



PEI Federation of Labour June Newsletter Issued on September 2, 2007

Current News In Brief

Federation's Annual Book Donation Campaign

□ Once again this year in early September, the Federation will be donating books, CD's, and DVD's, dealing with labour and social issues to the Provincial and UPEI libraries. The value of this year's donation will be approximately \$1200. Recently, the Federation sent out campaign pamphlets to affiliated and nonaffiliated union locals here on PEI asking them to donate to the Adopt-A-Book Fund. The Federation feels that it is very important to ensure that the general public has access to information dealing with the labour and social issues that are important to all workers and their families. Too often the information on these issues is left off the shelf or it is given with a big business bias. Last year, thanks to the generosity of many of our affiliates, the federation was able to donate approximately \$1000 worth of materials. If your Local wishes to donate to this campaign, please send a cheque payable to the PEI Federation of Labour (memo Adopt A Book Fund) to our office at 22 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, PEI, C1E1E6. Thus far, we would like to thank CUPE Local 1775, CUPE Local 501, CUPE Local 1870, Carpenters Local 1338, the PSAC PEI Area Council, Union of Parks Canada Employees Local 90023, CAW 1515 and CEP Local 401 for their generous donations.

Federation to Hold Labour Day Corn Boil and Barbeque

□ On Monday, September 3, 2007, the P.E.I. Federation of Labour will hold its 7th Annual Labour Day Corn Boil and Barbeque at Victoria Park in Charlottetown. So bring a lawn chair and meet your brothers and sisters as we celebrate Labour Day 2007. There will be Entertainment, Games for the Kids, Prizes, Hot Dogs, Corn, and Fun For All. If your local has union hats, shirts, jackets, etc (Especially something for kids) that you are willing to donate for prizes at the event or if you have any members interested in helping out with the serving or preparation of food or with the children's games and races at this year's event, please contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368-3192 or e-mail at: peifed@pei.aibn.com by Friday, August 31, 2007. Thus far, we would like to thank the CLC, the PSAC PEI Area Council, CUPE Local 501, Carpenters Local 1338, CEP Local 401, and IBEW Local 1432 for their generous donations.

Unemployment Rate For June

□ On Monday, July 9, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for June was 10.5% up 0.5% from May's 10% . You currently need 525 hours to qualify for EI on PEI.

Study Finds Workers Not Benefiting from Canada's Economic Growth

□ On Friday, June 29, it was announced that a recently released study by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has found that while Canada's economy has grown steadily, with workers' productivity rising by 51% over the last 30 years, workers average real wages have been stagnant throughout. The study "Rising Profit Shares, Falling Wage Shares" finds that the wage portion of the national income that goes to workers is now at its lowest level in 40 years. If real wages had increased to reflect improved productivity and economic growth, workers could be earning an average of \$10,000 more each year (in 2005 dollars). Instead, corporations with profit shares at the highest point they've been in 40 years have been banking the lion's share of the benefits of economic growth and improved productivity. The study is available at http://policyalternatives.ca/documents/National_Office_Pubs/2007/Rising_Profit_Shares_Falling_Wage_Shares.pdf.

New Film "SiCKO" Praises Public Healthcare

□ On Friday, June 29, Michael Moore's new blockbuster documentary, "SiCKO" went into general release. The film praises the public health care systems in countries such as Canada, France, Britain and Cuba while making a scathing indictment of the privately-run American health care system and the behavior of major pharmaceutical and insurance companies. The film also highlights horror stories from American patients, offers inside accounts from disillusioned former insurance company employees and provides insight into the relationship between health industry lobbyists and Washington politicians. Despite being the most expensive on the planet, the American Healthcare system leaves 47 million Americans uncovered, only ranks 37th in health care around the world, and according to the film approximately 18,000 Americans die each year simply because they don't have health insurance.

Federation and the United Way Sign Memorandum of Agreement

□ On Thursday, June 28, PEI Federation of Labour President Carl Pursey and United Way Executive Director Clair Smith signed a Memorandum of Agreement to form a working partnership together. The agreement, which was signed at the United Way PEI's Annual General Meeting, is meant to form a mutually beneficial partnership between the United Way and the Federation. Before the signing Carl gave a short speech expressing the Federation's pride in the large role that unionized workplaces play in the United Way's donation campaign, thanking our representatives on the United Way Board for all their hard work and explaining why the labour movement works so often in

coalition on the social issues and programs that affect and benefit our members and their families outside the work environment. Last year, the United Way received approximately \$820,000 in donations with unionized workplaces accounting for roughly half of those donations.

Ontario Arbitrator Rules Against Random Workplace Drug Testing

□ On Thursday, June 28, an Ontario arbitrator ruled against the Greater Toronto Airports Authority (GTAA) and found that random workplace drug testing is intrusive and an unreasonable exercise of management rights. The GTAA's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy, which was developed and implemented without union input, cast a wide net and called for provocative measures such as random drug testing involving urine samples, pre-appointment testing and the imposition of discipline upon a positive test. The arbitrator also found that a positive drug test does not indicate impairment and rejected employer arguments that positive tests legitimately alert the employer to increased safety risks. The ruling stems from a policy grievance launched by PSAC Local 00004 in February 2001.

CUPE PEI Holds Grand Opening of its New Office

□ On Thursday, June 28, CUPE PEI held an open house to mark the grand opening of its new Charlottetown area office at 100 Trans-Canada Highway in Charlottetown. The new office was officially renamed the Bob Crockett Charlottetown Area Office in honour of former CUPE national representative and Maritimes regional director Bob Crockett, who was employed with CUPE on P.E.I., from July 15, 1975 until his retirement on June 30, 2002. The opening which included speeches, a barbecue, and entertainment was very well attended.

IAMAW Local Lodge 1934 Vote to Accept New Contract with East Isle Shipyard

□ On Wednesday, June 27, it was announced that the members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, Local Lodge 1934 have voted to accept a new contract with East Isle Shipyard Limited. The 3 year agreement which expires October 31, 2009, provides for a wage increase of 4 % in each year. Other contract highlights include: boots and coveralls allowance increased to \$125 per year, changes to 3-day bereavement leave to now include brother and sister, employees will now receive \$50 for each year of service upon retirement, increased vacation pay, and increased RRSP contributions.

Wage Protection Law Moves Closer to Reality

□ On Tuesday, June 26, the House of Commons passed amendments to a law that offers basic wages and pension contributions' protections for workers when their employer goes bankrupt. This brings the law another step closer to finally coming into force. The law guarantees payments to employees for any unpaid wages and vacation earned, but

not paid, up to a maximum of \$3,000, at the time their employer enters bankruptcy or receivership under the Bankruptcy and Insolvency Act. It also will ensure that arrears in regular pension contributions that have not been remitted to the pension plan by the employers constitute a priority charge over all assets ahead of secured creditors. The law has faced a political logjam since it was originally passed in the previous Parliament.

Manitoba Labour Board Certifies First Migrant Farm Workers Union in Canada

□ On Tuesday, June 26, the Manitoba Labour Board ruled that migrant workers from Mexico who work at the Mayfair Farms in Portage la Prairie, Man have the right to join UFCW Local 832. The ruling makes them the first unionized group of foreign farm workers in Canada. The decision of the board is expected to open the door to a number of similar decisions by labour boards across the country. UFCW Canada has already called on the Ontario government to voluntarily drop its prohibition against agricultural workers forming unions. The Manitoba ruling comes in the wake of the recent Supreme Court of Canada's landmark ruling that collective bargaining is guaranteed by the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms. About 18,000 foreign agricultural workers come to Canada every year under the federal Seasonal Agricultural Worker Program.

Board of Arbitration Awards 800 Health-care Workers an 8.5 % Salary Increase

□ On Friday, June 15, it was announced that a board of arbitration has awarded 800 PEI health-care employees represented by the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 942 an 8.5% salary increase over 3 years. The decision provides for wage increases of 3 % effective April 1, 2006, 2.5 % on April 1, 2007, 2% on April 1, 2008, and a further 1% on October 1, 2008. It also provides for improvements to shift and weekend premiums, vacation benefits and contract language.

NAFTA Tribunal Rejects UPS's Complaint Against Canada's Public Postal Service

□ On Thursday, June 14, it was announced that United Parcel Service's (UPS) complaint under NAFTA has been rejected by the tribunal hearing the case. UPS sued Canada over six years ago, under NAFTA's Chapter 11, which allows corporations to challenge governments if they think their investments are restricted by government measures. UPS claimed that its investments were being restricted by Canada's publicly funded network of mailboxes and post offices because this network allegedly provided Canada Post with an unfair advantage. In its decision, the tribunal dismissed allegations of unfair treatment with respect to the postal network, customs and the Canadian Heritage Publications Assistance Program. Both CUPW and the Council of Canadians believe that investment rules such as Chapter 11 which allow foreign corporations to sue governments are unconstitutional and together have asked the Supreme Court of Canada to hear an appeal concerning the constitutionality of these rules.

Halifax Town Hall Meeting Held in Response to Atlantica Conference

□ On Wednesday, June 13, in response to the Atlantic Provinces Chambers of Commerce's (APCC) "Atlantica 2007 – Charting the Course" Conference that was being held in Halifax, the Nova Scotia Federation of Labour and the Council of Canadians held a community town hall meeting to warn Atlantic Canadians of the dangers of Atlantica, a corporate-driven free trade scheme proposed for Eastern Canada and the northeastern United States. The meeting attracted approximately 300 people to the Scotia Bank Auditorium at Dalhousie University to hear the expert panel of critics that included Maude Barlow, national chair of the Council of Canadians; Scott Sinclair of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Marcela Orozco, a researcher with the Mexican Action Network on Free Trade speak. Scott Sinclair started the evening's discussion with an overview of Atlantica, Maude Barlow spoke on the threat posed to energy security in Atlantic Canada by Atlantica and the possible negative effects it would have on the minimum wage, social programs and the environment, and Marcela Orozco drew direct parallels between Atlantica and the broader topic of neo-liberalism, and how it has affected the lives of millions of people in Mexico.

Labour Disruptions in 2006 at an All-time Low in Canada

□ On Tuesday, June 12, it was announced that labour disruptions caused by employee strikes and management lockouts in Canada dropped to the lowest level in 2006 since the federal government began tracking them more than 30 years ago. Statistics by HRDC say the number of person days lost for the year dropped to 813,336 from 4.1 million the previous year. The level was 35% below the previous low of 1.5 million lost days in 1993. Factors accounting for the decline appear to be a lower than average number of expired contracts during the year, the decline in manufacturing jobs and the impact of international trade agreements which have put more power in the hands of management to use cheap labour in other countries to make up for lost production in the event of a labour disruption here. The number of disruptions is expected to increase this year because of a heavier collective bargaining calendar.

Supreme Court of Canada Declares the Bargaining Rights of Workers to Be Protected

□ On Friday, June 8, the Supreme Court of Canada declared for the first time in a 6-1 ruling that the collective bargaining rights of workers are protected by the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms and are also a fundamental aspect of Canadian society predating the Charter. The ruling arises from a 2002 case in which the government of B.C. rammed through legislation (Bill 29) that cancelled the contracts of thousands of health care workers, allowed for mass layoffs outside the collective bargaining process, and enabled the widespread privatization of health-sector service jobs. The top court ruled that three key portions of the controversial bill are unconstitutional. The court also

rejected earlier Supreme Court decisions that excluded collective bargaining from the Charter's protection saying those decisions do not withstand principled scrutiny. The court further noted that collective bargaining complements, promotes and enhances fundamental Charter values such as equality and democracy.

New Brunswick to Hold Public Hearings on Bill to Ban Double-Breasting.

□ On Thursday, June 7, it was announced that a committee of New Brunswick MLAs will hold public hearings this fall on the Progressive Conservative's Bill 60, that would close a loophole in provincial labour laws that allows a practice called double-breasting. The practice occurs when a construction operation becomes unionized, and the owner of that company creates a spin-off construction company in an effort to avoid union certification and the obligations of a collective agreement. This includes avoiding payment of appropriate wages and benefits provided by a collective agreement. Currently only New Brunswick and PEI allow double breasting while every other jurisdiction in Canada has put a stop to it. Over a hundred unionized workers were at the New Brunswick legislature Wednesday to show their support for the bill.

NUPGE Creates a New Website to Counter Harper's Right-Wing Agenda

□ On Thursday, June 7, it was announced that in a partnership with the on-line news magazine StraightGoods.ca and other partners, the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) has created a new web site to counter the way the Harper Conservatives frame issues with responses based on public values. The website focuses on the persuasion techniques used by the Harper Conservatives as they attempt to get majority support and provides the public with information, and recommendations on how to counter his persuasion tactics. The site located at <http://www.harperindex.ca/index.cfm> adds new content daily, adding continuously to an "index" of background articles on Harper and the Conservatives.

New Report On Maritime University Graduate Retention Rates Released

□ On Tuesday, June 5, the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission released a report on the retention rates of university graduates in the Maritimes. The report studied the 4,314 members of the class of 2003 and followed their career paths until 2005. The report found that PEI fared the worst with only 61% of graduates from the Island choosing to stay and work on PEI. Nova Scotia fared best at 74% while New Brunswick was in the middle with a 70% retention rate. Not Surprisingly, the report found that the ability of the respective province's economy to provide good jobs has the greatest impact on whether graduates choose to stay and work in their home province or not. The report is available on the Maritime Provinces Higher Education Commission website at www.mphec.ca.

Unpaid Overtime Lawsuit Launched Against CIBC

□ On Tuesday, June 5, it was announced that a massive unpaid overtime class action suit has been launched against CIBC. The action covers thousands of current and former non-unionized employees of CIBC retail branch offices across Canada who are or were tellers or other front-line customer service employees at CIBC. The statement of claim alleges that the affected workers are assigned heavier workloads than can be completed within their standard working hours. They are required or permitted to work overtime to meet the demands of their jobs and CIBC fails to pay for the overtime hours in direct contravention of the Canadian Labour Code under which they are regulated. The claim is seeking \$600 million in damages on behalf of all the company's approximately 10,000 customer service staff. The law firms handling the case have launched a web site www.unpaidovertime.ca and phone number 1-888-687-2431 which allow other class members to register in strict confidence to obtain more information about the class action.

East Isle Shipyard Lands Contract for Three Escort Tugs

□ On Friday, June 1, it was announced that the East Isle Shipyards has landed a contract to build a series of three escort tugs for Atlantic Reyser. East Isle Shipyards currently has more than 100 employees working at their facility in Georgetown. The new tugs are to be delivered by August 2008.

Articles for this Month

C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation of Labour Fall Educational

□ The C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation of Labour will be holding a one day educational at the Summerside Wellness Centre, 511 Notre Dame Street, Summerside, PE on Thursday, October 11, 2007 - 8:30 am - 5:00 pm (Lunch provided). The courses being offered are:

Steward Training Level I : Building Unions in a World of Change

-This nine (9) hour introductory course provides a solid framework for learning the roles, rights and responsibilities for a steward as a problem solver. The course encourages activism and challenges participants to broaden their understanding of the labour movement in the context of global solidarity within our communities. New stewards and other union members interested in becoming more active and informed will want to take this course as it focuses on building the leadership and communication skills of participants. Participants should bring their collective agreement with them to this course.

Facing Management

-This course deals with the tactics employed by management to prevent workers from building on the gains of their collective agreements. This course exposes the corporate agenda in the workplace, from union weakening tactics to various participatory management schemes and offers local union leaders strategies to deal effectively with these tactics.

Registration Information

-Please complete the attached form and send it before **September 28, 2007** along with a cheque made payable to the P.E.I. Federation of Labour to cover the registration fee (\$35.00 per person which includes lunch) to: Marjorie Gyurus, Registrar P.E.I. Federation of Labour 22 Enman Crescent, Charlottetown, P.E.I. C1E 1E6

-If you require additional information, please contact: Marjorie Gyurus at (902) 368-3068 or email: peifed@pei.aibn.com or Jean-Claude Basque at (506)-851-7086 or email: jcbasque@clc-ctc.ca

Report on the Press Conference Held to Oppose the Security and Prosperity Partnership

□ On Friday, June 22, in an effort to urge the Eastern Canadian premiers and New England governors to oppose the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) of North America and other similar deals before their annual conference being held this year in Brudenell, the P.E.I. Federation of Labour, the Council of Canadians, Earth Action and the P.E.I. Health Coalition held a press conference at the Murphy Center in Charlottetown.

-Essentially, the SPP is another attempt of corporate America, in partnership with their political and corporate allies in Canada and Mexico, to negotiate deals behind closed doors and without public consultation that will reduce the power of government to protect citizens from profit hungry business. Their intention is to scale down government regulations and controls that try to protect our society, culture and environment. Specifically, the SPP will minimize controls in areas like immigration, food and agriculture, natural resource exploitation, public services and entertainment.

-The press conference was lead by Leo Broderick (Council of Canadians) who gave an overview of threats posed by this Partnership. Federation President, Carl Pursey spoke on TILMA which has the same basic regulation model that is being pushed through the SPP

and the danger that these deals pose to the ability of elected politicians at all levels of Government to maintain and enact the very basic regulations and legislation that protect workers and the public in general against those that who put corporate profit above all else. Sharon Labchuk (Earth Action) spoke on the impact that the unsustainable economic growth being pushed in deals like the SPP and Atlantica will have on the basic life support systems of our planet. Mary Boyd (P.E.I. Health Coalition) spoke on the threats posed by the SPP to Canada's universal health-care system and social safety net.

Federation's Letter to the Federal Government Against the No-Fly List for Air Travellers

□ On June 18th, 2007, the Federal government implemented a no fly list for Canadian travellers calling the initiative a Passenger Protect Program. This program though simple in design, is filled with potential human rights and civil liberties violations; threatens the privacy rights of Canadian residents; seriously obstructs people's right to free movement across this country; and obligates airline workers to comply with a poor process that will single out some travellers without reasonable grounds. Ironically the initiative also fails to truly protect airline travellers. In response to this flawed program the Federation sent the following letter to the Prime Minister, Public Safety Minister Stockwell Day, and our Island MP's:

□ The PEI Federation of Labour urges you to withdraw the implementation of the **"No-Fly List for Air Travellers"**.

-While it is important to improve safety and security for all travellers, it is unacceptable in a democratic society that a handful of individuals have the power to arbitrarily deprive their fellows citizens of their rights on the basis of secret information and without being required to provide reasonable grounds

-It is very concerning that:

- the criteria used for placing someone on the list are not publicly known
- the information to put a name on the list is considered confidential for reasons of national security and international relations.

-This leaves a person placed on the No-Fly List on the basis of this secret information and dubious process, deprived of his or her freedom of movement, without charges, without a trial, without access to the information held against him or her, and therefore without any way of setting the record straight. Those people who are placed on this list are not notified

that their name is on the list and when a mistake is made, it is very hard to have a name removed from the list.

-Considering that the United States “No Fly List” has resulted in more than 30,000 travellers being falsely associated with terrorism as they attempted to cross borders or board planes, Canada’s No- Fly- List will create major hardship for many innocent Canadians.

-It is also unacceptable that measures which infringe upon fundamental liberties are being established by simple regulation, without parliamentary debate, as if they were mere administrative changes.

-There is also no assurance by the government that names on what they call the Passenger Protect program will not be shared with foreign governments and could pose risks to innocent individuals of incarceration by other governments.

-In Conclusion, We consider this no-fly list to be an attack on the freedom of movement which is a democratic right in our society and once again we ask that the Federal Government to withdraw the implementation of the Passenger Protect Program.

Results of the Provincial Election and the New Provincial Cabinet.

□ On Monday, May 28, 2007, the PEI Liberal party ended the 11 year reign of the Island’s Progressive Conservative party in a landslide. The Liberals earned 52.9% of the vote and 23 of the province's 27 seats, compared with 41.4 % of the vote and 4 seats for the Progressive Conservatives. Neither the Green Party at 3% of the vote or the NDP at 2% won a seat .Voter turnout in Monday's election was up 1% from the 2003 election, with 83.4 per cent of registered voters casting a ballot in 2007.

-On Monday, June 11, 2007, Robert Ghiz was sworn in as the new Premier of the Province of PEI and he named the following MLA’s to his Cabinet:

Name	Position
Robert W. J. Ghiz	Premier, President of Executive Council and Minister Responsible for Intergovernmental Affairs
Ron W. MacKinley	Minister of Transportation and Public Works
Richard E. Brown	Minister of Development and Technology

Carolyn I. Bertram	Minister of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour
Allan V. Campbell	Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Doug W. Currie	Minister of Health and Minister of Social Services and Seniors
Valerie E. Docherty	Minister of Tourism
L. Gerard Greenan	Minister of Education and Attorney General
Neil J. LeClair	Minister of Agriculture
Wes J. Sheridan	Provincial Treasurer
George T. Webster	Minister of Environment, Energy, and Forestry

-Premier Ghiz also announced that Robert Vessey will be the Government House Leader.

Opposition Shadow Cabinet Announced

□ On Monday, June 25, 2007, Opposition Leader Pat Binns named his shadow Cabinet and here is how it shapes up.

Name	Will shadow
Opposition Leader Pat Binns	Intergovernmental Affairs, the Provincial Treasury, and Aboriginal Affairs
Opposition house leader Jim Bagnall	Agriculture, Fisheries and Aquaculture, Tourism, Environment, Energy and Forestry
Mike Currie	Transportation and Public Works, Development and Technology, and Telecommunications and the Internet.
Opposition whip Olive Crane	Health, Social Services and Seniors; Education; Attorney General; Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour ; Status of Women; Acadian and Francophone Affairs; Multiculturalism and the Disabled.

Deputy Ministers Appointments Appointed

☐ Recently, the following people were appointed to Deputy Minister positions in the new provincial government:

Name	Position
Tracey Cutcliffe	Deputy Minister, Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour
Sharon Cameron	Deputy Minister, Social Services and Seniors
Michael Mayne	Deputy Minister, Office of Biosciences and Economic Innovation
Rory Beck	Deputy Minister of Health and Chair of the Deputies' Committee
Richard Gallant	Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Melissa MacEachern	Deputy Minister of Tourism
Brooke MacMillan	Deputy Minister of Development and Technology
Sandy Stewart	Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs.
Allan Rankin	Clerk of Executive Council and Secretary to Cabinet

-Former Deputy Minister of Communities, Cultural Affairs and Labour Ron MacMillan will assume the position of Chief Negotiator, Labour Market Development and Infrastructure, to support the government's ongoing negotiations with the federal government over major funding agreements.

Important Dates

7th Annual Labour Day Corn Boil and Barbeque	Monday, September 3, 2007	4:00 - 6:00 P.M. at Victoria Park, Charlottetown
Federations of Labour Presidents' Meeting	September 21-23, 2007	Loyalist Lakeview Resort, Summerside

Deadline for Resolutions for the Federation's Convention	Wednesday, October 3, 2007	
C.L.C. Atlantic Region and P.E.I. Federation of Labour Fall Educational	Thursday, October 11, 2007	8:30 am - 5:00 pm at the Summerside Wellness Centre, 511 Notre Dame Street, Summerside
Deadline for Applications to the George MacInnis Memorial Scholarship	Monday, October 15, 2007	
PEIFL Annual Convention	Friday and Saturday November 2 and 3, 2007	At Rodds Charlottetown Hotel