



PEI FEDERATION OF LABOUR NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2005 ISSUE

CURRENT NEWS

-On Tuesday, March 8, 2005, the P.E.I. Federation of Labour's Women's Committee will hold an event to celebrate International Women's Day. Donalda MacDonald, President CUPE PEI Div. & VP CLC Executive Council will do a presentation on Child Care and Improv PEI will perform a skit. The event will be held in the Elliot Room at the Howard Johnsons "Dutch Inn" in North River from 7:30 - 9:00 P.M. Everyone is welcome to attend.

-On March 8, (7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.) and 9, 2005 (9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.), the C.L.C. Atlantic Region and the P.E.I. Federation of Labour will be holding a two day educational at the Howard Johnson, Charlottetown, PE. The courses being offered are: Building Unions in a World of Change - Steward Training: Level I and Social & Economic Well-Being of Women in the Atlantic Region. For registration information, please contact the fed at (902) 368-3068. The registration deadline is February 21, 2005.

-On Tuesday, March 8, 2005, the fed will be presenting its annual brief to cabinet. If any of our affiliates have any issues they wish us to bring to the Cabinet, please contact our office at 368-3068; fax at 368-3192 or e-mail at: peifed@pei.aibn.com.

-It was recently announced that the Employment Standards Board will be conducting a review of the current Standard Work Week Exemption Order for Community-care facilities looking at reducing the standard work week from 60 hours to 48 hours. The deadline for written submissions is March 4, 2005 at fax (902)- 368-5476 care of Hazel Walsh and email at hawalsh@gov.pe.ca.

-On Wednesday February 23, 2005, PSAC will be holding a federal Budget Watch event at 4:45 pm at their regional office in Charlottetown. Everyone is welcome.

-On Friday, February 18, 2005, it was announced that U.S. Federal investigators will review a \$135,540 settlement the U.S. government reached with Wal-Mart Stores Inc. over accusations that the company violated child labor laws because the

settlement provided that Wal-Mart would receive 15 days notice in most cases before the Labor Department investigated employee complaints of wage and hour violations. The alleged violations, at 25 stores in Arkansas, Connecticut and New Hampshire between 1998 and 2002, had to do with teenage workers who used hazardous equipment such as chain saws, paper balers or forklifts. Wal-Mart denied the allegations but agreed to pay the penalty.

-On Thursday February 10, 2005, it was announced that the 65 members of CEP 902 on the Island have voted to de-certify their local. CEP 902 was made up of managers at Aliant who cited bad feelings from last year's strike as the reason for decertifying.

-On February 9, 2005, the fed sent a letter to P.E.I. Health and Social Services Minister Chester Gillan and federal Social Development Minister Ken Dryden in support of the establishment of an affordable public child care system. The letter was sent to express the fed's position on child care before the February 11th federal-provincial meeting Gillan co-chaired on the issue in Vancouver.

-On Wednesday February 9, 2005, just hours after the Quebec Ministry of Labor announced its approval for UFCW's arbitration request, Wal-Mart Canada announced that its first unionized store was unprofitable and they plan to close it this spring. The UFCW which represents the workers at the store has decided to continue to negotiate a first contract at the store and are fighting to keep the store open. They are also trying to get a first contract for the recently unionized St-Hyacinthe store and are in the process of certifying a Wal-Mart in Brossard. Due to the sensitive nature of their organizing drive in Quebec and the rest of the country, they are not calling for boycott of WalMart as of yet.

-On Wednesday February 9, 2005, UPSE's Women's committee launched the Silent Witness Project on PEI as part of Family Violence Prevention Week at the East Prince Family Violence Prevention Inc. luncheon in Summerside. PEI's first Silhouette is dedicated to UPSE member Kimberly Ann Byrne who was killed by her common-in-law husband on Dec. 10, 2000.

-On Tuesday, February 4, 2005, it was announced that the unemployment rate on PEI for January was 10.5% up 0.1% from December's 10.4%. You currently need 525 hours to qualify for EI on PEI.

-On Monday, January 31, 2005, it was announced that the 2003-04 deficit for PEI is \$125 million. The deficit was blamed on a \$33-million payout to cover a unfunded pension liability, \$17.6

million lost on the failure of Polar Foods, and \$2.8 million to help the Island Waste Management Corp. The total provincial debt stands at \$1.29 billion.

- On Saturday, January 29, 2005, delegates of the Atlantic Communications and Technical Workers Union, which represents 1,800 Aliant workers in Nova Scotia, unanimously voted to merge with the larger Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada which represents Aliant workers in the rest of Atlantic Canada.
- On Friday, January 28, 2005, it was announced that the UPSE bargaining unit which includes 3,000 members, including workers in the provincial civil service, IRAC, and the WCB have reached a tentative agreement with the provincial government. The UPSE bargaining team is recommending ratification of the proposed settlement.
- On Thursday, January 27, 2005, it was announced that the case against Bev Roach, the woman charged in connection with a demonstration on the Souris wharf, has been adjourned until April 28 to explore options through the alternative measures program. At the fed's January 26, 2005 meeting, the Executive Council voted to give \$200.00 to the Bev Roach Defence fund.
- On Wednesday, January 26, 2005, the fed's Executive Council voted to nominate Michelle Johnson (UFCW) for the open position on the Charlottetown EI Board of Referees from the three names that were submitted.
- On Monday, January 24, 2005, CUPE began an eight-week campaign of radio ads in response to the provincial government's program renewal program. The ads explain the public services that CUPE members deliver to the public.
- On Saturday, December 11, 2005, it was announced that Alberta has granted Canadian Natural Resources special status under provincial labour laws for their \$10-billion Horizon oilsands mega-project which allows them to negotiate its own deal with unions, to use both non-union and union crews - and pay them the same wages in order to avoid competition among contractors, to pick one so-called "primary contractor" to negotiate a settlement with then apply it to all groups working on the Horizon project for the next 10 years, and the deal makes any strike or lockout illegal during the negotiations, which Canadian Natural hopes to have wrapped up in the next three months. At the peak of construction in 2006 and 2007, there is expected to be about 6,000 workers working on the project.

UPDATE ON PSAC'S NEGOTIATIONS

-On Thursday, January 27, 2005, it was announced that the 101,000 PSAC members who work for the Treasury Board have ratified new agreements. 80,000 Table 1 members voted 72%, 10,000 Table 2 members voted 90%, 10,000 Table 3 members voted 76%, and 1,000 Table 5 members voted 92% in favor of their respective contracts. All the tables received increases effective on various dates in June to August of 2.5% retroactive to 2003, 2.25% retroactive to 2004, 2.4% in 2005 and 2.5% in 2006. The new collective agreements will expire on various dates in June to August, 2007.

-On Thursday, January 27, 2005, it was announced that the 4,500 PSAC members at the Canadian Food Inspection Agency voted 90% in favor of ratifying their tentative agreement. The new agreement which will expire on December 31, 2006 includes: increases of 2.5% retroactive to January 1, 2003, 2.25% retroactive to January 1, 2004, 2.4% effective January 1, 2005 and 2.5% as of January 1, 2006; two new days of leave, remuneration for "captive time"; part-time workers will now be entitled to a salary increment after 12 months; operational categories will see their salaries adjusted from between 5.4% to 9.6%, effective January 1, 2003; pay zones will be reduced from four to three; and salary rates for certain administrative groups will be put on a par with rates paid to similar occupational groups at Treasury Board, retroactive to January 1, 2003.

REPORT ON THE PEIFL'S MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

-On Tuesday, February 4, 2005, 4 representatives of the PEI Federation of Labour met with the provincial Minister of Education Mildred Dover to discuss issues concerning apprenticeship and the construction trades. With only 20% of apprentices on PEI completing their apprenticeship, concerns were expressed over the both the Provincial and Federal government's policy of training more apprentices to eliminate the impending trade shortages while ignoring the real problems facing tradespeople.

-The problems expressed to the Minister included: the lack of a journeyman to apprentice ratio, the need for a Provincial fair wage to help retain Island tradespeople who are in general the lowest paid in Canada, concerns over Holland College's OJT being used as a cheap labour program rather than a training program, concerns over the apprentice rating system which is confusing and does little to show the competency of an apprentice, and the

problems that randomized inspection and the lack of an Island wide recognition of National Building Codes are causing to workmanship in the trades.

REPORT ON THE PEIFL'S MEETING WITH THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION

-On Thursday, February 10, 2005, 7 representatives of the PEI Federation of Labour met with the provincial Attorney General, Mildred Dover. The representatives expressed concerns with the fact that PEI is the only province in Canada that does not have pension legislation enacted (The legislature passed it in April of 1990 but it was never proclaimed).

-Other concerns expressed were employer responsibility for maintaining the pensions sustainability, access to information about your, workers secession rights in case a company is bought out (a case was brought before the Attorney General where a longtime employee of a company on the Island lost his entire pension when the company was bought out, and the problems with the portability of pensions when you change jobs all of which are addressed in the legislation that wasn't proclaimed.

-It was also expressed that we did not want to see the proclamation of the legislation dragged out by a long process of review and public consultations. The Act needs to be Proclaimed now.

-The Minister's main problem with proclaiming the Act was the costs associated with the start up, implementation, and administration of the act given the government's current financial situation.

FEDERAL ANTI-SCAB LEGISLATION

-As Bill C-263 "Anti-Scab Legislation" comes up for its second hour of debate in Parliament in the last week of February and for a vote in early March, the PEI Federation of Labour urges our affiliated members to send letters and faxes in support of this important piece of legislation to our Island MP's. The fed has been working to get anti scab legislation in on the provincial level for awhile. Getting federal legislation passed will only help our provincial aspirations. Last year, a similar bill was brought before Parliament and was defeated. Joe Mcguire was the only Island MP to vote for it.

-To get more info on the subject go to <http://www.canadianlabour.ca/antiscab.html>

-Here is one of the letters the fed sent to our Island MP's on February 15, 2005 to garner their support.

Dear Mr McGuire:

-With Bill C-263 "An Act to Amend the Canada Labour Code (replacement workers)" coming up for a vote in Parliament in early March, 2005; The PEI Federation of Labour urges you to vote in favor of this Bill.

-We feel that the use of replacement workers during a labour dispute lengthens the dispute needlessly as was shown in the recent 373 day strike of 5 group home workers in Montague. It also heightens the chances of violent confrontations on the picket lines. The experience in Quebec and British Columbia has shown the positive effects of such legislation in reducing these problems.

-In the minority report submitted by the 1996 Task Force on the Canada Labour Code, Part 1, Rodrigue Blouin of that Task Force concluded that Parliament must condemn in no uncertain terms the introduction of an outside interest into the good-faith bargaining process between two clearly identified parties.

-Labour legislation should treat workers and employers fairly in the event of a strike or lock-out. Both sides must pay an economic consequence in such situations. The fact that employers can stall negotiations by the use of replacement workers undermines the whole collective bargaining process and gives the employer an unfair advantage.

-On October 22, 2003 you voted in favour of a similar bill, Bill C-328. We urge you to continue your support of a fair collective bargaining process and vote in favour of Bill C-263.

Yours Sincerely,

Carl Pursey,
President of the PEI Federation of Labour

THE LETTER THE FED SENT TO THE PREMIER ON PROGRAM RENEWAL

-At the federation's last Executive Council meeting there was a motion made that we send a letter to Premier Pat Binns and Provincial Finance Minister Mitch Murphy, after we got approval from the unions involved with the situation, urging the provincial government not to use the program renewal process as

a way to bring in privatization and job cutbacks to the Public Service on PEI.

-Here is the letter the fed sent out on February 9, 2005.

Dear Mr Binns:

-As the renewal process comes to a conclusion, the PEI Federation of Labour would like join with CUPE, IUOE, and UPSE to urge your government to reject privatization and public service cutbacks as a method of cost savings.

-The fact is in the long-term both options will cost your government and all Islanders a lot more than the minimal savings that could be achieved by either option.

-As you know, due to the seasonal nature of most of the Island's economy, the elimination of any full-time job through cutbacks whether it be through lay offs or early retirement is a major blow to the Island's economic health.

-Also, the basic concept of privatization makes it incompatible with providing government services efficiently. In order to provide government services efficiently to Islander's, Islander's best interests must be the number one consideration. Unfortunately with privatization, the companies bottom line becomes the overriding factor which can not only lead to a major drop in the quality of government service but also to a public danger.

-PEI has a Public Service full of very dedicated, skilled and hardworking individuals who efficiently serve the public's best interest. Islanders can ill afford the damage that privatization or cutbacks will cause to this valuable asset.

-Therefore once again we urge you to look at other options in your attempts to spend public monies more effectively. Your government has realized in the past what a bad concept the privatization of government services is, most notably when you decided against privatizing the new Prince County hospital and we hope that you will come to that realization again in this case.

Yours Sincerely,
Carl Pursey,
President of the PEI Federation of Labour

-On Friday, February 18, 2005, the fed received a response back from the Premier. Here it is:

Dear Mr. Pursey:

- Thank you for your letter of February 8, 2005, expressing the concerns of the Prince Edward Island Federation of Labour regarding the possibility of cutbacks in programs and privatization of provincial government services.
- The primary objective of Program Renewal is to improve the quality and sustainability of our services by continuously evaluating them and finding ways to improve.
- Teams were asked to look at all their programs and to ask a variety of questions including whether the service could be delivered in other ways. While in some cases this response included the private sector, it does not mean that government is pursuing these avenues. Rather, we thought it was important to ask all the questions as part of the evaluation because knowing the implications of a variety of options can be very helpful in planning and decision making.
- I want to assure you and your members that government continues to have the best interest of Islanders at heart. While we do have major financial challenges to overcome, I assure you that Cabinet will explore all available options before changing the way we do business.
- We appreciate the great contribution the public service makes to the Island economy. Your input has always been highly valued by government and your opinions and ideas continue to be most welcome.

Pat Binns
Premier of Prince Edward Island
cc Honourable Mitchell Murphy, Provincial Treasurer

**UPDATE ON THE FED'S LABOUR MOVEMENT DONATION DRIVE
TO ESTABLISH A DAY OF MOURNING MONUMENT**

- On Saturday, November 6, 2004, at our annual convention the federation kicked off its labour movement donation drive to pay for a Day of Mourning Monument to honour all workers who have been injured or have died on worksites across PEI to be installed around Province House hopefully by the next Day of Mourning ceremony. We feel that it is very important for labour to come together and supply this very important monument to workers who paid the ultimate price. The goal for the drive is \$8,000.

-On Monday, January 10, 2005, Charlottetown City Council passed a resolution at their regular monthly Council meeting to provide upkeep and maintenance on the Day of Mourning Monument.

-Thus far, the fed has received donations from:

UNION	AMOUNT
BRICKLAYERS LOCAL 1	\$100.00
CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS	\$500.00
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 501	\$100.00
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 1145	\$100.00
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 1779	\$185.00
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 1870	\$287.00
CANADIAN UNION OF PUBLIC EMPLOYEES LOCAL 3324	\$50.00
CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS CHARLOTTETOWN LOCAL	\$150.00
CANADIAN UNION OF POSTAL WORKERS SUMMERSIDE LOCAL	\$100.00
COMMUNICATIONS, ENERGY & PAPERWORKERS UNION LOCAL 61	\$10.00
COMMUNICATIONS, ENERGY & PAPERWORKERS UNION LOCAL 401	\$100.00
IATSE LOCAL 906A	\$40.00
INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF ELECTRICAL WORKERS LOCAL 1432	\$500.00
PEI TEACHER'S FEDERATION	\$100.00
UNION OF CANADIAN TRANSPORT EMPLOYEES PSAC LOCAL 60905	\$100.00
UNION OF PARKS CANADA PSAC LOCAL 90023	\$80.00

UNION OF VETERAN AFFAIRS EMPLOYEES PSAC LOCAL 90001	\$750.00
UNITED BROTHERHOOD OF CARPENTERS & JOINERS OF AMERICA - LOCAL 1338	\$300.00
TOTAL	\$3,552.00

-The Federation of Labour would like to thank all of the affiliated, and nonaffiliated locals and the CLC who have donated to the cause so far and we hope that the rest of the Island Labour movement will show their support for this very important cause.

-So far the average contribution has been approximately a dollar per member but any contribution would be greatly appreciated.

-The commitment that has been shown to this important project thus far has been overwhelming with all the pieces coming together very nicely. With the City of Charlottetown's generous offer of upkeep and maintenance on the monument and the Island Labour movement showing tremendous support for our donation drive, the only piece that remains is securing the land for the monument and the Province has assured us that they are working hard to accomplish that goal.

-If you wish to receive copies of our brochure or want to arrange for a fed representative to come to your meeting to discuss the monument. Please contact the fed's office. If you wish to keep up on what is happening with our drive please visit <http://www.peifl.ca/pages/dom2/dom.html>

IMPORTANT DATES

FEDERAL BUDGET WATCH	FEBRUARY 23, 2005	AT 4:45 PM PSAC CHARLOTTETOWN REGIONAL OFFICE
BRIEF TO CABINET	MARCH 8, 2005	9:00 A.M.
INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY EVENT	MARCH 8, 2005 7:30 - 9:00 P.M.	ELLIOT ROOM - HOWARD JOHNSON "DUTCH INN"

C.L.C. ATLANTIC REGION AND P.E.I. FEDERATION EDUCATIONAL	MARCH 8, 2005 -7:00 PM - 9:00 PM MARCH 9, 2005 - 9:00 AM TO 5:00 PM.	AT THE HOWARD JOHNSON, DUTCH INN, CHARLOTTETOWN, P.E.I.
ONE WEEK ATLANTIC LABOUR LAW COURSE	APRIL 10 - 15, 2005	MEMARAMCOOK INSTITUTE, SAINT JOSEPH, NB
DAY OF MOURNING FOR WORKERS KILLED AND INJURED ON THE JOB	THURSDAY, APRIL 28, 2004	
LABOUR COLLEGE OF CANADA GRADUATE PROGRAM	MAY 9 - JUNE 3, 2005	ALGONQUIN COLLEGE , OTTAWA
25 th ANNUAL CUPE CONVENTION	MAY 19 - 20, 2005	SLEMON PARK, SUMMERSIDE
24TH CLC CONSTITUTIONAL CONVENTION	JUNE 13 - 17, 2005	CREDENTIAL DEADLINE MAY 13, 2005
C.L.C. ATLANTIC REGION AND P.E.I. FEDERATION EDUCATIONAL	OCTOBER 13 - 14, 2005	