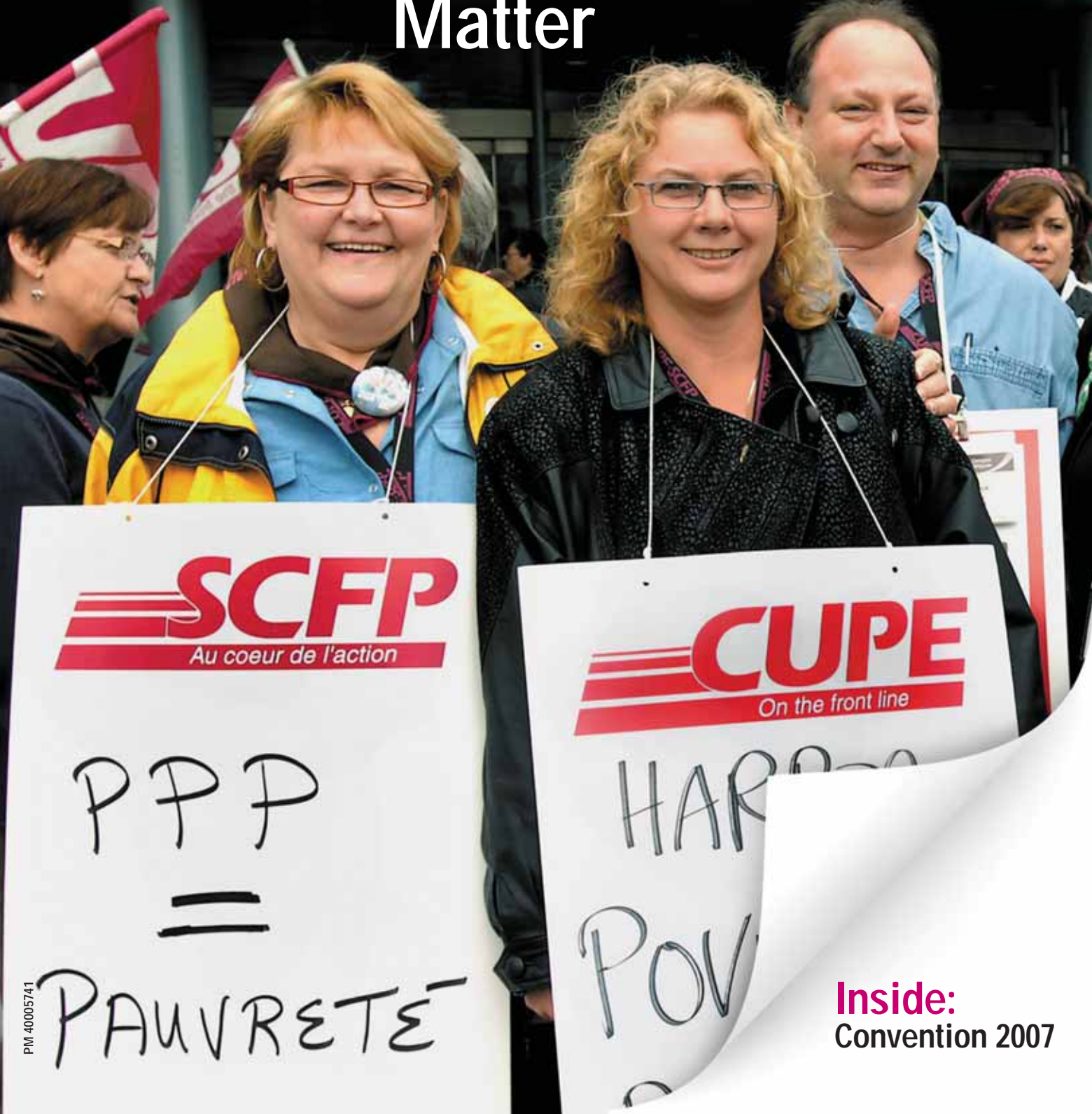


ORGANIZE

Public Services Matter



PM 40005741

Inside:
Convention 2007

CUPE's 2007-2009 National Executive Board

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National Secretary-Treasurer



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British Columbia

Convention 2007 a big success



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

This issue of *Organize* captures highlights from our 23rd constitutional convention held last October in Toronto.

Over 2,000 delegates gathered to set policy for our entire union; 40% were attending their first national convention. For me, this is both a remarkable and positive indicator. Many activists who have built our

union are moving into retirement. To each of these members I offer our sincere thanks and best wishes. Thousands of new activists are assuming leadership roles in our locals. To you, on behalf of over half a million members we represent, I say thank you for your activism.

Our national convention united behind a recommendation to increase our efforts to fight the privatization of public services in each and every corner of Canada. Delegates acted upon many of the recommendations from our National Women's Task Force in recognition of the barriers sisters face to full participation in our union. We took to the streets on International Day for the Eradication of Poverty, joining the millions of people around the globe demanding a fairer distribution of the world's wealth.

We also marched for Toronto hotel workers (UNITE HERE,

Local 75), locked out by their employer. These sisters and brothers were overwhelmed by our support. In the weeks after convention, they achieved a settlement of their dispute and offered their thanks to our delegates.

And we had some tough debates at our convention, debates that must continue within our union. Different points of view are healthy; silence will only hurt us. Our collective goal must be to make our union stronger, more united in order that we may best represent our members from coast to coast.

I look forward to the next two years, working with each of you to build our union.

In solidarity,

Paul Moist

Paul Moist
National President

Contents

2 Frontline

University strike in Saskatchewan; Update on the *Journal de Québec* lockout; Remembering Donalda; Building Canada fund; Ontario and Saskatchewan provincial elections; CUPE's new national headquarters; First national social services meeting.

17 CUPE across Canada

Fighting on many fronts in B.C.; Serving the public in Alberta; Unique Ontario campaigns; Quebec members chart new paths; Small and large gains in Nova Scotia; Ready for bargaining in Newfoundland and Labrador; Fighting P3s in Saint John.

21 Cultural Revolution

What's new in books and film.

21 From the National Secretary-Treasurer

Greening our union.

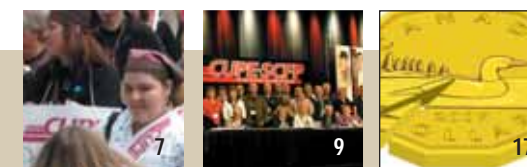
Features

7 Public services are at the heart of the matter

CUPE's efforts to support public services in Aboriginal communities and in developing countries.
By Alexandre Boulgerice, with files from Karin Jordan

9 Convention 2007

Highlights from the 2007 CUPE National Convention in Toronto.
By CUPE National Communications staff



ORGANIZE

ISSN 1913-9888

Organize is published by the Canadian Union of Public Employees. Address all correspondence to CUPE Communications, 1375 St. Laurent Blvd., Suite 123, Ottawa, ON, K1G 0Z7. Phone: 613-237-1590. Fax: 613-237-5508. Letters to the editor are welcome, but may be edited for brevity and clarity. All material appearing in *Organize* may be reprinted (please credit).

Publications Mail Agreement
Number 40005741

Return undeliverable Canadian addresses to:
CUPE Communications
1375 St. Laurent Blvd., Suite 123
Ottawa, ON, K1G 0Z7

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CUPE CALM

Union printed on 25% post-consumer chlorine-free recycled paper, certified by the Forest Stewardship Council.

WINTER 2008

CUPE 1975 strike teaches universities a lesson

It was nearing the end of November 2007. The weather had turned bitterly cold on the picket lines of the strike by 2,400 workers at the University of Saskatchewan and University of Regina. Thoughts were turning to the approaching Christmas season – on strike pay. And members were facing a vote on the employers' final offer.

The CUPE 1975 negotiating committee wanted members to vote "no" to the final offer. It ignored the two issues that had caused the strike: tying wage increments to performance reviews, and the need for improved funding for benefits.

On the morning of the votes, supervised by the Labour Relations Board at the insistence of the employers, the universities ran double full-page ads in local papers urging members to accept their offer and return to work. The pressure was on.

The stunning rejection – 85% voted "no" – publicly embarrassed

the employers. "The vote sent a clear message to our employers that we were not going to settle for anything less than a fair contract," said Brad McKaig, CUPE 1975 bargaining committee chair.

On November 29, 2007, just two days after the vote, the newly elected right-wing government in Saskatchewan announced it would pass back-to-work legislation if the two sides didn't find a settlement quickly. The tentative agreement, reached two days later, referred the outstanding issues to binding arbitration.

Although it will be months before an arbitration decision, CUPE members returned to work with their heads held high. "The strike galvanized our membership and united the university community," said Linda Reiber of the CUPE 1975 negotiating committee. "We showed our employers what solidarity looks like – and that's something they won't soon forget."

■ Beth Smillie

A long, drawn-out dispute



Lucie Butler,
President of CUPE 2808.



Jocelyne Martineau,
President of CUPE 1872.



Denis Bolduc,
President of CUPE 1450.

Photos: Murray Mosher

The lockout declared by the employer at the *Journal de Québec* on April 22, 2007 is still in effect. At the time of writing, the locked-out workers have asked for binding arbitration to settle the many-months-long dispute.

Quebec City's daily paper – now put out by management, including the 14 extra "managers" hired just prior to the conflict – has become an ersatz version of itself. Everyone in Quebec City is aware of it. Radio hosts mention it regularly, one of them even referring to the current *Journal de Québec* as a "rag."


Thanks to Quebec's anti-scab legislation, on August 24, the Quebec Labour Relations Board (LRB) issued orders against four people who had been performing paid work during the dispute. Additional complaints were filed in mid-October and early November. In all, 16 people – who could well be considered scabs –

will have to provide the LRB with an explanation of the work they are doing at the *Journal*.

At an international UNI Graphic conference held in Lima, Peru in December 2007, Quebec workers shared their experiences with Québecor's labour practices in Canada and around the world.

In the meantime, every day, rain or shine, the 252 CUPE members involved in the dispute continue to distribute their free daily paper, *MédiaMatin Québec*, on street corners throughout Quebec City.

■ Robert Bellerose

 *MédiaMatin* is available online at www.mediamatin-quebec.com (French only), and a video of the daily distribution of the union paper can be found at www.youtube.com/watch?v=e6gNMAYukT8



Remembering Donalda



On January 20, 2008 Sister Donalda MacDonald passed away after a six month battle with cancer; she will be missed. She leaves us a powerful legacy: the many women she mentored, and the activists she worked alongside as a labour leader in PEI and on CUPE's National Executive Board.

Recognizing Donalda's work and inspiration as a role model, CUPE National has created an education scholarship for women in her name, that will benefit CUPE members in the years to come.

 For more information, see <http://cupe.ca/about/donaldamacdonaldobituary>

Building Canada fund, the agency of choice for privatization

To great fanfare, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced a \$33 billion Building Canada program in his 2007–2008 budget. The lion's share of this fund will go to enhance trade infrastructure such as the Asia Pacific corridor. Yet, the Federation of Canadian Municipalities has pegged the current infrastructure deficit at \$123 billion.

“Of the \$33 billion federal Building Canada fund, \$12 billion will be tied to public private partnerships – or P3s,” says Paul Moist, CUPE National President. “Despite the overwhelming evidence that public private partnerships are more expensive, less effective and unaccountable, the Building Canada program institutionalizes privatization of public services as the preferred route for public investments in infrastructure.”

Toby Sanger, CUPE economist adds, “Providing a financial incentive of up to 25% for P3 projects is contrary to principles of equal treatment. Tying infrastructure funding to a P3 requirement is also an implicit acknowledgement that these P3s can't be justified on their own.”

There is a stark double standard at play. The Harper government is forcing proponents to consider fully P3s as a condition of receiving federal funding under the new Building Canada program, yet it wants to make it extremely difficult to use federal spending powers to meet social needs, such as early learning and child care, housing and homelessness, training, health care, pharmacare or social services. “This is just bad public policy,” concludes Moist.

■ Catherine Louli

CUPE candidates in Ontario:

Henry Bosch	CUPE 1019, ran in St. Catharines
Ric Dagenais	CUPE National, ran in Ottawa-Vanier
Henri Giroux	CUPE 146, ran in Nipissing
John Grima	CUPE 82, ran in Essex
Shailla Kirbria	CUPE 1281, ran in Mississauga-Erindale
Pauline Kuhlman	CUPE 5666, ran in Leeds Grenville
Gail McCabe	CUPE 3903, ran in Mississauga-Streetsville
Nigel Moses	CUPE 3902, ran in Whitby-Oshawa
Catherine Robinson	CUPE Local 2936, ran in Durham
Sid Ryan	CUPE Ontario President, ran in Oshawa
Antoni Shelton	Executive Assistant to the President, CUPE Ontario, ran in York West

Ontario election campaign produces unprecedented number of CUPE candidates

This graphic, designed at CUPE National, was the central theme of the “Putting People First” campaign during the Ontario provincial election.



In the Ontario provincial election, held on October 10, 2007, an unprecedented number of CUPE candidates won the NDP nomination in their riding.

Under the theme “Putting People First,” CUPE rallied the membership and public at numerous events across the province. Our election campaign bus logged over 7,800 kilometres zigzagging across the province. Over 50,000 report cards

– conveying how the Liberals and Conservatives were two sides of the same coin – were handed out to members and the public.

Hundreds of CUPE members and staff joined the campaign. Area leadership meetings were held across the province to which local NDP candidates were invited to speak, meet our members and talk about their platform. At these well attended meetings, many CUPE members

signed up on the spot to work for their local candidate.

CUPE brothers and sisters contributed energy, time and money to support CUPE candidates, as well as other NDP candidates. They raised the bar, receiving more votes than ever before and shone a spotlight on the issues of concern to working Ontarians.

■ Wendy Forbes



This photo, taken by CUPE at the Montebello demonstration against the Security and Prosperity Partnership on the afternoon of August 20, has appeared throughout the country. Three masked individuals, one armed with a rock and another with a bottle, were denounced as troublemakers by the peaceful demonstrators. These three later crossed the police line and were “arrested.” This photo of the soles of their boots forced the Sûreté du Québec to admit that the three were its own agents!

Photo credit: Sébastien Goulet

SaskParty finally secures the ring

When the ballots were counted on November 7, 2007, the right-wing Saskatchewan Party – created from the DNA of disgraced conservatives – secured more than 50% of the popular vote and 38 seats, compared to only 20 seats for the NDP.

The NDP proposed increases to the minimum wage, tying the minimum wage to the low-income cut-

off by 2010 and indexing it to the cost of living – a move anti-poverty activists had been seeking for years.

NDP leader Lorne Calvert promised to introduce a universal prescription drug plan, modelled after its popular seniors’ drug plan. SaskParty’s drug plan provided limited coverage to seniors and children. The drug plan debate, which fuelled

the four-week campaign, sharply defined the differences between the two political parties.

But on election day, the desire for a change after 16 years still trumped the NDP’s promise of more progressive days ahead.

■ Beth Smillie



CUPE National, staff from the Ottawa area office and WE travel staff settled in the new Stan Little Building at the end of November 2007. Despite record snowfalls and the chaos that comes with any relocation, CUPE staff left the old headquarters and moved into our state-of-the-art environmentally friendly headquarters in the east end of Ottawa.

"This new Stan Little Building is the centre point of our national union's plan to build a strong future for our members," says National Secretary-Treasurer Claude Généreux. For more information about the new building, check out Brother Généreux's column on p. 21.

■ Sébastien Goulet

For information about CUPE's other new buildings in Cranbrook, B.C, Moncton, N. B. and Cornwall, Ontario, and to see more photographs of the new Stan Little Building, go to: http://cupe.ca/about/CUPE_national_office

First national social services meeting

150 delegates attended CUPE's first national social services meeting, held in Ottawa November 21-23, 2007.



Françoise David speaks to delegates at the national social services meeting.

Speaking on the topic of work-life balance, guest speaker Linda Duxbury used both humour and hard facts to describe generational differences in today's workplaces.

Building on this idea, Françoise David, political and social activist, highlighted the importance of succinct messaging and getting media coverage of our views in order to be successful in our campaigns for social justice. Her remarks prefaced an afternoon of workshops devoted to developing the right message for specific issues and just as suggested by Duxbury, paying attention to generational differences.

■ Louise Leclair

Proceedings from the meeting and Françoise David's presentation can be found at: <http://cupe.ca/socialservices/>
Print copies of Linda Duxbury's piece can be obtained by request at info@cupe.ca

Public services are at the heart of the matter



The things we take for granted – safe drinking water, adequate shelter, an accessible hospital, a school for our children – are still just a dream for far too many people. For example, today:

- 4,000 children will die of diarrhea, as a result of dirty water.
- 1,400 women will die in pregnancy or childbirth, for lack of care.
- 80 million children, mostly girls, will not attend school.
- A billion people still will not have potable water.

One in three people will not have access to adequate sanitary facilities.

Joanne Webb, member of CUPE's National Aboriginal Council, brings these issues back home to Canada: "Aboriginal peoples often live in situations of severe poverty, lacking access to decent public services – water, health care, education, housing and social services – that keep our communities healthy."

How can we ensure access to clean water, proper sanitation, health care and education? The answer is always the same: through public services! According to Webb, "when we fight privatization and work to strengthen public services, we are creating and defending good jobs for Aboriginal people. We are also strengthening the services we need to have strong, healthy and vibrant communities, and that's so important."

This year, CUPE has waged a joint campaign with Oxfam Canada

and Oxfam Québec to publicize the undeniable role of public services as tools in the fight against poverty. As part of the campaign, thousands of people have signed postcards calling on the Prime Minister to stop privatization and respect Canada's international commitments to reduce global poverty. The Oxfam-Canada booth at the 2007 CUPE National Convention was very busy. "Delegates blew me away with their questions and the level of concern about global issues," said Bill Hynd, CUPE 2722 member and CUPE-Oxfam campaign co-ordinator.



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

Joint actions with Oxfam have now taken place in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. And the fight continues. CUPE and Oxfam are planning activities to highlight World Water Day (March 22) and World

AIDS Day (December 1), and CUPE is closely monitoring the major conferences of decision makers like the G-8 and the WTO.

■ Alexandre Boulerice, with files from Karin Jordan

Would you like to change the world? Join this fight, organize events in your community or place of work. Contact us, or visit CUPE's website for details on upcoming activities at: <http://cupe.ca/globaljustice/>

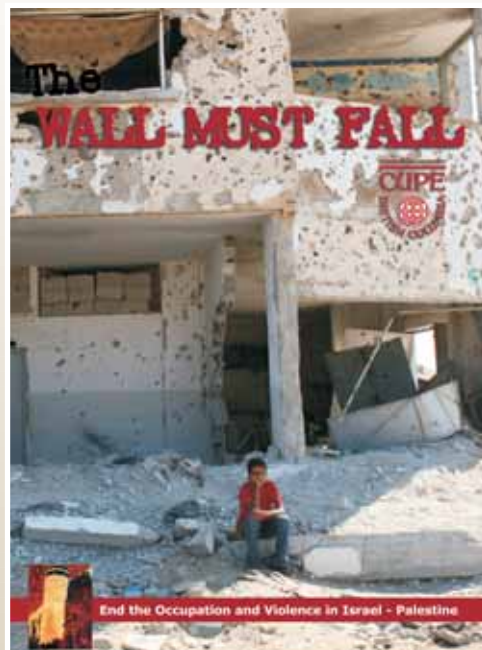
Convention 2007

was one of the largest conventions in our union's history: 2,054 delegates,



Photo credit: Mike Scott, CUPE 30

The Wall Must Fall



For so many people – this reviewer included – the conflict in the Middle East is a complicated and confusing issue. Fortunately, there is a factual and easy-to-read resource at hand. CUPE B.C., through its international solidarity committee, has issued a new edition of *The Wall Must Fall*.

Drawing on data from recent reports from Amnesty International, the United Nations and the World Bank, *The Wall Must Fall* includes maps, charts and photographs that cover the history of the conflict, including Canada's involvement and the impact of the occupation on Palestinians. As Division President Barry O'Neill says in the introduction, the 36-page book "is not an official position paper but rather a resource for interested union and community members featuring voices from the Israeli and Palestinian peace movements often shut out of the mainstream media."

The final message is one of resistance and hope, illustrated by descriptions of ongoing campaigns to end the occupation and bring down the Israeli Wall.

■ Pat Daley

Copies of the book can be ordered by e-mailing info@cupe.bc.ca



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

Toronto Mayor David Miller welcomed CUPE members to Toronto, thanked them for their commitment to public services, communities and neighbourhoods, and urged them to use their voices to fight for more funding for municipalities across Canada.

including 40% first-time delegates and 52% sisters, gathered in Toronto October 14-19. In these pages, the communications staff at CUPE National share highlights from this historic week.



Sign language interpretation was provided at convention.

Photos: Murray Mosher

Convention adopts Strategic Directions for 2007–2009

In an almost unanimous show of support, delegates to the 23rd CUPE National Convention passed the Strategic Directions Program for 2007–2009.

The plan sets out three strategic priorities. The first strategic direction, the CUPE fightback campaign, calls for a multi-million dollar commitment over and above normal cost-

extended health benefits and puts a priority on job evaluation and pay equity, lobbying the federal government to conclude Aboriginal land claims in an expeditious manner, and additional tools to educate and lobby on rights for persons with disabilities. It addresses the need to strengthen the participation of women within CUPE's structures and support women to achieve measurable gains at the bargaining table and on issues of social policy.

The third strategic direction is to meet global green targets and build global solidarity. The plan calls for a policy and action plan on climate change and global warming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It will provide actions that CUPE members and locals can take to effect positive change in our homes, workplaces and

shares and related political activity. The aim is to bring together and mobilize research, education, communication and organizing expertise to respond to both breaking events and ongoing privatization threats. This direction calls for specific focus on fighting back against bad trade deals, building strong communities by promoting public services and influencing public policy through political action.

The second strategic direction is to strengthen bargaining power and achieve equality. This section sets out targets for a minimum wage of \$15 per hour and a pension plan for all CUPE members by 2013. It calls for



An engaging cultural program took place throughout convention week, including this performance by Samba Elégua.

communities. An energy plan will also be developed. This third strategic direction includes a two-year plan to continue the international struggle to maintain and promote public services around the globe.



To view the Strategic Directions document, go to: <http://cupe.ca/convention07/>

Keynote speaker



Buffy Sainte-Marie

It's not at every convention that an Oscar-winning singer/songwriter treats delegates to an *a capella* performance of a song from her next album, but that's exactly what happened this year. Iconic Canadian activist and artist Buffy Sainte-Marie was our keynote speaker, and delegates were thrilled.

Her speech touched on many issues familiar to CUPE members: education, equality, political action, culture and history. She spoke of the different ways of learning by drawing attention to her own Cradleboard Project, which has developed a complete geography, science, social studies and music curriculum for Grades 3 to 12 from a First Nations' perspective.

Sainte-Marie also spoke of peace, and performed her hard-hitting poem "The War Racket" – delivered simultaneously in American Sign Language and as French text – a poem that doesn't pull any punches:

*That's how it's done
About every 30 years
The rich fill their coffers
The poor fill with tears
The young fill the coffins
The old hang a wreath
The politicians get photographed with their names underneath.*

After her presentation, Sainte-Marie took questions from the National Aboriginal Council members, and thanked them for their continuing work, including their commitment to the Free Leonard Peltier campaign. Speaking informally later that day, Sainte-Marie commented on the positive energy and awareness of CUPE members and staff she had encountered at convention.

For information on the Cradleboard Project, see www.cradleboard.org

Solidarity in action



Denis Bolduc, spokesperson for the locked-out workers at *Le Journal de Québec*, and CUPE National President Paul Moist share the excitement of this solidarity moment.

Convention delegates witnessed a classic solidarity moment on Wednesday October 17. Immediately after the traditional photo taking, four locals involved in a strike or lockout were invited to the stage. First, the presidents of the three CUPE locals for *Le Journal de Québec* spoke of the lockout that Quebecor/Sun Media had forced on them six months ago. Then, CUPE 15 and 391 members from the Vancouver Public Library, on strike for 15 weeks, described their struggle. Both presentations clearly moved delegates, and a large number of local union members lined up at the microphones to proclaim, forcefully and proudly, additional support for these struggles of \$98,000, which was rounded up to \$100,000 and matched by CUPE National. Back in Quebec and B.C., members of those union locals were able to listen to the wave of support via live audio feed on the CUPE website.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty



Photo credit: Mike Scott, CUPE 30

CUPE convention delegates turned up in force for the record-setting anti-poverty rally on October 17.

Eliminating poverty locally and globally is a shared responsibility we all must embrace. With that in mind, convention delegates and community social activists marched and rallied on October 17, 2007 to mark the International Day for the Eradication of Poverty. Delegates stood in solidarity with 38 million people in 110 countries. Community anti-poverty activists, along with locked-out Holiday Inn workers (UNITE-HERE, Local 75), also participated in the Toronto rally. This worldwide action broke a Guinness World Record! Public services and strong labour laws protecting low-waged workers are powerful anti-poverty tools and among the best ways to tackle inequality, said several rally speakers.



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

Task Force puts women's issues on front burner

Delegates show support for NWTF resolutions, singing "we're the women of the union and we're just beginning to fight ..." on the convention floor.

From a national women's conference on bargaining, pensions and pay equity to leadership training and a harassment-free union, issues raised through the work of the National Women's Task Force (NWTF) were often forefront at convention. In addition to supporting efforts to combat privatization and program cutbacks, delegates supported actions at all levels to put equality on the front burner within CUPE and in our communities.

The NWTF's opening video was greeted with applause and a standing ovation. And CUPE chartered organizations sent a record number of resolutions – more than 170 – relating to women and other equality-seeking groups to the biennial event. NWTF themes were echoed repeatedly as speakers, many first-timers, went to the microphones.

"It is because of 'Women Breaking Barriers' that I dare to stand at this microphone today," said Veriline Howe, CUPE 2191. Delegates passed a resolution at convention giving members more opportunities to take this CUPE women's course.

Women – and men – spoke about mentoring for women and a code of conduct to make the union more welcoming. Others talked of pensions, the need to reach out to members with disabilities, and the importance of addressing barriers to women's participation and representation within CUPE.

Among the NWTF recommendations were structural measures to guarantee a minimum number of seats for women on the National Executive Board (NEB). Although more than half the delegates (55 per cent) supported structural change, an additional

188 votes were needed to amend CUPE's constitution. Nonetheless, elections raised women's representation to six seats, up from three, on CUPE's 23-member NEB.

"Our recommendations plant the seeds for a new growth of CUPE activism ... a future in which our differences unite us in our common struggle for a better quality of life for all," said B.C. NWTF member Sheryl Burns.

Our delegates: Champions of social justice

Many of the resolutions adopted at the National Convention reaffirm CUPE's role in the defence of the common good and of public services nationwide.

CUPE delegates embraced a militant and ambitious two-year action plan calling for CUPE National to develop a Canada-wide campaign for public health care, a pharmacare program, fighting privatization and P3s, and legislated minimum standards of care in long-term and home care.

National programs for accessible public child care are a priority. CUPE National will adopt an energy policy that stresses public ownership of energy, and the transition to renewable sources of energy with a view to meeting Kyoto objectives. CUPE will also be keeping a close eye on the Security and Prosperity Partnership initiative, TILMA, Atlantica and other bad trade deals, and on the concentration of the press – illustrated by the case of Global TV, which broke its pledge to



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

the CRTC to maintain a newsroom in Quebec City.

On the international scene, CUPE delegates called for the strengthening of economic sanctions against the dictatorship in Burma (Myanmar) and mobilizing to end Canada's military involvement in Afghanistan.

Sharing strategies to fight privatization



UNISON leaders Norma Stephenson (left) and Angela Lynes.

The United Kingdom's largest union, UNISON, knows a thing or two about fighting privatization. Leaders of the 1.3 million-member union – 1 million of whom are

Finally, other resolutions support the internal functioning of our union, notably by helping small local unions participate in national events and by making our events more accessible to members who are physically challenged.

women – shared some of their experiences and success stories with delegates to the 2007 National Convention. UNISON President Norma Stephenson and Angela Lynes, a National Executive Committee member from Glasgow, Scotland and one of the union's lead negotiators, both said they could completely relate to our struggles over protecting public services. The only difference is that they are starting to come out at the other end. Said Stephenson, "The good news is we've started to drive off corporations like Sodexo, Compass and others. The bad news, I guess, is we've driven them to your shores."



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

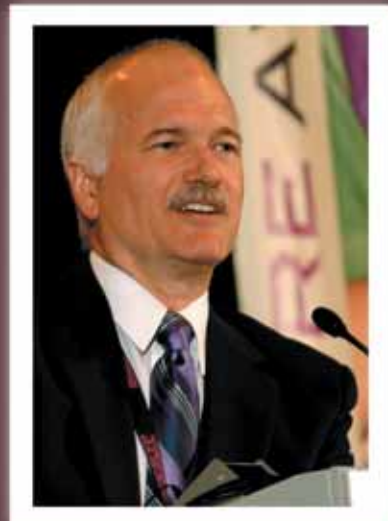


Photo credit: Murray Mosher

Federal NDP leader Jack Layton focused on the needs of working families, and thanked delegates for "taking on the issues like no other union. I am proud of the work CUPE members do in your communities across this country." On health care privatization, Layton said "health care dollars shouldn't be going to Bay Street. They should be directed toward improving our public system."

Award-winning members



Donalda MacDonald, CUPE PEI President, member of the National Executive Board and an activist for more than 25 years, was the recipient of this convention's Grace Hartman award. MacDonald, who was both "ecstatic" and "humbled" to receive the award, said "There really is no power greater than the union, and it is especially true in the lives of women." MacDonald also stressed her commitment to work towards implementation of the NWTF's "great recommendations so that real progress can be made."

Ed Thomas, an active member of CUPE 5167 and a grade school dropout who overcame his own literacy issues to write labour books, was given the second biennial CUPE literacy award. "There is a perception among many that literacy is not a problem; unfortunately, that is not true. Literacy empowers our activist members and gives them the confidence to participate in union affairs," said Thomas.



Sister Sylvia Diamond's daughter Margaret Scanlan.

The first CUPE National Disability Activism Award was presented posthumously to Sister Sylvia Diamond. Sister Diamond was a member of CUPE 4222 and on CUPE's Persons with Disabilities National Working Group from the beginning. Her daughter, Margaret Scanlan received the award on her behalf. "My mother would be very honoured and proud of this award. If she was here today she would probably say that we should try to remember the person and not the disability in the person."

Michael J. Murphy, member of CUPE 1615 (Memorial University) and a tireless activist, won CUPE's Health and Safety Award. Murphy helped create and monitor safe procedures for roof repairs to avoid asbestos exposure and tackled other important health and safety issues at the university.



Photos: Murray Mosher

Leo Cheverie, President of CUPE 1870 (University of Prince Edward Island), former member of the National Executive Board and long-time social justice activist, has been named the recipient of the 2007 Alumni Award by World University Service of Canada for his exceptional contribution to international development.



Attendees at the Communications breakfast.

At each biennial convention, CUPE National recognizes people who help their members communicate better. This year's communications awards included a best photography category and awards for English and French language newsletters and websites. Winners got a trip to the podium to receive a certificate of achievement and a CUPE backpack that was handed out during the communicators' breakfast.

Supporting locked-out hotel workers



Large numbers of CUPE convention delegates show support for locked-out Holiday Inn workers.

On September 28, 2007, the Toronto Holiday Inn put its room-service and restaurant employees out on the street by decreeing a partial lockout. The company refused to sign a collective agreement that would have the same expiry date as all other Toronto hotels. In addition to cancelling reservations for members

during convention, CUPE delegates marched to the Holiday Inn on King Street to support locked-out members of UNITE-HERE Local 75. When the strike was settled later last fall, UNITE-HERE credited the CUPE action with helping them win.

For a complete list of communications awards winners, go to: http://cupe.ca/convention07/2007_CUPE_Communicat



Canadian Labour Congress President Ken Georgetti brought greetings from the 3.2 million affiliated members of the CLC: "As President of the Canadian Labour Congress, I am here to tell you that the entire labour movement is behind you and we will fight privatization with you right across this country." As well, Georgetti recognized the work of CUPE, both at home and on the international front. "CUPE understands that international development cannot happen without workers and without workers' solidarity across borders."

ACROSS CANADA

Fighting on many fronts in B.C.



After a volatile first round of bargaining in Lower Mainland and job action lasting about 12 weeks for CUPE 15, 391 and 1004, and a much shorter period for CUPE 389, 17 civic and library collective agreements have been ratified. However, a number of locals in the region and throughout the province have yet to conclude new agreements.

While CUPE municipal locals in Greater Victoria also reached settlements, CUPE 410, representing library workers in Greater Victoria, has been taking intermittent job action in support of pay equity since September. "This is our first-ever job action, and I am proud of our members for their courage and creativity in this very tough fight," says CUPE 410 President Ed Seedhouse.

■ Roseanne Moran



The B.C. Liberals seem determined to ram through legislation dismantling democratic governance of the Lower Mainland transit system. Gerry Cunningham, CUPE 7000 President, says that the legislation will "take local input and control out of transportation and install a hand-picked corporate board to follow a Liberal agenda with no questions asked."

Mobility Agreement (TILMA) enforcement. And, in Greater Victoria, new double-decker bus ads advocating for public sewage treatment were unveiled. CUPE 1978 campaign coordinator Kim Manton is "very pleased with the growing support on the ground."

Serving the public in Alberta

P3s have been proposed for a new arena in Edmonton, a hospital in Grande Prairie, and 18 schools in Calgary and Edmonton. If corporations are able to take hold of public services in a province with as much fiscal abundance as there is in Alberta, it will be even harder to argue against P3s in more cash-strapped provinces. CUPE Alberta's research about the true cost of P3s will be released very early in 2008.



CUPE members participated in summer barbecues and parades in Westlock, Alberta.

(cont. on page 18)

CUPE 3421 (Paramedics) were extremely disappointed with a government-appointed arbitrator's award issued last summer. Despite a super-hot economy, the award limited Calgary paramedics to a 12% increase over the term of the contract, and rejected the union's arguments for market and index adjustments on par with other occupations in the City. CUPE 3421 will initiate a public awareness campaign about the value of its work in the upcoming months.

Elected CUPE members:

David Blair	CUPE 1505, Municipality of Wood Buffalo
Brenda Carter	CUPE 3705, Town of Valleyview
Myrna Lanctot	CUPE 1038, Village of Donnelly
Alice McLaughlin	CUPE 1606, Buffalo Trail School Division
Rick Poole	CUPE 838, Town of Blackfalds
Therese Taschuk	CUPE 4575, Town of Smoky Lake
Will Taylor	CUPE 1012, Town of Blackfalds
Dave Thiele	CUPE 30, City of Edmonton



CUPE 4318 members Lyle Fish (left), Jay Pratt (3rd from right), Debra Hornsby (2nd from right) and Karen Schoorstra (right), along with CUPE National Representative Kirk Oates (2nd from left).

In a great show of generosity, CUPE National office matched CUPE 4318's pledge of \$25,000 to The Banff Centre staff campaign. The new CUPE Scholarship Endowment establishes a \$50,000 fund for artists in all disciplines at The Banff Centre, and is eligible for matching funds from a federal government program. "We are tremendously proud to have CUPE National's support of the staff campaign, and thankful to Jay Pratt [President, CUPE 4318] and the executive for making this happen" said staff campaign co-chair Karen Schoorstra.

■ Audra Williams



Unique Ontario campaigns

Support for public power remains high in Ontario, according to polls conducted for the Ontario Electricity Coalition during the Fall 2007 provincial election campaign. CUPE Local One, CUPE 4400, the Ontario Municipal Employees Coordinating Committee and other unions, with

Kahnert, a Toronto Hydro worker and member of CUPE Local One, took the message on the road with a tour of six cities. The coalition also forged new alliances with environmental activists.

The Fair Deal for Our City Coalition – an energetic coalition of labour, community and justice groups in Toronto – campaigned for a City of Toronto land transfer tax and a new vehicle registration fee during the provincial election. CUPE 79 and 416 took the lead in the campaign that saw the tax proposal approved even though the McGuinty Liberals won the election.

In Cornwall, CUPE 234 launched a fight to stop the City from replacing two arenas with a mega P3 arena. After a rousing campaign kick-off

financial support from the CUPE National Defence Fund, waged an uphill campaign to make public power an issue during the campaign. Tireless public power advocate Paul



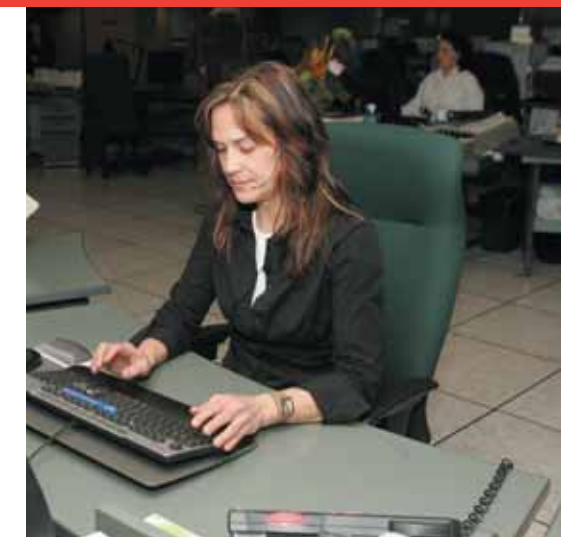
Quebec members chart new paths

After more than 3 years of work, CUPE 2500 concluded a pay equity agreement with l'Université Laval on November 1, 2007. This was a big day for our members, the majority of whom are women, and an achievement for all workers – the first pay equity ruling in the university sector in Quebec.

The plot thickens at the Société de transport de Montréal (STM). After more than a year of negotiations, on November 13, 2007, the 3,750 STM bus drivers, subway operators and related services employees (CUPE 1983) voted 97% in favour of a strike mandate. The Quebec government has appointed a mediator to unblock the talks.

In a remarkable media endeavour, CUPE 3642 members who work for Urgences Santé – a call centre whose staff advise people waiting for an ambulance – have let the public know about their difficult working conditions through a video which illustrates the intense stress, human drama, unreasonable hours, recruitment problems and low salaries these workers endure.

■ Alexandre Boulerice



A call centre worker in CUPE 3642 responds to emergency calls despite poor working conditions.

The video, financed in part by the CUPE National Defence Fund, can be viewed on the CUPE-Quebec website at: <http://scfp.qc.ca/modules/pages/index.php?id=71>



Small and large gains in Nova Scotia



The mayor of the Halifax Regional Municipality signs a first contract with CUPE 4814, who represent 140 school crossing guards.

Labour Day in Nova Scotia provided the backdrop for the launching of a seven-union coalition campaign against the MacDonald government's plan to take the right to strike away from 32,000 health and community

care workers, including close to 9,000 CUPE members. Thus far, the campaign has been a huge success and the unions currently have the support of both opposition parties to defeat the bill.

(cont. on page 20)



Design credit: MPH Graphics

speech by National President Paul Moist, CUPE handed out flyers, distributed posters, covered Cornwall in anti-P3 stickers and prepared an extensive P3 briefing for Cornwall city councillors and local media. According to the latest reports, requests for proposals will not be sent out until the spring. CUPE 234 will keep the issue in the public's eye.

■ Wendy Forbes



Design credit: Union Communications



CUPE N.S. President Danny Cavanagh gathers with CUPE health care workers to protest the MacDonald government's attempt to take away the right to strike from 32,000 health and community care workers.

In a small but important victory, Lynn Howes, President of CUPE 4745 (early childhood educators), convinced the Minister of Community Services to make a spot for an ECE on her provincial Working Group.

A record number of CUPE activists from across Nova Scotia gathered in Halifax for a first-ever political action conference in mid-November. By all accounts, this conference was a huge success and will help us set the stage for a spring election and a change in government.

■ John McCracken

Ready for bargaining in Newfoundland and Labrador



Provincial bargaining is underway in Newfoundland and Labrador; the official exchange of proposals took place in mid-November. There are high expectations on the part of all public sector workers for this round, following statements from Premier Williams that there will be wage increases.

On other fronts, CUPE 1860 (Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation) has managed to make 30 seasonal positions at the agency year-round. Provincial

elections saw CUPE help NDP party leader Lorraine Michael hang on to her seat. As well, CUPE activist Julie Mitchell obtained a very strong second place in the Burin Peninsula. She was running against a cabinet minister in a strong Tory tide.

■ John McCracken

For more information on CUPE activities in Newfoundland and Labrador, check out their new website at: www.cupe.ca/newfoundland



CUPE members in Saint John have an upcoming battle on their hands

The City of Saint John wants to build two water treatment plants because of high levels of trihalomethane (THM) found in the drinking water, and it has decided to look into a public private partnership for this project.

"The possible involvement of the private sector in this project concerns our members," says Mike Montgomery, President of CUPE 18 (City of Saint John outside workers). "This is not a

question of the union wanting to save some jobs; we believe that the city should never give up the ownership of our water."

Opposition to a possible P3 is taking shape. A group of citizens has formed a coalition, SOS Saint John Water, to inform the public on the dangers of the privatization of the water plants and to work with CUPE against this P3 project.

There is no doubt that water will be a major issue during the upcoming municipal election in May 2008. "If the City councillors don't come to their senses, they will have quite a fight on their hands," adds Montgomery.

■ Danielle Savoie

More than 300 people attended Maude Barlow's lecture on the commercialization of water in Saint John. Here, she is signing her new book for Mike Montgomery, President of CUPE 18.



Design credit: Marnie Thorp

Healthy, Clean & Green: A Workers' Action Guide to a Greener Workplace

By CUPE National

This timely publication places big environmental issues squarely in the hands of union members. The guidebook shows that CUPE members and locals can do much to improve the environment, whether it's global warming, recycling or toxins elimination, including:

- Working in our occupational health and safety and environment committees to eliminate toxins from workplaces.
- Reading the new Labour Environmental Alliance Society (LEAS) *Cleaners and Toxins Guide*.
- Doing energy and waste audits of our workplaces.

Multiply these and other actions by hundreds of CUPE work sites and you can see what tremendous impact CUPE can make in communities across Canada. Taking actions outlined in the guidebook will demonstrate that CUPE is concerned and engaged in our communities.

At LEAS, we love working with CUPE, as a union and with the rank and file. Let's be in the leadership together to stop global warming and save the planet.

■ Mae Burrows, LEAS for a Toxin-Free Canada

Greening our union

The Conservative Government under Stephen Harper continues to embarrass Canadians on the world stage, as it did recently in Bali, undermining international efforts to make a dent in greenhouse gas emissions. Members of Canada's largest union can take pride in the fact that CUPE is leading by example where our federal government is failing.

CUPE's new national headquarters in Ottawa, the Stan Little Building,

scaping, CFC-free and HCFC-free refrigerants, a green housekeeping program, a green construction and recycling program, and many more.

One of the first things people notice when they go to the washroom at CUPE headquarters are instructions next to the toilet explaining our dual-flush system. You pull up for liquid waste (flushing with half the water) or down for solid waste. You may be surprised that I write about this, but it's a good example of water-saving measures in our new building, allowing us to reduce water consumption by 43 per cent.

As National Secretary-Treasurer, I can add that it makes good economic sense as well as environmental sense to reduce our collective environmental footprint. Our upfront costs for installing energy efficient systems in our new headquarters will be fully recovered in only 3.8 years, while the benefit to our environment is timeless. With the introduction of hybrid vehicles to our list of fleet vehicles and other pro-environment initiatives, CUPE truly is greening our union.



Photo credit: Murray Mosher

was planned and built to ensure a significant reduction in resource consumption and minimize our union's impact on the environment. Using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) award system as a guideline to design the building, we have achieved LEED certification and reduced our energy consumption by 49 per cent.

The new building has many other environmentally friendly features, including energy efficient lighting, occupancy sensors that turn lights off when you leave the room and maximize use of daylight, energy efficient heating, cooling, ventilation and heat recovery systems, native species land-

In solidarity,

Claude G n reux

Claude G n reux
National Secretary-Treasurer



Keep tabs on the privateers

Read **Privatization Watch**, CUPE's monthly update on defending public services from P3s, contracting out and other forms of privatization.

Sign up and see past issues at
cupe.ca/privatizationwatch

CUPE / Canadian Union
of Public Employees