



PEI Federation of Labour Newsletter Issued on March 14, 2007

Current News In Brief

Federation Welcomes Newest Affiliate

□ The PEI Federation of Labour would like to welcome the Canadian Media Guild-Charlottetown Unit (CBC) and its 50 members into the federation as our newest affiliate.

Federation of Labour to Hold Sixth Annual Provincial Day of Mourning Ceremony

□ On Saturday, April 28, the PEI Federation of Labour in conjunction with the Department of Community and Cultural Affairs and the Workers Compensation Board will hold its Sixth Annual Provincial Day of Mourning Ceremony for workers who have been killed or injured on the job. The ceremony will be held at 1:00 pm at Province House with a reception to follow. Everyone is encouraged to attend. We also ask any union who wishes to lay a wreath at the ceremony to contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368- 3192 or e-mail at: peifed@pei.aibn.com as soon as possible.

CLC Atlantic Region and the Labour College of Canada Weeklong Educational

□ From April 22 to 27, the CLC Atlantic Region and the Labour College of Canada will be holding a weeklong educational at the Memramcook Institute in St. Joseph, NB. The courses for this year will be Labour Law; Advanced Steward; and Popular Economics: If People Mattered. The Registration fee will be \$775.00 single and \$625.00 shared accommodation. For more information please contact CLC Atlantic Region at (506)858-9350; fax at (506)858-9571 or e-mail at: atlantic@clc-ctc.ca. The deadline for applications is March 28, 2007.

Public Meeting on "Atlantica: Myths and Realities"

□ On Wednesday, April 11, 2007, there will a Public Meeting on "Atlantica: Myths and Realities" with Scott Sinclair at 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m at the Lecture Theater, Colonel Gray Senior High School, 175 Spring Park Road, Charlottetown.

Call For Input Into the Federation's Brief to Cabinet

□ On Tuesday, March 27, 2007, The federation will meet with the Provincial Cabinet and the Opposition parties to present our Annual Brief. Therefore, If any of our affiliates

have any issues they wish us to bring to the Provincial Cabinet please contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368- 3192 or e-mail at: peifed@pei.aibn.com. **The deadline for input will be Friday, March 16, 2007.**

Federation Calls on its Members to Support Anti-Scab Bill

□ On Wednesday, March 21, Bill C-257 (Anti-Scab), is scheduled for the vote on its third reading in the House of Commons. While the Bill passed its second reading quite comfortably (167 in favour and 101 opposed) with 3 of the 4 Island MP's voting for it (Joe McGuire was absent from the house), the Liberal Leader recently withdrew his support of the Bill due to the fact that two of the three amendments recommended by the Committee reviewing the Bill have been ruled out of order. The Liberals are putting up the smoke screen that essential services are not set out in the Bill. They refuse to acknowledge that the Canadian Labour Code already has essential services provisions called "Maintenance of Service". **Therefore, the Federation asks all our affiliated members to contact their MP and express your support for the Bill.**

- **Wayne Easter**, Malpeque, Telephone: (902) 964-2428 Fax: (902) 964-3242
Email: Easter.W@parl.gc.ca
- **Lawrence MacAulay**, Cardigan, Telephone: (902) 838-4139 Fax: (902) 838-3790
Email: MacAulay.L@parl.gc.ca
- **Joe McGuire**, Egmont, Phone: (902) 436-7333 Fax: (902) 436-0175 Email:
mcguij@parl.gc.ca
- **Shawn Murphy**, Hillsbororough, Telephone:(902) 566-7770 Fax: (902) 566-7780
Email: murphs@parl.gc.ca

PSAC to Hold Federal Budget Watch 2007

□ On Tuesday, February 20, Federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty announced in the House of Commons that he will deliver his second budget on Monday, March 19. In response to this, PSAC will hold Federal Budget Watch 2007 on Monday, March 19, 2007 at 4:45 pm at the PSAC Office, Yates Building, 1 Harbourside, Charlottetown.

Unemployment Rate For January

□ On Friday, February 9, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for January was 10.7% down 1.7% from December's 12.4%. You currently need 490 hours to qualify for EI on PEI

Early Childhood Educators Vote to Accept Three Year Deal

□ On Wednesday, January 31, it was announced that the Early childhood educators

represented by UPSE and employed at the Child Development Centre voted to accept a 3 year deal. The deal in effect from September 1, 2006 to August 31, 2009, includes a substantial immediate increase for most of the members and a 3% economic adjustment for all staff in years two (2) and three (3) of the agreement. Also included in the deal are articles covering issues such as: sick time, vacations, statutory holidays, and educational opportunities.

Report Finds Many Island Women Having Trouble Qualifying for Maternity Benefits

□ On Monday, January 29, a report released by the Women's Network of P.E.I. found that 41 % of P.E.I. women have difficulty qualifying for maternity benefits through E I. The report found that maternity benefits can be difficult to obtain for women who are either self-employed or don't have enough hours of work to qualify, given the seasonal nature of much work in the province. To ensure more Island women are eligible for maternity benefits, the report recommends that E I. be opened up to allow self-employed women and parents the option to pay into this system and that E.I. allow a 3- 5 year reach-back (currently only hours of employment over the previous 12 months are counted toward eligibility for the program). The report also recommends increasing the benefits for those who do qualify.

Canada's Labour Ministers Pledge to Promote Safety of Young Workers

□ On Friday, January 26, Federal, provincial and territorial labour ministers concluded their meeting in Fredericton with a joint statement in which they promised to promote safety for young workers and the prevention of violence in the workplace. The ministers will look at including workplace safety issues in schools as well as sharing information between government departments. Ottawa is also planning to table new labour regulations in the spring to make workplaces safer. In 2005, 1,097 Canadians died as a result of work-related causes and another 337,930 work-related injuries and illnesses were reported.

Ont. Arbitrator Finds Temporary Workers Unjustly Excluded from Collective Agreement

□ On Friday, January 26, In a ruling that could have far-reaching implications for temporary workers supplied to employers by private agencies, an arbitrator in Ontario has ruled that temporary employees of the former Ontario Property Assessment Corporation (OPAC) were unjustly excluded from the collective agreement negotiated between OPAC and OPSEU covering the period 2000 to 2002. The policy grievance brought forward by OPSEU involved the hiring by OPAC of 64 temporary data-entry clerks from an outside employment agency (Pro Temps) when it was found that OPAC did not have enough bargaining unit employees to finish a major overhaul of centralizing assessment and property records. OPAC took the position that Pro Temps was the

legitimate employer of the temporary workers because it retained fundamental control over the employment arrangement. However the arbitrator found that OPAC exercised direction and control over the employees' work, that it bore the burden of remuneration, and that it maintained the authority to hire and fire the temporary employees. He also pointed out that the recognition clause of the collective agreement clearly obligated the employer to recognize OPSEU as the "sole and exclusive" bargaining agent for "all employees of the employer.

Federation Submits Seven Names to the WCB Advisory Committee, Two Chosen

□ On Wednesday, January 24, after a call out to our affiliates, the federation submitted 7 names for consideration for membership on the Advisory Committee reviewing the Workers Compensation Act. Of those names 2 were chosen as Worker's Representatives : Federation President Carl Pursey (CUPW) and Joyce MacLean (UPSE).

Worker Dies In Workplace Accident

□ On Monday, January 22, a worker died in a workplace accident at UPEI. Claude Adolph Scully 53 of Charlottetown died at the Queen Elizabeth Hospital shortly after a fall while working on the extension to the School of Business. Occupational Health and Safety is investigating the accident.

New Study Reveals Layoffs and Closures Often Hit High-seniority Workers Hardest

□ On Thursday, January 18, a new study by Statistics Canada found that when companies close or announce major layoffs, the financial impact on employees often lasts for years and hits high seniority workers the hardest. For workers in general the study found that, the losses experienced 5 years after displacement caused by closure or mass layoffs represented at least 9% of their pre-displacement earnings. The losses were even more pronounced for workers who had at least five years of seniority and found another job with males experiencing losses that represented between 18% and 28% of their earnings before the job loss. For their female counterparts, the losses ranged between 24% and 26% of their pre-displacement earnings. The study examined the earnings of displaced workers 25 to 49 in the private sector between 1988 and 1997.

Workers Receive Lay-off Notices at the Summerside Tax Centre

□ On Wednesday, January 17, lay-off notices were received by 131 workers who work in the GST rebate program for tourists at the Summerside Tax Centre. While most are expected to find work elsewhere within the Tax Centre, there could be as many as 30 full-time and 23 term or contract positions eliminated in the end. The day before, the Canadian Tourism Industry Association of Canada issued a news release stating that cancelling the GST Visitors' Rebate Program would cause \$238 million in GDP losses and 5,700 jobs to disappear in the tourism sector.

Health Care Workers Represented by UPSE Vote to Accept New Contract

□ On Friday, January 12, it was announced that Health care workers represented by UPSE have voted to accept a new 3-year contract with the province. Mail-in ballots were sent to 1,228 members with 73% of those responding voting in favor of the agreement. The count was 409 in favour to 148 opposed with six ballots spoiled. The agreement in effect until March 31, 2009, includes: a wage increase of 8.78% (compounded over term of agreement), a short trip allowance increase from \$6.00 to \$6.25, a weekend shift premium increase from \$1.00 to \$1.25 per hour, staff development and training fund enhancements, bereavement leave eligibility for Casuals with 780 hours of service in a fiscal year, and a decrease in years required for entitlement of vacation increases.

New Study Calls Tory Child Care Initiative Bad Public Policy

□ On Friday, January 12, a new study “Making space for child care” from the Code Blue for Childcare organization was released. The study reviews Canadian and international evidence and experiences, and outlines alternate policies to build a solid early learning and child care system. It also shows that the Conservatives' piecemeal approach is far from the comprehensive, co-ordinated and well-funded approach required to do the job and concludes that Prime Minister Stephen Harper's “child care spaces initiative” is bad public policy that won't deliver on its promise. The study also cites a recent Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report that ranks Canada lowest among developed nations in early learning and child care spending and provision. The full study is available at http://www.buildchildcare.ca/updir/buildchildcare/spaces_report.pdf

The Federal Government to Seek Citizen Input on Electoral Reform

□ On Wednesday, January 10, the federal government announced that they will spend \$900,000 canvassing the general public on electoral reform. The tender calls for a private think-tank to join forces with a polling firm to canvass a cross-section of Canadians on 5 specific topics: political parties (e.g., their role in policy development); the electoral system (e.g., particular characteristics that are important for citizens, such as the link between elected representatives and a particular geographical area); the House of Commons (e.g., decorum); the Senate (e.g., the role it should play and the powers it should possess); and the role of the citizen (e.g., civic engagement). Public consultations are expected to begin by March 9 with a daylong citizens' forums to be held in each province and territory and they want to have a draft report completed before the end of May.

Employees of Veterans Affairs Canada in Charlottetown Raise \$121,433

□ On Tuesday, January 9, it was announced that the employees of Veterans Affairs Canada in Charlottetown have raised \$121,433 up from \$114,000 last year for the United

Way and 16 health partners through the Government of Canada Workplace Charitable Campaign this year. The money was raised through payroll deductions along with fundraisers.

Union Membership Increases in 2005 in Canada

□ On Tuesday, January 9, the federal human resources department announced that union membership in Canada grew by 60,000 to 4,441,000 members as of Jan. 1, 2006, up from 4,381,000 workers a year earlier. The unionization rate or union density (union membership as a percentage of non-agricultural paid employment) was 30.8% as of Jan. 1, 2006. The department also says the membership of the CLC increased by 41,040 over the year - from 3,156,560 to 3,197,600. The percentage of members from unaffiliated national unions increased slightly - from 11.4% to 12.0%, an increase of 34,430 members. The full report is located at http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/lp/wid/union_membership.shtml.

UPSE Announces Winners Of Annual Bursaries and Scholarship

□ On Tuesday, January 2, it was announced that UPSE handed out \$5,500 to 10 Island students enrolled in post-secondary education. Nine students received a \$500 bursary and one student, Kyle MacDonald of York, received the \$1,000 Laurie Jenkins Memorial Scholarship. The bursaries are awarded to UPSE members and their dependents who are attending a post-secondary institution on a full-time basis. Applications are rated on the basis of financial need, academic ability and union involvement of the applicant or of the person on whom they are dependent. The Laurie Jenkins Memorial Bursary also considers community involvement, in determining the successful applicant. Jenkins was an UPSE activist who held a variety of positions within UPSE and served as Treasurer of the P.E.I. Federation of Labour.

Top CEOs Earn Average Canadian's Salary in a Little over a Day

□ On Tuesday, January 2, a new report by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives announced that by 9:46 am on January 2, Canada's 100 highest paid CEOs will have reaped, on average, \$38,010 in pay which equals the average annual earnings of workers in Canada. To earn the equivalent of an average years salary for a minimum wage worker (\$15,931) took the CEOs to just 12:40 p.m on January 1 or a little under 4 hours. These figures refer only to the top 100 CEOs. The average yearly salary of the top 100 CEOs was \$9,059,113 and the highest-paid individual CEO 'earned' more than \$74,824,355 in 2005. The report assumes a normal work day of 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Articles for This Issue

The George MacInnis Memorial Scholarship

-This year the PEI Federation of Labour will be awarding two (2) scholarships of \$500.00 each for students who are graduating high school this year and attending their first year at a Holland College, Trades division course (i.e. Automotive Technology, Carpentry, Electrical - Construction and Industrial, Electromechanical Technology, Heating, Ventilation and Air Conditioning Technology, Plumbing, Precision Machinist, Steamfitting/PipeFitting, and Welding Fabrication).

-Besides this, there are two other criteria necessary to apply for these scholarships:

1. The applicants have to be sons, daughters, or legal wards of members in good standing of a local affiliated to the PEI Federation of Labour
2. The applicant must write an essay of approximately 250 words on **“Why Unions are Important in Today’s Society?”**

-If you wish to apply, please submit the application with written essay to: PEI Federation of Labour, 22 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, PEI, C1E 1E6. Telephone: (902) 368-3068; Fax: (902) 368-3192. E-mail: peifed@pei.aibn.com.

-The application form and essay must be received by the PEI Federation of Labour no later than **October 15, 2007**. The application form is available through our office or online at <http://www.peifl.ca/pages/schol/aplggmschol07.pdf>.

Highlights of the Federation’s Submission to the 2007-2008 Provincial Budget

□ On Wednesday, January 31, the PEI Federation of Labour submitted a 4 page submission to Provincial Treasurer Mitch Murphy, in response to his call for public input into the 2007-2008 provincial budget. The issues we dealt with in the submission were:

- **Pension Legislation** - PEI is the only Province in Canada without pension benefits legislation in place to regulate workplace pension plans. The P.E.I. Legislature adopted the Pensions Benefit Act in April of 1990, but the legislation was never proclaimed, therefore, it was never put into force. When we discuss this issue with the Provincial government, the main stumbling block that keeps coming up is funding to set up the necessary government structures to implement and administer this legislation. Therefore in the submission, we asked Minister Murphy to put aside enough funding in this budget to finally enact this very important piece of legislation.

- **Public Healthcare** - In the submission, we expressed our extreme concern over comments made in the press by Health Minister, Chester Gillan during the Canadian Medical Association's meetings in Charlottetown that he is willing to look at private options for healthcare on PEI. Therefore the Federation asked the Treasurer to not take badly needed public monies away from our public system to waste exploring private options that have been shown time and time again not to be in the best interest of Islanders. We also asked him to put more public health care funds towards a long term strategy to provide for better training, recruitment, and retention of health care professionals, ensure that Island Healthcare workers are given working conditions, benefits, and wages that are competitive with the rest of Canada, and work with healthcare unions and their members to find real solutions to the problems within our public healthcare system.
- **Student Attendant Pilot Project** - The Federation asked Minister Murphy to stop wasting government funds on the Student Attendant Pilot Project and commit more funds to properly finance the Special Education program and allow for the hiring of more Educational Assistants.
- **Homeless Shelters** - The Federation asked Minister Murphy in this year's budget to set aside funding not only to ensure services like homeless shelters and food banks are there for those in need but also show that the provincial government is looking beyond these bandaid solutions towards finding real and permanent solutions to the problems facing low income Islanders.
- To end the submission, the Federation reminded Minister Murphy that it has been shown time and time again that Public services are best and most efficiently delivered by the public system. To that end, we asked him to recommit to ensuring that the public services that are so important to Islanders are properly funded and staffed and show that the Provincial government is truly appreciative of the skill and hard work that public employees put into delivering these services.

Update on the National, Consumer Boycott against Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company

-On Tuesday, January 2, United Steelworkers' (USW) National Director Ken Neumann released press release thanking all those who supported the 15,000 USW members during their 86-day strike against Goodyear. In the release he states that the continent-wide agreement with Goodyear Tire and Rubber would not have been achieved without the support of thousands of working people, their organizations and others who supported

the Goodyear strikers in Canada.. The settlement provides better security in terms of preventing Goodyear from exporting production and jobs and Goodyear also agreed to put \$1 billion into the fund for retired workers' medical benefits - above the company's previous \$660-million plan.

-With this ratification, the PEI Federation of Labour ends its call for our affiliated members to boycott Goodyear and Motomaster tires. We wish to thank all of our members who supported this boycott.

Important Dates

Opposing Atlantica Meeting	Thursday, February 8, 2007	at 4:30 p.m. at UPSE Office in Charlottetown
Press Conference to Release the Atlantica: Myths and Reality Paper	Thursday, February 15, 2007	11:00 am at the Murphy's Community Center (former Basilica Rec Center) 200 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Information Session to Discuss Cuts to the Advisory Council on the Status of Women	Thursday, February 22, 2007	at 6:00 p.m. Delta CP Hotel (Consbrook Room)
Meeting With Peter Stoffer, NDP MP Sackville - Eastern Shore	Tuesday, March 6, 2007	At 1:00 p.m. at the Inn on the Hill, Charlottetown
The C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation Educational	Thursday, March 8, 2007	8:30 am - 5:00 pm at the Murphy's Community Center (former Basilica Rec Center) 200 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I.
Federation's International Women's Day Event	Thursday, March 8, 2007	12:00 pm - 1:00 pm at the Murphy's Community Center (former Basilica Rec Center) 200 Richmond Street, Charlottetown, P.E.I.

International Women's Day Celebration	Thursday, March 8, 2007	7 pm, Georgian Room, Charlottetown Hotel. Reception followed by a Round table discussion and a special ceremony honouring Island women labour leaders. For information call CUSO at 892-2610 or 1 800 676-8411
Federal Budget Watch 2007	Monday, March 19, 2007	at 4:45 pm at the PSAC Office, Yates Building, 1 Harbourside, Charlottetown
Annual Brief to Cabinet and the Opposition	Tuesday, March 27, 2007	
Public Meeting on "Atlantica: Myths and Realities" with Scott Sinclair.	April 11, 2007	At 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m at the Lecture Theater, Colonel Gray Senior High School, 175 Spring Park Road, Charlottetown
Workers Compensation Board's 8th Annual Workplace Health and Safety Conference	April 25-26, 2007	Delta Prince Edward, Charlottetown
CLC Atlantic Region and Labour College of Canada Weeklong Educational	April 22 to 27, 2007	Memramcook Institute St. Joseph, NB Deadline March 28, 2007
Sixth Annual Provincial Day of Mourning for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job	Saturday, April 28, 2007	at 1:00 P.M. at Province House

27th Annual CUPE Prince Edward Island Division Convention	May 17 - 18, 2007	Loyalist Lakeview Resort, Summerside
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