
NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

September 2014 - December 2014

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

The fall and winter period was a very full one for CUPE activists and staff throughout Canada.

On the bargaining front, members continued to walk the line in British Columbia (Local 608, Naramata Centre). A new dispute began in British Columbia (Local 2262 - Castlegar, BC). Bargaining is going on in all regions (see section on Collective Bargaining / Strikes / Lockouts for more details).

In early October a total of almost 1,200 members, staff and guests gathered for our first ever National Sector Council Meeting, in Toronto. All of the feedback we have received to date has been positive as delegates focused on sector specific issues related to collective bargaining and other key issues.

Brother Lee Saunders, International President of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) fired up our crowd with a strong message in defense of public services and of the importance of solidarity within and outside of our respective unions.

In October, our nation was shocked to see two military personnel murdered for no reason other than they were wearing armed forces uniforms. The deaths of Warrant Officer Patrice Vincent in St-Jean-sur-Richelieu, Quebec and Master Corporal Nathan Cirillo, in Ottawa were marked by a moment of silence in their memory at our December National Executive Board meeting.

In addition to a very tough bargaining climate, legislation in both Nova Scotia and Quebec which affects key sectors in both provinces is receiving our full attention.

Our October 2014 membership report shows we have for the first time hit the 630,000 level as our National Union now represents 630,027 members. Our Union continues to grow, albeit at slower pace than previous decades.

As another year ends, let me offer my sincere thanks to all activists and staff; together, your efforts combined, making life better for CUPE members.

1. National Scene

- **Federal Budget**

On September 29, 2014 I appeared before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance for their pre-budget consultations.

Our submission spoke about unemployment and the kinds of jobs being created today. We also discussed in the period of federal budget surplus how there was no justification to cut federal health care transfers to the provinces, or to raise OAS/GIS eligibility from 65 to 67 years.

Finally, we called for an end to tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy and for support for working families, such as a national universal public child care program.

- **Bill C-525:**

An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code, the Parliamentary Employment and Staff Relations Act and the Public Service Labour Relations Act.

Bill C-525 which makes organizing harder under the Federal Code, and decertification easier, has passed second reading in the Senate and has now been referred to Committee. In summary it ends automatic certification, making votes mandatory for all organizing.

The proposed legislation would also make employer designation of essential services easier and forced interest arbitration on federal employees where more than 80% of a unit is declared essential.

- **Bill C-377:**

An Act to amend the Income Tax Act (requirements for labour organizations).

Bill C-377 is back being debated in the Senate. You will recall in 2012, the Senate moved the proposed Bill back to Parliament with fairly significant amendments proposed by (now former) Senator Hugh Segal.

Parliament was prorogued in 2013, and the Bill was lost. The Harper government has now re-introduced it in its original, un-amended form, and send it back to the Senate.

We are in close contact with Liberal senators who oppose C-377. We will appear in the Senate again once the Bill is sent to Committee.

The following statement from the Honourable Senator James Cowan (Leader of the Opposition) capture concerns labour and others have with this anti-union Bill:

“I am not aware of any person or entity, public or private, anywhere in Canada required by law to make the kind of public disclosure that we would be demanding with Bill C-377. The Prime Minister’s office is not required to make this kind of public disclosure. Charities are not required to make such disclosures. Neither are political parties. Public and private corporations, which have their own lucrative tax write-offs, are not required to make such disclosures. On what possible basis can we demand that level of disclosure from labour organizations and labour trusts?”

I’ll keep you posted on all developments on this important file.

Related to all of this is a request we received from our sister union UNISON in the United Kingdom, requesting our assistance with any research we have on governments terminating automatic dues check-off provisions. The Cameron government is openly discussing ending automatic dues check-off for all public sector unions.

- **Ebola Crisis**

Since our September NEB meeting we have produced a series of fact sheets for CUPE health care workers. We continue to attend all government information sessions and to assist locals with safety-related complaints.

In addition, we are continuing to press the federal government to do more to assist the people of West Africa.

- **Environmental Policy**

I am proud to report that CUPE was invited alongside various environmental groups to a special session with Federal NDP Leader Tom Mulcair and key NDP MPs.

Brother Matthew Firth, our National Research Officer specializing in the environment was part of this distinguished group offering advice to the Federal NDP on all aspects of environmental policy.

- **Child Care 2020 Conference**

Almost 600 activists, including many from CUPE (including our National Child Care Working Group) met in Winnipeg in November to discuss the current state of child care in Canada.

Our Union was a key sponsor of the conference and we were visible in both plenary and workshops at the conference. Federal NDP Leader Tom Mulcair was well received with delegates expressing support for the NDP's announced plans to make a national child care program a key Party platform in the 2015 federal election.

Stephen Lewis in his keynote address to the Conference said, "Universal child care is the pre-condition for gender equality and a public good, much like public health care and education."

2. Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

- **CLC Fairness Works - Image Campaign**

In late November the CLC released its third advertisement for television, outdoor advertising and social media. Key issues such as pensions and health care are profiled in this ad, which again sees all Congress affiliates pooling our resources to speak with Canadians about the values unions stand for. Find out more at fairnessworks.ca.

- **CPP Expansion Campaign Re-Launch**

The CLC has begun a re-launch of the CPP Expansion Campaign in order to capitalize on the fact that Tom Mulcair and the Federal NDP have indicated that retirement security issues will be prominent, top level campaign issues for the NDP in the upcoming 2015 campaign.

Our Union has been and will continue to play a big role in support of this important initiative.

- **CLC Political Action Conferences**

In the first quarter of 2015 the CLC will host a series of regional political action conferences.

The purpose of these gatherings is two-fold. One, to update affiliates on the Fairness Works Program. And secondly, to prepare volunteers to work in support of NDP campaigns in the 2015 federal election campaign.

I can't think of a more important task next year, then to prepare for the 2015 federal election. We will circulate details of these regional CLC conferences as they become available.

- **CLC / Western Ontario University – Domestic Violence Survey**

On November 27, 2014 the CLC released findings of their comprehensive survey on domestic violence, conducted in conjunction with Western Ontario University. All CLC affiliates have been asked to share this important survey with our members. Visit the CLC website at www.canadianlabour.ca/issues/domestic-violence-work to read more on the survey.

3. National Conferences

- **National Sector Council Meeting - October 6-9, 2014 (Toronto, Ontario)**

Our first ever National Sector Council Meeting was held in Toronto, where 1,200 members, staff and guests gathered. CUPE's sectors are:

- Airlines
- Child Care
- Education
- Emergency Service Workers
- Energy
- Health Care
- Library
- Municipal
- Post-Secondary
- Provincial and Government and Crown Corporation
- Social Services

Delegates spent the bulk of the three days discussing sector specific issues. Collective bargaining was front and centre in each sector gathering. Other key issues included contacting out / privatization and attacks on our defined benefit pension plans.

Plenary sessions focused on pensions, bargaining, new organizing techniques as well as greetings from Federal NDP MP, Peggy Nash and as mentioned, a powerful address from Lee Saunders, President of AFSCME, our sister union in the United States.

I urge all locals to share your key table officer executive member contact information with your assigned national representative, so we may include your local in planned ongoing communication for your sector.

Lastly, I thank each and every local who attended the meeting in Toronto. Your positive feedback will enable us to expand this important sector-based work.

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

My hometown of Winnipeg will be host to CUPE's Second National Human Rights Conference.

Plans are well underway to host a conference that focuses on the key directions laid out in our 2013 National Convention Strategic Direction paper, including:

- CUPE's membership survey focused on our changing demographics and diversity;
- Bringing an equity lens to our important work on pensions, benefits, public services, health and safety and the economy.

I urge all locals to prioritize attending this important conference. Further details are available at CUPE.ca.

I look forward to seeing many of you in Winnipeg in February (remember, it's a dry cold!!!).

4. Collective Bargaining / Strikes / Lockouts

There were five CUPE disputes involving job action in this last quarter of 2014. Two of these disputes are on-going and three have settled.

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

Our dispute at this facility continues with no end in sight as members enter the eighth month on the picket line. Despite their mounting frustration with no progress members are solid on the picket line. Repeated efforts to speak with the Moderator of the United Church of Canada and the Moderator of the British Columbia Conference of the United Church have been met with silence. Local 608 has now filed a common employer application with the BCLRB.

Mediation efforts earlier in the fall failed to produce a settlement. During mediation the employer advised that they were changing the nature of the Centre's operations. The employer made little effort to resolve the dispute and be guided by the United Church of Canada approved policies that support and defend free collective bargaining.

- **CUPE 1490 – Township of Black River Matheson (Ontario)**

After 54 days on the line locked out by the employer the dispute ended. The parties were able to resolve the contentious issues around scheduling of hours and days of work. The last week of the lockout was not without controversy as the employer initially rejected the memorandum of agreement only to return to a further council meeting later in the week to ratify the same agreement.

- **CUPE 2099 – City of Mount Pearl (Newfoundland)**

The 140 members of Local 2099 were locked out on September 30th in a dispute over wages and pensions. After a period on the line the Mayor asked the Local to use the assistance of a mediator. Through the mediator the Local was able to resolve the wage issue and make some gains on the pension issue. The pension plan changed benefit levels unilaterally in January 2013 and the parties have resolved to work together in an effort to change the benefit level to where it was pre-2013.

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

The 34 members of Local 2262 took job action to fight concessions and protect job security. The employer's concession is with respect to union leave to investigate grievances. Current language allows for unlimited access and the employer proposes language to limit it to ten hours per month. The union has proposed language that protects bargaining unit work from being done by excluded managers on a continuous or repetitive basis. Standard job security language found in many CUPE agreements. The employer is adamant that they will not agree to this or any other job security language.

PROVINCE	LOCAL	EMPLOYER	# OF MEMBERS	STRIKE BEGAN	DURATION (days)
British Columbia	608	Naramata Centre	30	May 15, 2014	ongoing
Ontario	1490	Township of Black River Matheson	17	Aug. 11, 2014 Locked Out	54
Newfoundland	2099	City of Mount Pearl	140	Sept. 30, 2014 Locked Out	22
New Brunswick	76	City of Campbellton	43	Nov 4, 2014 Locked Out	30
British Columbia	2262	City of Castlegar	34	Nov. 8, 2014	ongoing

CUPE members at the City of Kelowna Local 338 recently ratified a five year agreement with wage increases of 8.5% over the term. They also negotiated new family leave provisions and improved tool allowance and vacation leave provisions.

Local 4193, employees of the Solid Waste Commission, New Brunswick came to a tentative agreement for a 5-year contract with a general economic increase of 2.5% per year for the length of the contract. The negotiation committee was able to get wage adjustments for "la position de pesée" (weight position) and the secretary. There are improvements in the language of the Collective Agreement and other financial gains.

The 43 members at the City of Campbellton went through a tough round of bargaining to protect their defined benefit pension plan as well as push back on contracting out snow removal services. The agreement now guarantees a minimum of 25 positions and a 2% salary increase in each year over the duration of the 7 year contract.

5. Regional Services Division Updates

Airline Division

- A contemplated merger between regional carriers First Air and Canadian North has been abandoned (both are CUPE organized airlines).
- A tentative agreement has been reached by Local 4088 and Cathay Pacific, it contains 10% wage hikes over four years and other benefit improvements.
- Our Air Canada component is currently preparing for 2015 negotiations. I was pleased to participate in membership telephone town hall meetings with ACCEX President Brother Michel Cournoyer.
- Our legal challenge to the 1:50 staff / passenger ratio is continuing.

Hospital Employees Union (HEU) - British Columbia

I was pleased to attend with Brother Charles the 70th Anniversary Convention of HEU. Their first agreement, with Vancouver General Hospital, was signed in 1944.

The biennial convention was jam packed with important debates and guest speakers including British Columbia NDP Leader, John Horgan, and Dr. Monika Dutt, Chairperson of Canadian Doctors for Medicare also addressed the convention.

Congratulations to Brother Victor Elkins (Regional Vice-President - British Columbia on our NEB) re-elected as HEU President for a two-year term.

British Columbia

Our Health Accord Campaign held two well attended town hall meetings in Campbell River and Courtney on Vancouver Island. Both are federal seats that our Party, the NDP, can take from the Conservatives in 2015.

CUPE British Columbia was very active in the municipal school board elections. The labour endorsed Mayor of Vancouver, Gregor Robinson was re-elected along with a majority council of progressive candidates. For a complete update please go to CUPE.bc.ca for details on the election. Strike action continues in Castlegar (Local 2262) and in Naramata, BC, Local 608.

Alberta

I was pleased to attend the Alberta and NDP Leadership Convention in mid-October. MLA Rachel Notley was elected Leader and I envision good things for the Alberta NDP going forward.

Bargaining in Alberta remains challenging with school board settlements that mirror the Alberta teacher's four-year deal which contained three years of wage freezes. City of Edmonton bargaining continues with all civic unions including our own Local 30 still at the table.

Saskatchewan

I was pleased to attend and speak at two important P3 meetings in Saskatchewan during this reporting period:

- North Battleford public meeting P3 hospital on October 22, 2014
- Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention P3 panel on October 31, 2014

Saskatchewan has become a P3 incubator of sorts under of the Brad Wall government.

Talks continue with the City of Regina and all civic unions regarding the city pension plan, our goal of course is to maintain the defined benefit plan and to hold the city to a deal we struck to sustain the plan, in May 2013. As this report goes to print there is a tentative deal which preserves the DB nature of the plan.

Manitoba

CUPE Manitoba health care workers celebrated "Health Care Support Workers Week" as proclaimed by the Minister of Health, the week of October 13 -17, 2014.

Municipal and school board elections were held on October 22, 2014, throughout Manitoba. An increase in labour endorsed candidates were elected to the Winnipeg

City Council, though our endorsed mayoralty candidate, Judy Wacylicia-Leis ran second, for the second consecutive election.

In late November the Manitoba government announced a new Child and Family Services Emergency Placement program which will see 210 child care workers hired (CUPE Local 2153) to provide care for the increased number of children in care in Manitoba.

CUPE Manitoba's first ever sector meeting was held in Brandon, Manitoba in late November and was a great success with over 125 delegates participating.

Ontario

School board and municipal elections were held throughout Ontario on October 27, 2014. CUPE Ontario and numerous locals and activists were very visible throughout the campaign. The CLC reports that a total of 225 endorsed candidates by labour councils were elected throughout the province (13 mayors, 154 councillors and 58 school trustees).

A total of 10 CUPE members and two retirees were elected. My congratulations to all candidates and activists who worked so hard in the campaign.

In late October, I spoke to Sister Jan Tutton, President of CUPE Local 132. Her members at Fairview Lodge in Whitby safely got 194 residents out after a fire broke out, destroying the facility. As I said to Sister Jan, each and every one of her 247 members are heroes, and CUPE is both thankful and proud of their efforts.

I was proud to deliver the keynote speech to the Ontario NDP convention in Toronto on November 15th. I spoke about the importance of the alignment between labour and the NDP and the need for a workers agenda from our Party.

On November 21st I joined our CUPE Ontario leadership at a Queen's Park rally sponsored by the Ontario Health Coalition, to "Stop Private Clinics and Save Local Hospitals".

Quebec

Last report I updated you on Bill 3 where pension concessions are being proposed for all workers in the municipal sector. Led by CUPE, the fight over Bill 3 continues.

Since that time, an important day of great upheaval took place on November 26 throughout the province.

Despite this demonstration, the government adopted the draft law on pensions for municipal employees, and without resorting to gag. The official opposition has agreed to end the detailed study of the bill in exchange for two minor amendments.

Now the Liberal government has introduced Bill 15, which seeks to increase government control over staff levels and expenditures in government departments and the broader public sector. The Bill has austerity and downsizing written all over it.

CUPE has also been invited to meetings to discuss pension plan in the university sector, the focus is “sustainability” of the plans.

In early November I was pleased to speak to our CUPE health care workers at their biennial CPAS Conference. Bill 10 will see forced health district mergers and numerous run-off votes for our members. CUPE National will do our utmost to support their members in 2015/2016 when the votes are expected.

Prince Edward Island (PEI)

I was pleased to again be able to attend the CUPE PEI All Presidents’ meeting in early December. Our Union is very visible and very busy in Prince Edward Island. CUPE PEI President, Lori McKay and I met with Premier Robert Ghiz (who announced his intentions to step down in early 2015) to discuss University of PEI pension issues.

Congratulations goes to Sister Ann Ramsey, a member of Local 1770 and the Persons with Disabilities Working Group, who received the PEI Council of People with Disabilities 2014 Access Award for her volunteer and mentoring work benefitting workers with disabilities.

In mid-November I sent out a unique congratulations letter to Local 805 health care worker Sister Elaine Fagan, who retired recently, with 48 years of service having been hired in 1966!!! Sister Elaine has been a long-time activist and I offered her our Union’s best wishes for a long, healthy and happy retirement.

New Brunswick

CUPE New Brunswick is busy on a number of fronts, including efforts to assist Local 1251 representing provincial correctional officers who had been without a contract for over three years. An agreement was finally reached Friday, December 5.

Members of Local 76 employed by the City of Campbellton were locked out since November 4 and have since returned to work Monday, December 1. They reached an agreement that includes a 2% wage increase in each year for the duration of the 7 year contract and maintained their defined benefit pension plan.

We are also seeking a meeting with the province's new Liberal premier who promised in the recent elections, to meet with CUPE New Brunswick regarding New Brunswick's pension reforms of 2012/2013.

Nova Scotia

The number one issue for our Union in Nova Scotia is Bill 1, which confirmed health care restructuring which will affect bargaining unit representation in Nova Scotia's health care sector.

The law provided a process of mediation, but after two days of mediation, the parties have not concluded with an agreement to define the bargaining units. While writing my report arbitration should take place in the second week of December.

The legislation appointed a mediator/arbitrator whom we are currently meeting with. Nova Scotia health care unions reached a common position which respects government restructuring and union representation rights. This is the position we are advancing in mediation.

CUPE Nova Scotia also held a very successful All Committees meeting in late October.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Congratulations to Local 4732, Transition House Hope Haven, in Labrador City, a relatively small union who achieved a good settlement after a long and protracted round of bargaining.

Our Health Accord Tour hit Newfoundland and Labrador on December 1st in St. John's and December 2nd in Corner Brook. We had good crowds in both communities where a strong commitment to public Medicare was evident.

6. Global Justice / International Solidarity

Public Services International (PSI) Inter-American Regional Conference (April 2015)

Our global union, PSI will hold its regional conference in Mexico City, next April. The theme of the conference will be, "Advancing Trade Union Rights in the Struggle for Quality Public Services!".

The Inter-Americas' action plan focuses on important issues including:

- Fighting privatization
- Advancing trade union rights
- Influencing global policy/global governance
- Trade union growth - equality of opportunity

UNISON - National Health Service Workers Day of Action - October 13, 2014

UNISON, our sister union in the United Kingdom, held a second 4-hour strike to protest austerity and low wage offers to national health service workers.

A UNISON membership survey revealed 54% of health care workers cannot make ends meet without a second job. Low wages also saw 80% of members having to cut vacation plans, and 51% had trouble purchasing sufficient food supplies due to their low wages.

Hong Kong Pro-Democracy Protests

The world witnessed massive citizen protests in Hong Kong over China's refusal to allow residents to vote on municipal candidates of their own choosing. Our Union joined many others in offering our solidarity with the people of Hong Kong.

Ebola Outbreak

As reported, I was incredibly proud that our September NEB authorized two \$10,000 donations to support the people of West Africa to contain the Ebola outbreak. CUPE Quebec has in addition offered a \$5,000 donation.

We also continued to call for our federal government to do more in terms of aid and the provision of health care workers and vaccines to assist the people of West Africa.

Go to cupe.ca to access our fact sheets for Ebola prevention for all health care workers.

Detroit Water Turn-offs

As outlined in my September report we continue to work with the Council of Canadians to protest austerity driven water turn-offs in Detroit.

In mid-October the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Human Right to Water, Catarina de Albuquerque, issued a report calling on Detroit to halt the water turn-offs.

Ms. de Albuquerque's report said, "The indignity suffered by people whose water was disconnected is unacceptable."

We plan to continue to work with Maude Barlow and the Council of Canadians on this important human rights issue.

Aids-Free World

Our Global Justice Fund, in partnership with CUPE British Columbia's Colleen-Jordan Fund, is in year three of our support for AIDS-Free World, a Boston-based advocacy group co-founded by Canada's own Stephen Lewis.

In recent months AIDS-Free World has spoken out, challenging the nations of the world to support the people of West Africa in their time of need with the current Ebola crisis.

They have also challenged the United Nations, International Labour Organization for not speaking out against forced marriages involving children.

Lastly, Stephen Lewis has spoken out against the U.N. establishment of a high level panel on peace operations, and notwithstanding the U.N.'s professed support for gender equality, the panel's 14 members are made up of eleven men and only three women.

AIDS-Free World is a relatively new group for us, but their advocacy is both forceful and progressive and I am proud CUPE is able to support this important work.

Stephen Lewis attended our December 2014 NEB meeting to report on this important work and to thank CUPE.

7. Organizing Report

During the period of September 1, 2014 to November 30, 2014 CUPE organized 1,296 new members in 15 bargaining units. The largest unit organized was at the City of Drummondville in Quebec covering 226 outside workers and crossing guards. We welcome all of these members into the CUPE family.

Across the country we organized 215 members in health care, 286 members in municipalities, 280 members in social services, 186 members in K – 12, 150 members in universities and 145 members in the energy sector.

We are currently involved in 47 active campaigns that if successful would bring 11,433 new members into CUPE. At Labour Boards across the country we have 11 projects representing 607 waiting for certification votes to be conducted. There are 11 restructuring projects on-going that will result in representation votes affecting 2,230 CUPE members

8. Personal / In-memoriam

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

- Brother Mike Coleman, Painter Foreman, CUPE Local 382 (School District 61, British Columbia)
- Sister Joan Rowlands, CUPE Local 2033 (Roman District School Board, Newfoundland and Labrador)
- Sister Julie Davis, retiree and former Managing Director of Organizing and Regional Service, National Office
- Sister Dea Pasini, Temporary National Representative (Ontario Regional Office) and a former President of Local 4092 (Air Canada Flight Attendants, Toronto base)
- Brother Kevin MacNeil, National Representative (Sydney Area Office), retired October 1, 2003
- Sister Helen Coemtzis, member of Local 3744, Unionville Home Society
- Brother Chris Sax, Servicing Representative, Barrie Area Office, who passed away suddenly on Tuesday December 2, 2014
- Sister Zahra Mohamoud Abdille, member of Local 79, City of Toronto Public Health Nurse and her two sons Faris age 13 and Zain aged 8 were murdered.

Retirements

- Robert Hickes, Organizing and Regional Services Department – January 1, 2015
- Paula Larocque, Niagara Area Office – January 1, 2015
- Linda Craig, Quebec Regional Office – January 1, 2015
- Denise Harder, Dauphin Area Office – February 1, 2015
- Helen Manning, Peel Area Office – April 1, 2015

Conclusion

My thanks to all locals who have sent details of member retirements and requested certificates of appreciation and a congratulations letter. If you would like such letters sent to honour a local union member, we require three weeks notice and accurate information.

We were all very sad to learn the passing of Sister Julie Davis. Sister Davis was a pioneer with our Union. One of the first female National Representatives and the first female full-time Officer at the Ontario Federation of Labour. She was also Regional Director of the Ontario Regional Office and retired as our Managing Director of Organizing and Regional Services. In late January 2015 we will host a memorial service to celebrate the life of our remarkable Sister and friend.

A special thank you and best wishes to Brother Bob Hickee, Managing Director of Organizing and Regional Services. Hailing from New Brunswick, Brother Hickee, a school board worker, was a long-time activist, President of CUPE New Brunswick, NEB member, President of the New Brunswick Federation of Labour, National

Representative, Regional Director and finally Managing Director of Organizing and Regional Services.

Bob exemplifies the very best qualities of trade union activism. Thank you Brother for a lifetime of commitment to our Union. Best wishes to you and Chris for a long, healthy and happy retirement.

As 2014 draws to a close, I offer best wishes to each of you, our activists, staff and retirees, for a peaceful Christmas and all the best in 2015.

In solidarity,



PAUL MOIST
National President

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