



# PEI FEDERATION OF LABOUR NEWSLETTER APRIL 2004 ISSUE

## **CURRENT NEWS**

- On Friday, May 14, 2004 at the Basilica Recreation Centre in Charlottetown; PSAC, CUPE, CUPW, and the CLC are sponsoring an event on the struggle to prevent privatization of public services. At the event three Public Union representatives from Columbia will share their struggle against privatization.
  
- On April 28, 2004 at 7:00pm at Province House, the PEI Federation of Labour and its affiliates will hold its third Annual Provincial Ceremony "National Day of Mourning" for Workers Killed and Injured on the Job. There will be a reception following at the Coles building. Everyone is encouraged to attend.
  
- On Friday, April 23, 2004, approximately 4,300 operators, technicians and clerical workers from Aliant Inc went on strike after last-minute contract talks failed. The strike affects 278 workers on PEI represented by the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada. The main issues surrounding the strike are job security, pensions, benefits and wages. Aliant employees have been without a contract since Dec. 31, 2001. The fed has sent a letter to the CEP and its new representative on the Executive Council extending our support for their strike and inviting them to send a representative to the April 27<sup>th</sup> Executive Council meeting to explain their position in the strike and how the fed can help.
  
- On Thursday, April 22, 2004, 100% of the 85 members of PSAC Local 90023 voted in favour of strike action. The members of PSAC Local 90023, who work at the PEI National Park, Province House and other provincial historical sites, have been without a contract since Oct., 2003. The main issues centre around wages, elimination of pay zones, and concerns about the process for converting seasonal employees to full-time status.
  
- On Friday, April 16, 2004, the president and the vice president of the fed met with George Stewart and Wendy MacIsaac. The topics of discussion were Occupational Health and safety's young worker initiative currently in high schools, bringing OHS training into Holland College and into the 6 week apprentice courses, OHS's passport program, improving OHS inspections on residential sites and all sites, adding employment standards to

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their training and OHS contributing articles to our newsletter and web site.

- On Thursday, April 15, 2004, the fed received a card from CEP-CULR 1 and OPEIU Local 225 thanking us for our support during the CLC strike.
- On Thursday, April 15, 2004, it was announced that about 4,000 Canadian Food Inspection Agency workers represented by PSAC voted 89% in favour of strike action in a recent nationwide vote. The main issues centre around work conditions, including vacation leave, care and nurturing leave, parental leave, personal and volunteer leave, maternity leave, accommodation, and wages. If a strike occurs, it would affect between 150-160 workers on PEI. The CFIA workers have been without a contract since Dec. 31, 2002. Talks are scheduled to resume with a conciliation officer on April 19.
- On April 14 and 15, 2004, over 300 delegates attended a two day Workplace Health and Safety conference hosted by WCB at the Delta Charlottetown. The theme of this year's conference was Prevention Pays. The fed sent Shelley Ward (UPSE) and Claudette Anderson(IUOE) to the conference as our representatives.
- On Wednesday, April 14, 2004, it was announced that Development Minister Mike Currie has apologized to union leaders for suggesting that Access PEI sites were being closed because of an union study that raised concerns about staff working alone. In fact, it was a report commissioned by the Provincial Treasury that raised these concerns.
- On Wednesday, April 14, 2004, the Prime Minister's Task Force on Seasonal Work was in Charlottetown. The task force's mandate is to provide recommendations on how to meet the needs of seasonal workers and their communities. Due to the lateness of our invitation to present before the task force, the fed was unable to prepare a submission in time for the meeting. However, the fed has been in contact with Shawn Murphy's office and has been given a deadline of May 14, 2004 to submit a written submission.
- On Tuesday, April 13, 2004, it was announced that the City of Charlottetown will fly its city's flag at half mast on April 28 in honour of the National Day of Mourning.
- On Monday, April 12, 2004, it was announced that, as a result of an accident at the Pownal Sports Centre project last July, Southern Kings Construction was fined \$2000 and Star

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Construction was fined \$2500. Southern Kings Construction was fined for not having a site safety committee in place, for failing to conduct a site safety orientation for all employees, for failing to have a written safe work procedure for installing roof panels, and for failing to ensure that all employees on the site were wearing fall protection when it was required by the OHS Act. Star Construction was fined for failing to ensure that its employees on site were wearing fall protection when it was required by the OHS Act. The accident occurred when an employee of Star Construction walked on an unsecured roof panel and fell 30 feet to the ground. He suffered a collapsed lung, a broken wrist, and a fractured hip.

-On Saturday, April 10, 2004, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for March was 12% up .3% from February's 11.7%. You currently need 490 hours to qualify for EI on PEI down from 525 hours.

-On Wednesday, April 7, 2004, Community and Cultural Affairs Minister, Elmer MacFadyen tabled legislation to lift the ban on WCB compensation for workers who suffer from chronic pain due to a workplace accident. This legislation was prompted by last October's Supreme Court ruling that the Nova Scotia WCB's ban on chronic pain was unconstitutional. The change will take effect on April 3, 2004 and be retro-active back to 2002 when the WCB act was changed to impose the ban.

-On Saturday, April 3, 2004, Provincial Treasurer Mitch Murphy announced that the province is not looking for a wage freeze from the public sector unions now in negotiations with the province and even admitted that the province has set aside a small amount of money for negotiations. The province will be looking for something close to 0% but not necessarily 0% in negotiations.

-On Friday, April 2, 2004, the PEIFL sent a letter to IBEW International Vice President Phil Flemming to invite him to be a guest speaker at the Fed's 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention. The convention will be held at the Howard Johnson Hotel in Cornwall on November 5 and 6. The fed has received a letter back from Mr. Fleming accepting our invitation to speak at our convention.

### **REPORT FROM THE PEIFL'S BRIEF TO CABINET**

-On Tuesday, April 13, 2004, members of the Executive Council of the PEIFL met with the Provincial Cabinet to present our Brief. Representing the Fed were President Carl Pursey (CUPW); Vice President, Blair Penny (IBEW); and Executive Council members,

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Claudette Anderson (IUOE), Leo Cheverie (CUPE), and Sandy Mackay (UPSE).

-Due to time constraints, the fed was unable to discuss all of the 25 page brief with Cabinet, but did manage to discuss a good portion of it. For the most part, the cabinet was quiet during the presentation with the lone exception being during our presentation on the problems in health care.

-The Topics discussed were: Anti-Scab Legislation, First-Contract Legislation, Occupational Health and Safety Concerns, WCB Issues, Recruitment and Retention of Health Care Workers, Apprenticeship Issues, Impending Worker Shortages in the Construction Industry, Journeyman to Apprentice Ratios, Fair Wages for the Construction Sector, Pension Legislation, the Day of Mourning, Public Run Auto Insurance, and Concerns with how Employee Representatives are chosen for Provincial Boards.\_

## **POLICIES VOTED INTO EFFECT AT THE MARCH, 2004 MEETING**

### **POLICY BOOK**

-All policies of the Federation of Labour will be collected in a booklet and updated regularly and given to every new executive council member and trustee upon acceptance of office. This shall be the responsibility of the Vice President to see that it is done.

### **SPENDING MOTION LIST**

-The Treasurer shall maintain a list provided by the secretary of all motions approving spending Federation of Labour funds. The list shall state motion, mover, seconder and date passed.

### **EXECUTIVE MEETING**

-There shall be an executive meeting prior to every monthly meeting of the Federation of Labour Executive Council. This will be the responsibility of the President.

### **SPENDING APPROVAL POLICY**

-All spending using Federation funds will have to be approved by the Executive Council before being spent.

### **Exceptions:**

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1. **Emergency** - due to circumstances or shortage of time. The spending must be approved by three (3) of the four (4) Executive committee members. It has to be brought to the next Executive Council meeting for approval.
2. **Everyday office expenses** must be recorded into a cheque registry and presented to the Executive Council on a monthly basis for discussion and recommendation.
3. **Expenses of the Executive Committee or Council** will be paid provided they were incurred on **approved** Federation business (**or under the exception**) and on approved expenses (mileage, etc.) and on approved representation of the Federation.

-The intent of this policy is to insure all expenses done on behalf of the Federation of Labour have the knowledge and consent of the Executive Council.

### **PRESS RELEASE FROM THE FED ON THE DAY OF MOURNING**

-On Saturday, March 27, 2004, it was announced that Malpeque MP Wayne Easter tabled a private members bill calling for Canada's flag to be lowered to half mast at all federal premises every April 28<sup>th</sup> in response to the Day of Mourning. In response to this the fed sent out a press release to express our appreciation of this bill and to ask all levels of government to follow suit. The press release appeared in the Tuesday, April 13, 2004 edition of the Guardian but it was wrongfully attributed to the Federation of PEI Municipalities. Both the President and Vice President have called the Guardian asking for a correction but as of yet none has been printed. Here is the press release:

-The PEI Federation of Labour would like to extend its appreciation to Wayne Easter for tabling a private members bill asking for the lowering to half mast of Canadian flags at all federal premises on April 28<sup>th</sup>, the National Day of Mourning for Workers who have lost their lives at work.

-“We will continue our tradition of holding a ceremony on this date and we request that municipalities as well as other levels of government also lower their flags on April 28<sup>th</sup> “ states Carl Pursey, President of the PEI Federation of Labour

-The Day of Mourning started in 1991 in Canada when a private members bill put forward by NDP MP Rod Murphy was passed in the house. The Day of Mourning honours the 800 Canadians who lose their lives at work each year.

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-“The main purpose for the Day of Mourning”, states Pursey .“Is to mourn the dead and fight for the living.”

-The Federation asks all Islanders to join us on April 28, 2004 at 7:00pm at Province House to pause and remember all workers who have lost their lives on the job.

### **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 2004 PROVINCIAL BUDGET**

-Here are some of the highlights of the 2004 Provincial Budget:

-Government to push for wage controls in upcoming labour talks.

-A \$5 per carton increase on cigarettes, 3 cents/litre increase to the gasoline tax, sales tax now applied to golf course fees, capital tax on financial corporations increased to 5%, and fee increases on a variety of services.

-UPEI and Holland College to get \$750,000 each in new operational funding.

-\$46 million in total cuts from status quo, \$9.5 million in cuts from a program review to be made after consultation with unions, \$4 million cut in professional and contract services, and \$20 million in program reductions from departments.

-The establishment of a standing office of program review.

### **UNIONS CARE**

-On Thursday, April 15, 2004, the local donated \$275.00 to the Upper Room. This money was collected around Christmas time by members working at the UPEI rink project.

### **IMPORTANT DATES**

<b>MEETING BEFORE THE BRIEF TO CABINET</b>	<b>APRIL 8, 2004</b>	<b>AT 7:00 AT FED OFFICE</b>
<b>BRIEF TO CABINET</b>	<b>TUESDAY, APRIL 13, 2004</b>	<b>9:15 AM</b>
<b>PRIME MINISTER'S TASK FORCE ON SEASONAL WORK</b>	<b>APRIL 14, 2004</b>	<b>7-9 PM AT THE DELTA PRINCE EDWARD ELFIN PEKEHA ROOM</b>
<b>WCB'S 5TH ANNUAL WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY CONFERENCE</b>	<b>WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY APRIL 14 AND 15, 2004</b>	<b>DELTA PRINCE EDWARD, CHARLOTTETOWN</b>

LABOUR COLLEGE OF CANADA WEEK LONG EDUCATIONAL	APRIL 25 TO 30, 2004	MEMARAMCOOK INSTITUTE, ST. JOSEPH, N.B. DEADLINE MARCH 26, 2004
DAY OF MOURNING FOR WORKERS KILLED ON THE JOB	WEDNESDAY, APRIL 28, 2004	7:00pm AT PROVINCE HOUSE RECEPTION FOLLOWING AT THE COLES BUILDING
FUNDRAISER FOR NDP LEADER GARY ROBICHAUD	SATURDAY, MAY 1, 2004	AT THE SUMMERSIDE LEGION AT 6 P.M ALL PROCEEDS GO TO ROBICHAUD'S MEDICAL AND RELATED EXPENSES
CLC AND LABOUR COLLEGE OF CANADA 4 WEEK GRADUATE PROGRAM	MAY 10 TO JUNE 4, 2004	OTTAWA DEADLINE MONDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 2004
THE STRUGGLE TO PREVENT PRIVATIZATION OF PUBLIC SERVICES	FRIDAY, MAY 14, 2004	7:30 PM AT THE BASILICA RECREATION CENTRE IN CHARLOTTETOWN
CUPE PEI DIVISION 24TH ANNUAL CONVENTION	MAY 14-15, 2004	
TOPSHEE CONFERENCE ON GLOBALIZATION	MAY 15 AND 16, 2004	IN ANTIGONISH, NOVA SCOTIA. THE MAY 14 FAREWELL PARTY ON BEHALF OF EVERETT BAKER HAS BEEN POSTPONED
CLC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING	MAY 17-18, 2004	
1ST ANNUAL SPRING LUNCHEON FOR LABOUR REPS AND JOURNALISTS	MAY 26, 2004	AT NOON AT THE BEST WESTERN, CHARLOTTETOWN
CLC HEALTH, SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENT CONFERENCE	JUNE 11-13, 2004	OTTAWA MARRIOTT HOTEL DEADLINE JUNE 4, 2004
LABOUR DAY	MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 6, 2004	
CLC NATIONAL PENSION CONFERENCE	OCTOBER 17-19, 2004	FAIRMONT WINNIPEG HOTEL, MANITOBA
2004 PEIFL ANNUAL CONVENTION	FRIDAY AND SATURDAY NOVEMBER 5 AND 6, 2004 (TENTATIVE)	

CLC NATIONAL DISABILITY RIGHTS CONFERENCE	NOVEMBER 11-14, 2004	FAIRMOUNT QUEEN ELIZABETH HOTEL, MONTREAL, QUEBEC DEADLINE OCTOBER 12, 2004
NATIONAL DAY OF REMEMBRANCE AND ACTION ON VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN	MONDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2004	