
- Develop programs to get local unions to maintain active membership lists, including e-mail addresses.

3. Intensify the campaign to stop contracting out and privatization

- Actively organize against every attempt to privatize or contract out in our jurisdiction.
- Coordinate anti-privatization work on a national basis by giving support to local and provincial strategic battles and by sharing information and experiences across the country.
- Fight for successor representation rights. Where such rights don't exist, follow our work by organizing workers of contracted-out or privatized services.
- Engage broad labour movement support in the fight against privatization. Get the movement to reject attempts by employers and other unions to undermine negotiated labour standards by signing sub-standard voluntary-recognition agreements.
- Stop pension funds from investing in privatization schemes.
- Vigorously defend job security protections through coordinated/centralized bargaining actions up to and including strike action regionally, provincially or nationally.
- Mobilize against free trade agreements.
- Build links with unions everywhere in the global fight against privatization.
- Develop strategies and campaigns to bring specific privatized services back into the public sector. Identify strategic targets such as long-term care, waste management services, information technology, food and other services.

It was a tall order. How did we tackle these three priorities? How did we move forward together in the common interest and on a common front line?

MOVING THE LINE FORWARD

Our union's progress

Strengthening our bargaining power

If we were just going by the numbers, size matters and CUPE is big. As of November 2004, we had 539,524 members. That's up from 456,580 in 1995 and 306,835 in 1985. We've grown by more than 230,000 members in 20 years.

The majority of our members are in locals of more than 1,000 members. Yet the majority of our locals have less than 100 members. This means dealing with different bargaining strategies and a wide variety of issues.

The numbers tell an important story, but there is much more. CUPE is about people – working people – and their struggles to keep our communities strong. Remarkably, in 2004, only 37 locals were engaged in strikes or facing lockouts of nine days or more. About 29,000 members walked the picket line. Many thousands of others walked in support.

Some of those actions were high-profile struggles. Some were provincewide strikes and some took place in tiny communities that are mere pinpricks on the map of Canada.

One of the big ones was health care bargaining in British Columbia. The Hospital Employees' Union, our B.C. health care division, battled against privatization. CUPE members across B.C. stood side-by-side with HEU members against a provincial government that continues to attack our members at every turn. As this is written, those members are preparing to do everything in CUPE's power to unseat the unpopular provincial government that has caused such tremendous social unrest.

Another big one was the four-week strike in Newfoundland and Labrador. Once again CUPE, alongside our sisters and brothers in the Newfoundland Association of Public and Private Employees

Did you know?

About 61 per cent of locals (1,236) have 100 or fewer members.

These locals represent 54,179 members or 10.05 per cent of the total membership.

About 34 per cent of locals (689) have between 100 and 1,000 members. These locals represent 217,876 members or 40.43

per cent of the total membership. About 4.5 per cent of locals have 1,000 or more

members. These locals represent 266,795 members or 49.51 per cent of the total membership.

stood strong together against an anti-labour provincial government. The strike involved 20,000 workers, including 3,500 CUPE members.

Then there were the smaller ones. Home care workers in Ituna, Sask., struggled for months to establish a first collective agreement. Municipal workers in Sainte-Béatrix and Saint-Jean-de-Matha, Que., challenged the record for the longest CUPE strike. Hydro workers in Sudbury, Ont., battled concessions and won. City workers in Nelson, B.C., fought back against a city council bid to privatize their jobs, using a Strong Communities campaign to win public support.

We have 3,700 collective agreements in CUPE, 737 of them were negotiated in 2004. Some of them were hard-won over months of difficult bargaining. Ninety-five per cent of those agreements were achieved, not through job action, but through the hard work of members and staff working side by side.

Making CUPE more effective

CUPE has a long-standing policy and practice of resisting attacks on our collective agreement rights and on free collective bargaining.

In 2004, these attacks intensified. In an unprecedented abuse of state power, the governments of British Columbia and Newfoundland and Labrador legislated away our right to strike and stripped away significant collective agreement provisions. Major contract concessions were also forced on our members at Air Canada. In this case, it was as a result of court-imposed negotiations brought on by bankruptcy protection proceedings.

At the heart of this assault is the push by certain governments to weaken both the legal rights of unions and our bargaining power. This would allow corporations to turn the public sector into a source of profit and maximize their earnings at the expense of Canadian workers and their families.

Our collective agreements and free collective bargaining stand in the way of this restructuring. Our demonstrated willingness to defend our negotiated rights through strike action is the reason provincial governments are using their legislative and state power against us.

At our 2003 national convention, we anticipated this renewed attack and adopted an ambitious strategic program to strengthen our collective bargaining power.

The dramatic events that have taken place in B.C., Newfoundland and Labrador and at Air Canada since our last convention tell us that we must accelerate this program. Our entire union must confront this reality so that we can take steps to reorganize ourselves to build the power needed to win.

To that end, in June 2004 the National Executive Board put in place a plan to defend free collective bargaining and stop concessions.

Stopping privatization

There wasn't a day in 2004 when we were not tackling our third priority: fighting contracting out and privatization. We dedicated more than \$1 million from our national defence fund to fighting privatization at the national and regional levels.

Some of this money went to fighting public private partnership (P3) hospitals in Ontario, challenging privatized health care in British Columbia and fighting the privatization and deregulation of hydro across the country. In addition, another \$125,000 supported local and regional campaigns fighting privatization and contracting out.

To assist in those daily struggles, CUPE National has developed a strategic initiative called Rebuilding Strong Communities. The initiative includes three broad campaigns focusing on health care, child care and cities. The goal of each is to strengthen public financial investment in these sectors as an alternative to privatization. Our work has involved lobbying governments so that they do not undermine our work in delivering these critical public services.

Having laid the groundwork for Rebuilding Strong Communities, 2005 is the year to expand this initiative. That is why CUPE National is engaged in a drive to ensure that the *Canada Health Act* is enforced and that provinces are not allowed to privatize medicare. We are also fighting to ensure that the new national child care program is a public one. And CUPE will lead the way in the push to give cities a new deal that keeps them public.

Part of this initiative is supporting the diversity of our communities and making them healthier, safer places for everyone.

In 2004, we declared October 5 Communities Day. We encouraged locals to get active in their communities. We want the day to be a celebration of the important work CUPE

Did you know?

Our national union operates 64 offices across Canada. We are a labour presence throughout the country in big cities and small towns alike. As of December 31, 2004, CUPE National employed 660 staff (139 at national office and 521 in the regions). CUPE members now own two regional offices and three area offices. Rather than leasing office space we are building equity and membership pride.

Did you know?

CUPE members collectively paid about \$2.2 billion in income taxes in 2004. This level of government revenue could have been used to fund 49,660 long-term-care spaces, 39,055 spaces for university students or 229,000 child care spaces.

members do to keep their communities strong and to protect them against the devastation of privatization and other community-destroying government decisions.

It is also a day to show our communities that we care about the quality of life enjoyed by our families and our neighbours. Some locals chose to collect food and clothing on Communities Day. Others offered the homeless a community barbecue or pancake breakfast. Still others celebrated their contributions during community crises such as floods, wild fires and other disasters.

OUR RESOURCES

Human and financial power and accountability

Members and locals sometimes ask what they get for their dues dollars. Where does our money go? Why aren't we getting back exactly what we put into the national pot?

The answer is simple. Your dues money is working for you in Quesnel, B.C., in Vulcan, Alta., in Kamsack, Sask., in Flin Flon, Man., in Northern Ontario, in Montreal, in Moncton, N.B., in Summerside, P.E.I., in Bishop's Falls, Nfld. And it is there to work for you in your town when you need it.

Our dues money is also in Ottawa to keep our union rolling in the strategic directions that members debate and set at national conventions. And it is sometimes working for us in South Africa or Colombia or Argentina. In 2004, it was also working in Sri Lanka and Thailand where Oxfam workers, CUPE members, by the way, were helping people hit by the tsunamis.

So the dues money is everywhere and it is serving all CUPE members all the time.

The good news is that we reached a financial turning point at the end of 2004. Coming out of the lean years of the 1990s, we saw our financial picture brighten. We also saw a renewed effort to stabilize our finances. For example, some CUPE offices are now housed in buildings that CUPE members collectively own. The savings will help improve service to all members.

The picture brightened even more as we saw our general fund, the money used to run our union, generate revenue of \$118 million. We recorded total expenses of \$113 million.

The national strike fund was also healthier in 2004. In December, we had a cash balance of \$23.8 million. That was up from \$8.8 million in December 2003.

Thanks to the strength and commitment of all members, we were able to lift the solidarity levy (.04%). Note that the constitutional levy (.04%) remains until the fund's cash balance hits \$25 million.

The national defence fund (\$5.68 million) is used to assist locals and divisions in their battles against privatization and other employer threats to our jobs and public services. Through this fund you can request that national share the costs of your campaigns to both strengthen your local power and assist your communities to rebuild and become stronger.

Did you know?

CUPE members earn about \$16.8 billion a year. That's an average of \$31,256 per member.

Our members' total earnings are greater than the budgets of six provincial governments.

In 2004, we funded 70 cost-share campaigns, totaling about \$1,144,000. In addition, we fully funded 21 strike-averting campaigns, totaling about \$440,000, and 11 strike-support campaigns, totaling about \$330,000.

The National Executive Board has strengthened the regulations governing access to the national defence fund, ensuring greater equity of access and increasing accountability.

Of course, money power must go hand in hand with member power. Our dues money is meant to help members keep CUPE the strongest union force in the country, and to get us the best deals possible at the bargaining table. It is also there to ensure that members have the lobbying power needed to influence law-makers and political decision-makers.

National Executive Board

The National Executive Board governs our union between conventions. In 2004, the NEB and the National Executive Committee, made up of our two national officers and the five general vice-presidents, met six times. National officers report on the meetings to CUPE's chartered organizations. Highlights for 2004 include:

- Approval of CUPE's 2004 budget in December 2003. About \$5.76 million was set aside in our national defence fund to cover organizing, cost-share campaigns and national strategic initiatives.
- In February 2004, the NEB held a strategic planning retreat to discuss NEB governance and implementation of the national convention's strategic directions policy document.
- Throughout 2004, the NEB dealt continuously with the Hospital Employees' Union (HEU)/Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada (IWA) dispute through the Canadian Labour Congress. CUPE convinced the CLC to impose Level 2 sanctions on the IWA due to their repeated violations of the CLC constitution. The IWA continued signing voluntary agreements with multinational corporations for contracted-out health care support work.

- On April 30–May 2, 2004, we convened a first-ever gathering of all 13 CUPE national committees and working groups.
- The June 2004 NEB meeting approved a “Plan to Fight Concessions and Defend Free Collective Bargaining”.
- At each meeting in 2004, the NEB approved a resolution on significant issues of the day, including:
 - Support for Stelco workers’ pension fight and a call for federal reform of pension governance (March 2004)
 - Support for anti-racism efforts, in particular in response to incidents in Toronto (June 2004)
 - Solidarity and support for striking Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) members (September 2004)
 - Opposition to any Canadian government support for the United States ballistic missile defence system (December 2004)
- The NEB also focused on improving CUPE’s relations with all other unions through our work at the CLC and on federations of labour executives.
- The NEB reiterated the need to promote the solidarity of Canadian workers by forging strong and principled relations with other unions. It encouraged members to support all picket lines and to negotiate bargaining pacts with other unions.
- CUPE convened two public sector all-presidents’ meetings in 2004 – CUPE, NUPGE (National Union of Public and General Employees), PSAC, CFNU (Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions), SEIU (Service Employees International Union) and CUPW (Canadian Union of Postal Workers).
- The NEB, with the assistance of outside actuarial, legal and accounting expertise, examined CUPE’s financial strength looking as far ahead as 2016.
- While our operating budget and strike fund are healthy, we have unfunded liabilities related to benefit obligations. The NEB has taken important first steps to address these obligations.

Did you know?

At the end of 2004, when the tsunamis hit the shores of several Asian countries, CUPE was one of the first organizations to offer help, pledging \$100,000 to assist Oxfam, an agency staffed by CUPE members, to provide water and medical supplies to the hardest hit regions.

Did you know?

In 2004, we organized more than 60 new bargaining units and continued to bring public sector workers into our ranks.

- In 2004, the national president's office processed amendments to 397 bylaws on behalf of locals, divisions, district councils and coordinating committees.
- The NEB dealt with many requests for new per capita arrangements. While the NEB has not approved any new arrangements, we have reviewed the history of our per capita provisions and the ways assistance is provided to many locals (i.e., arbitration cost-sharing, cost-share campaigns).

Organizing and regional services department

Organizing and regional services often report what's happening in the field, but we rarely identify the scope and breadth of work done by department staff at national office.

Although our primary responsibility is staffing we are also involved in:

- Coordinating the implementation of national strategic policies with each region;
- Working on internal labour relations issues;
- Arranging administrative training for regional directors and assistant directors;
- Maintaining job applicants' files and conducting interviews of potential servicing representatives;
- Conducting workshops in areas of organizing, building strong local unions and strategic planning with staff and local unions;
- National field coordination of CUPE political action initiatives;
- Coordination of the federal election;
- Liaison with the Canadian Labour Congress on many issues;
- Developing internal policy recommendations for staff recruitment and training;
- Developing and administering the national organizing budget;

- Developing initiatives for locals and membership including new member materials and materials for organizing potential members;
- Responding to membership concerns.

In 2004, each region focused on implementing the strategic directions policy passed at our 2003 convention. To this end, organizing and regional services staff worked shoulder to shoulder with regional staff, activists and members.

In the Maritimes, we helped develop an action plan to assist 6,500 hospital workers to achieve a settlement after a 3 1/2-week strike. In Alberta, we identified acute and long-term care locals and worked with staff and members to create the building blocks for a strong local union. We also mapped out an action plan to defend our Alberta locals from unwelcome and destructive raids from other unions.

Across the country, we worked with staff, activists and locals in political action initiatives as well as the coordination of CUPE's federal election campaign. In 2004, we organized more than 60 new bargaining units and continued to bring public sector workers into our ranks.

Union development department

CUPE's union development department provides membership education services, staff training, literacy program assistance, workshop facilitation and other services.

In 2004, the most popular member education workshops (in no particular order) were effective stewarding, bargaining, health and safety, workplace harassment, pensions, building strong locals, resolving conflict and retirement planning.

In 2004, about 400 CUPE staff members participated in week-long training sessions. Some of the courses: arbitration training, bargaining benefits, discipline and discharge, duty to accommodate, labour relations board, general trends and leading cases, and computer training.

Did you know?

CUPE has 11 education representatives, five education program developers and 253 active member facilitators supported by five clerical and administrative employees. In 2004, CUPE delivered 665 certificate courses to 8,808 members.

The department facilitated many special meetings and conferences during the year. These included:

- An historic CUPE BC aboriginal gathering,
- An equity perspective workshop at the CUPE Ontario human rights conference,
- CUPE Saskatchewan women's conference,
- CUPE Alberta and Airline Division think tanks,
- Assistance with New Brunswick's health care strike,
- CUPE Alberta's anti-privatization conference, and
- The "Building Our Bargaining and Political Power" workshop sponsored by the Ontario social service workers' coordinating committee.

The department also undertook several new initiatives in 2004. These included:

- A new policy framework on recruitment and training of member facilitators,
- A revised workshop and handbook for financial officers,
- A new workshop called "From Apathy to Action",
- Updates for "Duty to Accommodate" and "Duty of Fair Representation" workshops,
- A school board budget workshop,
- A pension fund trustees' course, and
- A revised anti-racism course.

Within the department, CUPE's literacy reference group coordinates our literacy work. Phase 4 of CUPE's literacy project was signed with the federal government on November 1, 2004. It runs to October 31, 2006. The federal government provided \$350,773 in funding. This represents 43 per cent of anticipated project costs.

The project stresses the use of clear language, a growing area of work. Staff members are working with the Canadian Association of Municipal Administrators (CAMA) to encourage employers to use clear language policies with employees and the public.

Clear language workshops were held at the national health and safety conference in Montreal in November 2004. The project published three issues of "Literacy News" and produced 1,500 copies of CUPE's new guide, "Do Your Members Know Their Contract: A Clear Language Guide for CUPE Locals". As well, a new national literacy award will be launched at the 2005 national convention.

National services department

Communications branch

This year, as in others, CUPE communications was involved in virtually all aspects of our union's work. From local campaigns to broad national initiatives, the branch played a role in assisting members to fight back, lobby and survive the strikes and lockouts of 2004.

The branch works closely with our national leaders, departments and other branches to keep members well informed about CUPE. It also works with locals, district councils and divisions, striving to give our union a higher media profile and more public recognition. Branch staff members work with locals to develop campaigns, produce newsletters and websites and coordinate strike support and political action.

In 2004, the branch produced three issues of Organize, our national magazine, 10 issues of P3 Alert, and 50 editions of FastFacts, our weekly national newsletter, including a total of 460 news items.

The CUPE National website, cupe.ca, attracted 30,000-35,000 unique visitors a month (not counting CUPE staff). Each of these visitors goes to 10 to 15 pages on the site. For example, in October 2004 we had 460,000 hits. The site also hosts about 200 CUPE locals' web pages. Our site won the LabourStart 'Best site of the year' award, making it the only labour site to do so twice in a row.

On the media front, the branch recorded 5,422 media 'hits' or an average of about 15 a day. This compares favourably with other unions. Health care was the dominant issue, with a total of 1,138 hits. It was followed by the "New Deal for Cities", 455 hits and child care, 128 hits.

Communications staff members work closely with other branches to produce newsletters and other documents, videos and other communications tools. Throughout the year, the branch places advertising in various progressive publications and assists with major annual events.

Did you know?

In 2004, CUPE's national website again won the LabourStart 'Best site of the year' award, making it the only labour site to do so twice in a row.

Did you know?

CUPE research staff members are coding 3,700 collective agreements into a new information system called CAIS, the collective agreement information system.

In 2004, the branch supported new organizing, lobbying, food drives, flood relief, anti-contracting-out campaigns, elections and many local initiatives.

Through its design shop and other functions, CUPE communications was also heavily engaged in local, regional and national campaign work. This included developing a kit to support our national Rebuilding Strong Communities campaign initiative. It was mailed to all chartered organizations.

Branch staff members have also facilitated dozens of educational workshops and week-long schools and provided educational assistance at numerous conferences and division conventions.

Research and job evaluation branch

CUPE's research and job evaluation branch provides research, bargaining and facilitation services to locals across Canada. Some highlights from 2004 include:

Strengthening bargaining

- CUPE's new collective agreement information system (CAIS) is up and running. It replaces our former SALAD system and is designed to support bargaining and assist organizing efforts. Staff members are coding 3,700 collective agreements into the system.
- Research staff participated in bargaining conferences in all sectors and all regions of Canada.
- *Tabletalk*, highlighting settlement trends and Consumer Price Index (CPI) information, is issued quarterly.
- A new quarterly publication, "Economic Climate for Bargaining", was launched in 2004.
- A new benefits kit was developed to assist locals in combating employer demands for benefit concessions.
- Research and job evaluation staff assists locals in preparing for interest arbitration hearings. The branch was heavily involved in Air Canada's bankruptcy proceeding in 2004.

Increasing our day-to-day effectiveness

- Branch staff provide support for CUPE's national committees and working groups.
- A new publication, "Debunking the Myths about Aboriginal Peoples – A Guide for CUPE Members", was developed in 2004.
- Assistance has been offered to locals on reading budgets, costing benefits and information management.
- In the regions, research staff members assist locals and servicing representatives with bargaining, membership surveys and contract analysis, among other duties.

Intensifying the campaign against contracting out and privatization

CUPE has a proud history of fighting against contracting out and privatization of the public sector. Last year work in this area included:

- Opposition to the Richmond–Airport–Vancouver (RAV) rapid transit P3;
- Preparing the research report, "P3 Schools: Public Interest vs. Private Profits";
- Bringing the Hamilton water and wastewater system back in-house;
- Blocking the privatization of the municipally run Rainycrest Home for the Aged in Ontario;
- Work with coalition partners to oppose P3 hospitals and privatization of electricity in Ontario;
- New research on urban infrastructure and new forms of funding infrastructure renewal;
- Work with activists on many federal, provincial and municipal lobbying efforts;
- Continued work on trade deals and their negative impact on public services and employment insurance work with the Canadian Labour Congress;
- Job evaluation staff work with locals in support of pay equity initiatives, including work with new locals created by mergers and amalgamations;
- A new initiative, the "Just Pay" software program, assists staff and members to implement job evaluation and pay equity systems.

Did you know?

CUPE locals and staff members contributed \$13,820 to our Global Justice fund in 2004. CUPE National gave \$54,461.70. And we got \$42,053 in matching grants from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

Our global justice work

CUPE's Global Justice fund (formerly Union Aid) is governed by the National Executive Committee. Our national global justice committee administers the fund and much of CUPE's international work. A research staff member works with the committee.

In 2004, contributions to the fund totalled \$126,765.16. CUPE National continues to be the major contributor (\$54,461.70). CUPE locals and CUPE staff contributed \$13,820. Through the Canadian Labour Congress labour international development program with the Canadian International Development Agency, CUPE received \$42,053 for project and development education work.

Last year, CUPE launched a major campaign to solicit contributions from locals and staff. The sale of promotional materials has raised \$8,445. The fund was used to finance projects approved by the board of directors on the recommendation of the national committee.

Some of that work includes:

- The first health care workers' exchange in Niagara Falls, Ont.;
- A "Gender and Privatization" research project with the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU), with three CUPE members participating in the final workshop in South Africa;
- The "Canada-Colombia Defending the Public Sector" speaking tour, with five Colombian public sector unionists travelling to the east and west coasts in collaboration with the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and the Public Service Alliance of Canada;
- On-going projects in Cuba, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Honduras sponsored by CUPE BC and the Hospital Employees' Union, CUPE's B.C. health care division, focused on women 'Maquiladora' workers;
- Saskatchewan's "Chile Project" in support of trade union and human rights education;
- Several contributions to smaller projects throughout 2004;
- Attendance of CUPE representatives at several international conferences.

Equality branch

The goal of CUPE's equality branch is to strive for economic equality and social justice for all equality-seeking groups. These include groups who are discriminated against or disadvantaged in the workplace because of their gender, racial or ethnic origin, aboriginal ancestry, sexual orientation or disability. The branch also supports and promotes the rights of those who have HIV/AIDS.

In 2004, the branch, together with our national women's committee, continued to raise awareness about violence in the workplace by participating in and promoting the Canadian Labour Congress's December 6, 2004, campaign, "15 days and 15 ways to end violence against women".

The branch also developed and promoted a bargaining equality kit to improve local collective agreements as part of our International Women's Day celebrations on March 8, 2004.

Working closely with the national rainbow committee, the branch encouraged the celebration of Black History Month in February. CUPE celebrated Asian Heritage Month in March. On March 21 we commemorated the United Nations' International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. On June 21 we recognized National Aboriginal Day. The branch also assisted in marking the national transgendered day of remembrance on November 20.

CUPE recently received the first-ever University of Toronto Sexual Diversity Studies Program Citizenship Award in recognition of our work on behalf of gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and transsexual persons.

Equality staff met with the persons with disabilities national working group last fall to help set goals for making the workplace and the community more accessible. And the branch provided many resources to back CUPE's commitment to achieve equality for our diverse membership. Some examples:

- A discussion paper on increasing the participation of women in CUPE;
- Regional women's conferences on how to mobilize more women;

Did you know?

Thanks in part to CUPE, most provinces have legalized civil marriage for same-sex couples, and the Supreme Court of Canada has brought down a positive ruling on the federal government's proposed equal-marriage legislation.

Did you know?

CUPE's health and safety branch distributed more than 22,000 copies of publications to members in 2004, including 2,500 *Violence in the Workplace* action kits.

- A week-long workshop on leadership training for women;
- Continuing work on how privatization affects women;
- Helping ensure civil marriage rights for gays and lesbians;
- Helping change the Criminal Code to include sexual orientation as a prohibited ground under Canada's hate propaganda legislation;
- A discussion paper on decriminalizing sex work;
- Two new workshops to address racism – "Solidarity and Racial Justice" and "Rising with the Ranks";
- Formation of aboriginal councils in British Columbia and Manitoba and continuing strong partnership work in Saskatchewan;
- Work with the disabilities working group, including consideration of a "Disability Wheel" to educate members about disability issues.

Health and safety branch

Improving the working conditions of CUPE members is a major part of CUPE's occupational health and safety program. Ongoing branch activities include developing and providing information about on-the-job-hazards, assisting in health and safety and occupational disease surveys and obtaining progressive health and safety legislation.

In 2004, the branch responded to hundreds of information requests and developed several new publications. These included materials for the Day of Mourning (April 28) and Earth Day (April 22) and new fact sheets on indoor air quality, ventilation, repetitive strain injuries and noise.

About 22,000 publications, including the fact sheets and health and safety guidelines, were distributed to CUPE members in 2004. The branch also distributed over 2,500 "Violence in the Workplace" action kits.

Branch staff represents CUPE on the federal government's human resources and skills development legislative regulatory

review committee. We are also represented on the Canadian Standards Association (CSA) occupational health and safety strategic steering committee.

At the federal level, the branch played a key role in the development of new health and safety regulations under the Canada Labour Code (Part II). It now is working with the federal government to develop violence in the workplace, ergonomics, and committees and representatives regulations.

The branch represents CUPE on several national standards development committees at the CSA. In 2004, work began on a groundbreaking occupational health and safety management systems standard due for completion in 2005. The branch is also participating in the development of new standards on high-visibility apparel, head protection and ergonomics.

Last year, the branch trained about 200 committee members in Regina, Saskatoon and Yorkton, Sask. It also trained members at health and safety conferences sponsored by CUPE Ontario and CUPE Saskatchewan, the New Brunswick Federation of Labour's health and safety and compensation conference and the Alberta Workers' Health Centre conference.

In October 2004, CUPE's ninth national health and safety conference attracted 400 delegates. Half were women, marking the first time that the level of women participating was so close to reflecting our membership's gender balance.

In preparation for the conference, the branch developed new workshops on ergonomics, committees, indoor air quality and toxins. The recommendations from the workshops will be used to develop new guidelines on violence, committees and ergonomics for 2005.

Legal branch

Members of CUPE's legal branch represented local unions and members at many arbitration, labour board and court hearings in 2004.

Of particular significance were proceedings related to bargaining unit structure and union representation in restructuring situations. These issues have been of consistent importance in recent years owing to continuing waves of employer restructuring in almost every jurisdiction.

We have also represented CUPE in opposing regressive legislation and supporting the right of the union and its members to oppose these government initiatives. In addition, members of the branch have provided many opinions, both written and oral, and advice to servicing staff so that they can provide high-quality assistance to our locals and members.

CUPE lawyers also provided education and training to staff and local officers to assist them in effectively representing our members.

Did you know?

CUPE's legal branch has represented us in precedent-setting legal challenges regarding the designation of essential employees, particularly in the school board sector.

With the assistance of outside counsel, we have provided representation in precedent-setting legal challenges regarding the designation of essential employees, particularly in the school board sector. We also provided representation in cases involving restrictions on free collective bargaining, and those involving the rights of our members and local unions in bankruptcy situations.

In 2004, we assisted in 75 cases for legal and arbitration costs, totaling \$1,310,000.

As the law stands, our bargaining rights and collective agreements fall into a state of "suspended animation" where a receiver or trustee in bankruptcy has been appointed. This leaves our members without union representation and without the protection of their collective agreement for extended periods of time. This is clearly unacceptable and we will continue to press for recognition of our members' rights at every opportunity.

CONCLUSION

A CUPE promise kept

It took all 660 CUPE staff members and thousands of CUPE activists to accomplish what we did in 2004. Did we do everything right? Did we win every fight? Can we take a break from the many challenges we still face?

Of course, it is 'No' to all of those questions. In fact, we need to redouble our efforts in 2005. We need to continue to live up to the promise we made to ourselves in 2003. We must stick to our three priorities at every level of the union.

As 2005 began, we were doing just that. We have recharged our batteries for the battles that lie ahead in health care, child care and cities. We will be a presence in each of those arenas, lobbying, campaigning, bargaining and fighting for our rights at every level of government.

We are already pushing the federal government to enforce the *Canada Health Act*, so we can all benefit from our much-valued medicare. We are forging ahead with plans to counter proposals for a "Third Way" in health care provision. We believe in public health care and we won't stop fighting for it.

We are also working hard to ensure that more funding is provided for the national child care program announced by the federal government. This program must focus solidly on public child care. We must and will be vigilant as the program unfolds.

We also plan to keep a sharp eye on the federal government's new deal for cities. No group knows better than our municipal workers the need for public infrastructure to strengthen our crumbling cities and towns. We will be at the Federation of Canadian Municipalities meeting again this year, and we will be carrying a single, powerful message: Keep community services public. It is the only way to keep our communities strong.

Did you know?

CUPE's national office has a staff of 139. Our Atlantic regional office and five area offices have 30 staff members; Maritimes regional and six area offices have 32; Quebec and its nine area offices have 105; Ontario and 18 area offices have 176; Manitoba and the area office in Brandon have 30; Saskatchewan and its area offices in Saskatoon and Prince Albert have 31; Alberta and five area offices have 32; and British Columbia with nine area offices has 78. We also have seven airline staff in three offices. Total staff: 660.

Did you know?

In 2004, we had 316 retired staff members in CUPE's jointly trustee pension plan. In 2000, there were 210 and in 1995 we had 107.

In 2004, we showed how CUPE can address the challenges posed by governments and other public employers. We demonstrated that privatization is not the way to fix problems. In fact, it tears apart the very communities it proposes to help. We also showed our neighbours that we care about rebuilding strong communities.

In 2005, CUPE members can be proud of what we accomplished last year. We can take heart that our union is prepared to defend public sector jobs and the public services that make our communities strong and healthy places to live, work and raise our families.



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Appendix 1 – Strikes & Lockouts

Province	Local	Employer	Members Participating	Strike Began	Return to Work	
New Brunswick	720	NB Council of Hospitals 1252	275	Sep. 27/04	Oct. 18/04	
New Brunswick	821	NB Council of Hospitals 1252	299	Sep. 27/04	Oct. 18/04	
Nfld & Labrador	488	Western Health Care Corp.	840	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	641	Central East Health Care Board	100	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	879-02	Glenbrook Lodge	105	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	879-00	St. Patrick's Mercy Home	233	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	990	Central West Health Corp.	400	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	1560	Avalon East School District	335	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	1568	Centre West Corp-Baie Verte	55	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	1581	Labrador Health Board	53	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	1644	Grenfell Reg. Health Services	226	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	1860	Nfld. & Lab. Housing Corp.	230	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	2033	Burin Peninsula School Board	115	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	2212	School District 2	79	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	2329	Prov. Info. & Library Res. Board	178	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	2543	Government House	6	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	2574	Aramark Canada	28	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nfld & Labrador	3148	District 3 School Board	148	Apr. 1/04	Apr. 28/04	
Nova Scotia	3912	Dalhousie University	220	Apr. 23/04	May 31/04	
Ontario	3	Town of Thessalon	5	Jun. 25/04	Sep. 1/04	
Ontario	255	Westario Power	30	Aug. 20/04	Oct. 27/04	
Ontario	905	Comm. Care Access Center	83	Aug. 6/04	Aug. 23/04	
Ontario	1287	Niagara Institute	13	Jun. 5/04	Aug. 29/04	
Ontario	3253	N. Superior Mental Health	23	Jun. 26/04	On going	
Ontario	3636	Yellow Brick House	11	Jan. 24/04	Apr. 4/04	Lockout
Ontario	3798-04	Sojourne House	23	Jul. 22/04	Aug. 6/04	
Ontario	4266-08	Ziptrack Dispatch	40	Jan. 1/04	Jan. 24/04	
Ontario	4705	Greater Sudbury Hydro	89	Jun. 19/04	Oct. 25/04	
Quebec	4646	Group TVA Inc.	6	Jan. 30/04	Apr. 6/04	
Quebec	4255	Mun. de Saint-Jean-de-Matha	7	Mar. 11/03	Dec. 6/04	
Quebec	4290	Mun. de Sainte-Béatrix	5	Mar. 11/03	Dec. 6/04	
Saskatchewan	4552	Deer Park Villa – Ituna	22	Jun. 3/04	On going	
Saskatchewan	1881	Town of Kamsack	13	Oct. 6/04	Nov. 15/04	
Alberta	1606	Buffalo Trail School Division	238	Sep. 24/04	Oct. 4/04	
British Columbia	339	City of Nelson	70	Jun. 11/04	Aug. 23/04	Lockout
British Columbia	HEU	BC HEU provincewide	23,840	Apr. 25/04	May 3/04	
British Columbia	1004	Parking Corp-City of Vancouver	68	Sep. 18/04	Sep. 26/04	Rotating
Total			28,965			

Appendix 2

Members

Year	Full-Time	Part-Time	Total Membership
December 1985	268,817	38,018	306,835
December 1995	342,764	113,816	456,580
November 2004	374,544	164,980	539,524

Locals

Region/Division	Total	Membership (Aug. 2004)
Newfoundland/Labrador	38	5,866
Nova Scotia	115	14,873
Prince Edward Island	16	2,337
New Brunswick	175	20,314
Quebec	494	97,382
Ontario	658	192,272
Local 1000 (Ontario Hydro)	1	13,310
Manitoba	104	24,650
Saskatchewan	137	25,950
Alberta	102	29,551
British Columbia	162	66,188
Airline Division	13	7,159
HEU (CUPE's B.C. health care div.)		38,998
Total		*538,850

Appendix 3

Total Agreements

Region	Total # of Agreements	# of Agreements open Dec. 31, 2004	# of Settlements Achieved in 2004
Atlantic	165	99	43 + 6 provincial agreements
Maritimes	214	54	25
Quebec	400	128	92
Ontario	1,400	552	293
Manitoba	141	110	52
Saskatchewan	177	105	54
Alberta	210	48	62
British Columbia	411	164	110
Total	3,004	1,260	737

Appendix 4

CUPE representation on parent labour bodies

Federation of Labour Executives

Newfoundland and Labrador	Wayne Lucas
Nova Scotia	Betty Jean Sutherland
New Brunswick	Bob Davidson, David Rouse, Delalene Foran, Pat Haye
Prince Edward Island	Leo Cheverie
Quebec	Pierre Dupuis, H�el�ene Simard, Diane Raymond
Ontario	Patrick (Sid) Ryan, Judith Mongrain, Irene Harris
Manitoba	Lorraine Sigurdson, Kevin Rebeck, Nicole Campbell, Cathy Williams-Stewart
Saskatchewan	Frank Menten, Carla Smith, Marv Meickel
Alberta	Dianne Wyntjes, D'Arcy Lanovaz
British Columbia	Barry O'Neill, Colleen Jordan, Fred Muzin, Neil Bradbury
NWT - Iqaluit Federation	Mary Lou Cherwaty

Canadian Labour Congress

Executive Committee	Marie Clarke Walker, Paul Moist
Executive Council	Donalda MacDonald, Mary Lou Cherwaty



CUPE National Committees/Working Groups

National Advisory Committee on Pensions

Co-chairs: Bob Ripley (Man.) bripley@cupe500.mb.ca
Judy Henley (Sask.) rjhenner@sk.sympatico.ca

National Contracting Out and Privatization Co-ordinating Committee

Co-chairs: Dawn Lahey (Nfld. and Labrador) dawnlahey@publiclibraries.ca
Michel Boudreau (N.B.) mcboudro@nbnet.nb.ca

National Environment Committee

Co-chairs: Danny Cavanagh (N.S.) dannyc@ns.sympatico.ca
Rh'ena Oake (Alberta) Rhena.Oake@shaw.ca

National Global Justice Committee

Co-chairs: Barb Moore (N.S.) barb.m@ns.sympatico.ca
Edgar Godoy (Ont.) egodoy@uoguelph.ca

National Health Care Issues Committee

Co-chairs: Donna Ryan (Nfld. & Labrador) dryan@cupe.ca
Michael Hurley (Ont.) michaelhurley@ochu.on.ca

National Health and Safety Committee

Co-chairs: Rex Hillier (Nfld. & Labrador) cupe3991@sk.sympatico.ca
Pearl Blommaert (Sask.)

National Pink Triangle Committee

Co-chairs: Céline Poitras (N.B.) cpoitras@nbnet.nb.ca
Bill Pegler (B.C.) billpegler@cupe23.ca

National Political Action Committee

Co-chairs: Mark Hancock (B.C.) hancockm@cupe498.ca
Carla Smith (Sask.) carla.smith@sasktel.net

National Rainbow Committee

Co-chairs: Liz Paris (N.S.) eparis@eastlink.ca
Leo Cheverie (P.E.I.) lcheverie@upei.ca

National Women's Committee

Co-chair: Odette Robichaud (N.B.) odetterobichaud@hotmail.com

National Child Care Working Group

Co-chair: Jamie Kass (Ont.) jkass@cupw-sttp.org

Persons with Disabilities National Working Group

Co-chair: Sheryl Burns (B.C.) p1936@telus.net

National Young Workers' Group

Co-chair: Rich Clifford (Sask.) rich.clifford@city.saskatoon.sk.ca



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