

leaflet

PULP, PAPER AND WOODWORKERS OF CANADA



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in

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“We can be proud of who we are and what we and our constitution represent.”

DEDICATED GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS REPRESENTS LOCAL

EDITOR *This letter was written for the members of PPWC Local 1. It was included with a thank you letter from Mary Ann Morris, a Nursing instructor at Selkirk College, who organizes a yearly practice experience for nursing students in Guatemala.*

I take this opportunity to share an article written in thanks to our membership for its modest financial support, and the impact our vision of sustainability, community, ethics, solidarity, honesty, and integrity has on us, our community and in fact sustains and advocates for progressive social change.

This letter reminds me what a privilege it is to be a member of the PPWC, to be elected by a group of like-minded peers to help defend its constitution, collectively-attained agreements, and vision of fair and equitable labour practices, and how this has broad-reaching implications. We can be proud of who we are and what we and our constitution represent.

It is during these difficult times when we are

challenged that we see who really understands these principles. “We are our brother’s keeper”, a slogan put forward by our brothers and sisters at Local 2, is very applicable today, when companies attempt to divide us, to circumvent our elected committees, stewards, and professionals.

Our jobs are being “restructured”, with complete disregard for our knowledge and years of experience, in some instances with more duties than time will allow us to complete safely and sustainably.

The contractual entitlements to a sustainable 40-hour work week and reasonable access to our vacation and time-off allocations are being completely disregarded, illegally and with intent.

This all being done to control “fixed costs” with complete disregard as to how this affects this business’s greatest asset: you, the employee.

When the union speaks of better communication, we speak of how to listen to and promote this asset, to respect and utilize the collective agreement as a reminder of the value we represent to the sustainability of this business and this community.

When we are forced to work excessive hours, and relief is not provided to meet contractual requirements, we are not at our best. Our families suffer, as it is harder to plan for and meet their needs, and our communities suffer, as we can’t engage in traditional volunteer commitments as coaches, mentors, fundraisers, or just involved parents and families. This hurts our business.

Those of us in recognized high-demand professional areas begin to look at options that better meet these needs and, ultimately, if the situation remains uncorrected, move on, making us weaker and possibly unsustainable. Those of us whose professional skill sets are developed and applicable within our mill are demoralized and left overburdened and unappreciated.

You, the members, can be proud of the many volunteers who step forward and give of their time to record the constant violations of our agreement and defend it and what it stands for, and those volunteers who assist members and their families as we deal with the injustices caused by these wrongs

and the stress of this unnecessary exercise.

We have members who have volunteered their time to assist Standing Committee so we better understand and reflect concerns directly related to their individual trades, departments and professions.

We have national support and counsel as requested in all areas we will be required to broach: WCB, human rights, LRB, and legal pursuits.

We, the members, are reminded by this letter of thanks who we are and what we represent. We are democratic, we have integrity, and in solidarity we are strong. I thank you, the members, for the opportunity to represent this Local as a part of a dedicated group of volunteers and the education and support we provide with the limited resources we have. We are making a difference.

Darren Pilla
Local 1
CASTLEGAR



PPWC presents our forestry initiatives

FORESTRY WAS and still is integral to the people of British Columbia and defines who we are as the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada.

We have and will continue to try to stem the flow of raw log exports that is detrimental to our livelihoods, something we have been pushing for at least the last decade. We have organized many rallies during this time, from the town of Lake Cowichan, the cities of Nanaimo and Victoria, as well as at the Legislature.

We have aligned ourselves with environmental groups to log in an ethical and sustainable way.

We have and will continue to develop relationships with First Nations as they have an ever-increasing say as to what happens in forests of their traditional territories.

- Starting in January 2014, the PPWC held a rally at UBC. We started a conversation about the coast forest and the vision moving forward into the future. We invited stakeholders, be it forest companies, First Nations, politicians, and environmentalists, as well as representatives from PPWC Locals and the National.

Actions out of this have been articles in union publications and the UBC forestry magazine. This also started us on a path to hold this type of forum across BC.

- The PPWC were instrumental in bringing together a focus group in northern BC called Stand up for the North, the purpose being renewing our woods, and keeping our forests public and sustainable.

We planned and delivered two meetings, one in Prince George and one in Mackenzie. The focus of these meetings were the TFL conversions by Canfor and West Fraser. Speakers included: Vicky Husband (Commons BC), Anthony Britneff (policy analyst), Leonard Thomas (Nak'azdli First Nation), Frank Everitt (USW 1-424), Megan Scott (BCGEU), Keith Atkinson (BC First Nations), Peter Ewart (Stand Up for the North) and, of course, our own Arnold Bercov.

We have taken the position supported by the speakers that area-based tenures versus volume-based ones put too much control of our forests into too few companies' hands.

Subsequently, and from our work, Canfor recanted their position. Victory for forest workers in Northern BC.

- Arnold Bercov, National PPWC President, and Gary Bull, Forestry Faculty Professor at UBC, planned and delivered a forum on wood fibre availability and supply chain demand throughout the province. Invitees included all the major forest companies, be it solid wood, biofuel and pulp and paper, First Nations, government and, of course, our union.

We wanted to gather everyone together with the goal of getting more fibre out of the woods so our operations can continue to run into the future despite the shrinking fibre basket we are all facing.

- We placed ads with Mediaplanet to keep the public informed about what is happening to our forests.
- We supported community forest initiatives keeping fibre and jobs in our communities.
- Into the future we want to petition the govern-

ment to pull tenure from forest companies that continue to shut mills down for the only purpose of having surplus logs, thus exporting more, despite promises of reinvestment.

The PPWC is comprised from a wide range of industries throughout BC. We plan on being instrumental in driving change to the forest industry now and into the future.

In closing, we have a moral obligation not only to forest workers but also to the people of British Columbia to continue this work.

WE HAVE A MORAL OBLIGATION NOT ONLY TO FOREST WORKERS BUT ALSO TO THE PEOPLE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA TO CONTINUE THIS WORK.



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Trees are the solution LNG will never be

BC needs to phase out fracking and abandon plans for LNG

THE PULP, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (PPWC) and the Wilderness Committee (WC) are organizations with deep roots in Canada's forests. Since its inception over 50 years ago, the PPWC and its members have relied on abundant and resilient forests for their livelihoods. In turn, since it was founded 34 years ago, the WC has tirelessly advocated for the protection of old-growth forests and other key ecosystems, and for the sustainable management of second-growth forests.

We believe the BC government has gradually abandoned the province's forestry heritage in pursuit of an unsustainable pipe dream: liquefied natural gas (LNG) exports to Asia. The better option—for a resilient economy and for our climate—is to re-build an innovative, sustainable forestry sector.

That's not to say that forestry doesn't have its own problems.

The current industrial model that has dominated forestry in western Canada is based on endless ex-

traction and minimal domestic processing of timber resources. This approach has harmed watersheds and degraded entire ecosystems. At the same time, we've seen more unprocessed or under-processed timber leave the province, resulting in a downward spiral of mill closures and layoffs. Clearly, this model is failing our forest ecosystems and forestry-dependent communities and families.

British Columbia lags far behind other jurisdictions in terms of jobs created per unit of timber harvested. In BC, to create one full-time, year-round job we must cut 1,189 cubic metres of timber—one cubic metre roughly equals one city telephone pole. In Ontario, the forest industry produces one job for every 205 cubic metres of timber harvested, meaning they can cut the same amount of trees and employ almost six times as many people (or cut one-sixth of the trees and provide the same amount of jobs).

BC simply has to find a way to provide more jobs while cutting at

a sustainable level. The WC and the PPWC believe this is not only doable but necessary.

What BC needs is legislation that supports an innovative and adaptable forest industry that creates local jobs and moves products up the value chain. Raw log exports must be banned. Strong laws should also be enacted to protect the ecological values of our working forests for future generations of British Columbians.

Instead of addressing our shortfall in sustainable forestry jobs, the BC government is narrowly fixated on the extraction and export of liquefied fracked gas. It is an unavoidable fact that BC's proposed LNG industry would have to be fed by gas extracted using hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking". The impact of this industry is already visible all over the province's former wilderness: in certain parts of BC, the oil and gas industry clears more trees than the forest industry.

Due to the nature of unconventional gas extraction methods such as fracking, vast swaths of forests are eliminated for pipeline clearways and toxic wastewater ponds. All of this oil and gas development results in disastrous consequences for water, wildlife and forestry resources in northeast BC.

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TREES ARE

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BC's carbon tax demands that all companies account and pay for the climate-changing gases they create. From Lululemon shirts to Okanagan plums, the carbon tax is applied to almost every producer, with one glaring exception: the gas industry is exempted from taxes on flared gas, a by-product of the production process and a big contributor to climate change.

We already know what climate change looks like here in BC. The mountain pine beetle infestation has destroyed over 18 million hectares of forest in impacted regions. It is difficult to assess the financial damage incurred, but it's estimated we've lost billions of dollars in timber sales and stumpage to an insect that could not have thrived here without climate change. Even if we set aside the many other negative impacts of an altered climate, the short-term value we hope to gain from the sale of cheap gas is dwarfed

by what we'll lose from our forests.

BC needs to phase out fracking and abandon plans for LNG.

British Columbians deserve a bright and hopeful future. We deserve a stable climate and an opportunity for sustainable employment in sectors like forestry. We have the choice between trying to build an industry of uncertain benefit based on a finite resource that is guaranteed to increase our contribution to the climate crisis, or rebuilding an industry that could provide livelihoods on a potentially infinite basis, while preserving forest resources and mitigating climate change.

Why on Earth would we ever choose the former?

Arnold Bercov is president of the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada, Eoin Madden is climate campaigner with the Wilderness Committee, and Torrance Coste is Vancouver Island campaigner with the Wilderness Committee.



PPWC members walk to oppose budget cuts to post-secondary education

Christmas quotes

“Christmas gift suggestions: To your enemy, forgiveness. To an opponent, tolerance. To a friend, your heart. To a customer, service. To all, charity. To every child, a good example. To yourself, respect.”

- Oren Arnold (1900-1980)

“What is Christmas? It is tenderness for the past, courage for the present, hope for the future. It is a fervent wish that every cup may overflow with blessings rich and eternal, and that every path may lead to peace.”

- Agnes M. Pahro



“You know you're getting old, when Santa starts looking younger.”

- Robert Paul

“I once bought my kids a set of batteries for Christmas with a note on it saying, toys not included.”

- Bernard Manning

“I stopped believing in Santa Claus when my mother took me to see him in a department store, and he asked for my autograph.”

- Shirley Temple

“There are three stages of man: he believes in Santa Claus; he does not believe in Santa Claus; he is Santa Claus.”

- Bob Phillips

What's new in your local? Write to your union. Keep us all in the know. Contact richardsonron6@gmail.com.

LOCAL 2 CROFTON

Forest group works to retain tenure

Our Local sent a letter to the BC Provincial Forests Minister supporting the Lake Cowichan Community Forest group's efforts to retain and increase tenure in south Vancouver Island. This is a coalition between the community of Lake Cowichan and the Pacheedaht First Nation. This is something we hope may potentially benefit our fibre position in the future.

I had the pleasure of representing our Local and showing support for Local 26's fight to get better funding for post-secondary education. My congratulations to Rod, Nadya, and the rest of Local 26 for putting on a fantastic rally.

STEVE LANDYGO, NEB MEMBER

LOCAL 18 MACKENZIE

Local says goodbye to president

On behalf of Brother Dave Seright's family and the membership of Local 18, we would like to thank everyone here for their support during this most difficult time. The many messages of condolences, offers of assistance, and participation at the funeral and Celebration of Dave's Life were greatly appreciated.

Since Dave's passing, a lot of members have taken time to reflect on our past. Dave's determination

to do what he thought was best for our membership was well known and appreciated. There were moments when strong feelings on other issues collided. Dave taught us that these differences did not have to be taken personally and we should always find a way to move forward.

BOB LAVALLEE, NEB MEMBER

LOCAL 5 NEW WESTMINSTER

Local acclaims new president

At a special general membership meeting on Nov. 22, Todd Smith was elected by acclamation as the new Local 5 president, replacing Travis McLean, who vacated the position.

GLENN JACKSON, NEB MEMBER

LOCAL 1 CASTLEGAR

Mercer highlights accomplishments

In one of our meetings, the company highlighted some of their accomplishments.

Safety: Our Total Recordable Incidents Rate has fallen from 4.5 this time last year to 1.95, and one recordable last quarter.

Environmental: We are on pace to have our best environmental performance since Mercer bought the mill in 2006.

Production: At our peak we were a 500,000 tonne a year mill. Since restructuring, they have budgeted to be a 470,000 tonne mill

and will realize around 430,000 tonnes this year.

Their fixed costs per tonne of pulp were the lowest ever: first quarter was \$423 per tonne, with third quarter performing even better at \$391 per tonne. The low Canadian dollar and a savings on fibre were the biggest drivers.

July also saw our best results for power production in a month ever.

NEIL BERMEL, NEB MEMBER

LOCAL 26 CASTLEGAR

Thank you for rally support

Overall, enrollment at Selkirk College appears to be steady. More specifically, the trades programs are a going concern. Most of the day programs are full, and we are now running a few of the courses as afternoon classes.

Our Nelson campus (Silver King) is in the process of finalizing the details of an \$18 million renovation/add-on for the campus. That would mean newly-renovated and, in some cases, new shop space and equipment.

On behalf of Local 26, I would like to thank the National officers and all PPWC members who came out and supported us at our rally in September. I believe it was a success, and kudos to our Local president, Rod Fayant, for initiating and orchestrating the event.

LARRY PEREPOLKIN,
NEB MEMBER

Harmac expects large turnover

CURRENTLY, WE have 272 members working at Harmac. The company has hired 11 new people over the last couple of months. They need the new people so we can get training done. The company knows that in the next five years we are going to have a large turnover as production people retire. We have not even hired the next bleach or kamyr operator yet.

The company has posted for a millwright and a pipefitter apprentice. The two people who get them will start in January.

On Oct. 2, we had a celebration for running six years now. Pioneer Homes put a new log entrance to our Industrial Relations building with a carved statue of H.R. MacMillan. There was a lunch served and speak-

ers, as well as prizes given out.

On Nov. 27, we had a wage meeting with the company. After a lot of discussion, we managed to get the pattern 2.5 per cent increase starting at the end of December and bumped up the meal tickets to \$18.

We currently have 64 members and are running two shifts at Ladysmith Sawmill Division. We are in negotiations right now with Western Forest Products. We have a protocol agreement with WFP, and were supposed to start but they were cancelled. The company has a new vice president who, they tell us, is getting up to speed with negotiations.

At Chemainus Value Added Division, we currently have 66 members working with two shifts running. They are cutting big squares for export.

We currently have 54 members working at Long Hoh on one shift. The Employee Family Assistance Program looks like it is moving forward and close to an agreement.

There are currently 13 members working at Canexus. They are now at a full complement. Things are going smoothly.

LES HILLIER, NEB MEMBER

Pacific BioEnergy plans to build two new pellet plants

At Chemtrade, the warehouse job has seen a change in work days from five 8-hour shifts to four 10-hour shifts. We have members trying the job right now. The plant has openings to fill two new operators in the coming months.

Esther's Inn and our members are expecting a busy start to next year. The Canada Winter Games, slated for February, and our convention in March will make it a good start to the year for them. The Christmas party season is booking up, and the hotel has seen a nice increase in room bookings for this time of year.

Pacific BioEnergy has recently announced that, in conjunction with Canfor, they are building two new pellet plants in northern BC. Through our last set of negotiations, we are sitting down with the company and discussing the possibility of bringing the member-

ship into pulp diversified pension plan from a group RRSP. The plant has been running well, with some minor issues with fibre supply.

At Canfor Pulp, the new turbo operator project is ongoing at Intercon, with a hoped-for completion date early in the new year.

We had a President's Council meeting on Nov. 12 that Arnie and Frank attended with us. Some of the items brought up were that the company is projected to spend \$54.3 million on capital projects this year, most of it on the new generator. For northern BC, there is a residual chip supply demand of 4.1 million oven-dried tonnes (ODTs), with a supply of 3.55 million ODTs. The tensile strength of the trees' fibres has been decreasing as the trees decay while standing dead. We are injecting calcium carbonate into our paper products, which has freed up 26 tonnes of fibre for our pulp machines.

Our new maintenance program continues to be rolled out. The project, called AIM88, hopes to achieve an 88 per cent production efficiency.

CHUCK LEBLANC, NEB MEMBER

An elf's life

What kind of music do elves like best?

"Wrap" music!

What kind of bread do elves make sandwiches with?

Why, shortbread, of course!

What kind of money do elves use?

Jingle bills!

Why did Santa's helper see the doctor?

Because he had low "elf" esteem!

What did the elf say was the first step in using a Christmas computer?

"First, YULE LOGon!"



Why did the elf put his bed into the fireplace?

He wanted to sleep like a log!

Who sings "Blue Christmas" and makes toy guitars?

Elfs!

Who lives at the North Pole, makes toys and rides around in a pumpkin?

Cinder-"elf"-a!

How do elves greet each other?

"Small world, isn't it?"

Santa rides in a sleigh. What do elves ride in?

Mini vans!

What do you call an elf who tells silly jokes?

A real Christmas Card!

Why did the elves ask the turkey to join the band?

Because he had the drum sticks!

provincial

Conroy calls for better services for the elderly

Katrine Conroy, as the BC Official Opposition's Spokesperson on seniors' issues, delivered a keynote speech that covered a wide range of issues and also took questions from BC FORUM delegates.

She noted that BC remains the only province that charges MSP premiums to seniors, and that increases in ferry rates, coupled with cuts in service, have hit seniors particularly hard.

Conroy said the creation of a Seniors Advocate position, following two private members' bill introduced by the NDP and tenacious lobbying by seniors, is a real win. However, she added, it is frustrating the position is not independent of the government, and the new advocate "will need to hear from all of us".



Katrine Conroy, BC NDP MLA for Kootenay West, speaks at rally in Castlegar on Sept. 30

Labour Board finds Ikea guilty of unfair labour practices

Canada's Teamsters Local 213, representing locked-out workers at Ikea's flagship store in Richmond, BC, report the provincial Labour Board has found the Swedish retail giant guilty of unfair labour practices. According to the union, the board ruled Ikea bargained in bad faith and violated provincial labour law by trying to bargain directly with workers through a website posting.

The company was ordered to remove the website posting and stop paying workers to cross the picket lines.

The union complained to the Labour Board that the company offered locked-out workers an extra \$2.50 an hour, additional weekend premiums and other incentives on its website to cross picket lines.

The Richmond store is one of only two unionized Ikea outlets in the country.



PPWC President Arnold Bercov walks in support of post-secondary education

PPWC protests cuts to post-secondary education

ON SEPTEMBER 30, the PPWC held a rally at Selkirk College in Castlegar. The purpose of this rally was to bring to the public's attention the cuts the provincial government has made to post-secondary education in British Columbia.

Selkirk College and the PPWC have been affected by these cuts. In the last year, the Aviation Department was shut down. This meant the loss of jobs and members.



Mathew Jameson

Speakers at the rally included: Mathew Jameson, chairperson of Canadian Federation of Students, Local 4; Duff Sutherland, president of Selkirk College Faculty Association; Katrine Conroy, BC NDP MLA for Kootenay West; and Arnold Bercov, president of Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada.

The speakers talked about how the cuts are affecting all the colleges and universities throughout the province. Mathew Jameson's presentation had an impact on a few of our members. Here are some highlights of his speech:

We are here to talk about the state of post-secondary education in our province, about public funding, and about the public good.

Our college is in some ways the heart of our communities. In Castlegar, it is certainly on the list for largest employers. Jobs at Selkirk College are good jobs.

Selkirk College workers, including support staff and faculty, have shown time and again their commitment to this institution.

Each year hundreds of students from the Kootenays come through the doors of this school hoping for a bright future. However, if things continue the way they are going, then that bright future may be diminished, and the com-

mitment that so many have to this institution will be for naught.

In the last decade, Selkirk College funding from the provincial government dropped: programs were cut, and tuition fees increased. Average student debt after four years of study is over \$30,000, meaning those who do complete are entering the workforce with a "new car-sized" debt.

In BC's 2014 budget, the provincial government meted out another \$45 million slash to post-secondary education across the system.

Kootenay residents fought long and hard for the Kootenay School of the Arts, and that campus is all but closed.

Second-year programs have been eliminated, a change that erodes the institution's ability to deliver its basic mandate. This impacts our jobs, it impacts our culture, it impacts our families, and it impacts our community in a number of other ways.

This is the reason student, support staff, and faculty need to stick together to stand against the tide. When we stick together, we can make a change. Solidarity forever.

After the rally, a large number of the attendees marched along the main street of Castlegar.



Attendees at rally listen to speakers talk about affects of budget cuts on colleges and universities in BC

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NEWS FROM AROUND THE WORLD THAT HITS HOME

NATIONAL STRIKE

One million workers across Indonesia strike to oppose fuel price increase and new minimum wage

ON DECEMBER 10, three of Indonesia's trade union confederations KSPI, KSBSI, KSPSI organized a national strike involving

around one million union members in large cities in the country. In Jakarta alone, around 50,000 workers demonstrated on the streets and marched to the President's Palace to voice their demands.

The unions are opposed to a price increase on fuel, introduced by the president. The hike will effectively mean workers lose 50 per cent of their purchasing power.

The day of action follows demonstrations one week earlier, where unions reacted to the new minimum wage for 2015.

Unions are urging Governors of every province to increase the minimum wage to USD 272,7 and to increase the number of items for living-cost calculation from 60 to 84 items.

A pension reform was agreed to enter into force on July 1/15, but there are growing concerns on how it will be implemented.

Said Iqbal, president of trade union confederation KSPI, says: "The law already exists, what we need is for the government to make a decree so that the law can be implemented. Once it is implemented, 44 million workers will benefit from the pension system."

A universal health insurance meant to apply to all citizens in Indonesia as of January, 2014, still leaves more than 10 million people lacking cover. Unions are demanding that this level of health insurance should be fully implemented for everyone by Jan. 1/15.

The striking unions are also demanding a stop to outsourcing, which is growing fast in Indonesia.

Said Iqbal says: "We want to see 16 million agency workers converted to direct employment."

On Dec. 11/14, the confederations met with the Indonesian House of Representatives to present their five demands. Rusli, spokesperson of IndustriALL Global Union affiliate Federation of Indonesian Metal Workers Union (FSPMI), said: "We will see how the government reacts to the demands we raised in today's rally. If they fail to respond we will stage a nationwide strike."

Unity among unions

As IndustriALL Global Union affiliates in the Indonesian National Council met for a unity building meeting on Dec. 11-12, they expressed their support for the unions involved in the struggle.

IndustriALL unions in Indonesia are currently working together on drafting a model collective bargaining agreement, as well as on a high profile campaign for 14 weeks maternity leave for all Indonesian women workers.

Right to strike cannot be compromised

BY RUWAN SUBASINGHE

“IT IS GOOD TO finally shake your hand; the last time I saw you, I was in prison”.

These were the poignant words Myoung-hwan Kim, President of the Korean Railway Workers' Union (KRWU), greeted me with when we met at the International Transport Workers' Federation's (ITF) 43rd Congress in Sofia earlier this year.

Indeed, the last time we spoke, we had to do it through a prison intercom system as Kim, along with other leaders of the KRWU, was being detained for organizing a strike in opposition to rail privatization. Despite complying with all “essential services” requirements under Korean law, the authorities declared the action illegal even before it began.

Kim and his colleagues are now facing so-called “obstruction of business” charges which carry a maximum sentence of five years in prison or a fine not exceeding 15 million won (US\$14,000).

Hundreds of strikers have been dismissed or relocated, and the union's assets have been seized by the authorities.

In fact, transport workers are one of the groups increasingly being excluded from the right to strike by way of outright bans or public service, essential services or minimum services requirements that severely limit that right.

Following a fatal train accident in 2009, the State Railway Workers' Union of Thailand (SRUT) launched an occupational health and safety initiative and called on its members to abstain from driving trains with faulty equipment.

Without even attempting to address the grave issues at hand, the authorities cracked down on the initiative by conveniently labelling it a “strike”, a right denied to all public sector workers in Thailand.

In another recent dispute, 316 members of the Turkish Civil Aviation Union were dismissed by text message following a coordinated sick leave action taken in response to the Turkish government's decision to add aviation services to the list of industries where industrial action was prohibited.

Turkey currently has one of the worst rates in the International Trade Union Confederation's (ITUC) Global Rights Index.

Convention 87

This trend is especially concerning as transport workers, including those employed in aviation, trucking and commercial seafaring, have some of the most dangerous jobs in the world.

This is why the protection of the right to strike under Convention 87 of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and its enforcement through the ILO's supervisory mechanisms is particularly important for transport workers.

For example, it has been unequivocally held that the right to strike may only be restricted or prohibited in the public service for those exercising authority in the name of the state or in essential services in the strict sense of the term (that is, services the interruption of which would endanger the life, personal safety or health of the whole or part of the population).

Furthermore, it has also been held that transport generally does not constitute an essential service and that minimum operational services can only be applied to non-essential services in very limited circumstances.

Notwithstanding this extensive jurisprudence, the Employers' Group at the ILO has since 2012 been doing its best to undermine the authority of the ILO's supervisory mechanisms. Not only has it questioned the mandate and capacity of the Committee of Experts, it has challenged the very existence of a right to strike under Convention 87.

The Employers' continued intransigence has left the Workers' Group no alternative but to call on the ILO's Governing Body to seek an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the question of the existence of a right to strike.

There can be no compromise on the right to strike. There can be no compromise on human rights.

“Hundreds of strikers have been dismissed or relocated, and the union's assets have been seized.”

- Adapted from *equaltimes.org*

Happy New Year!

“Youth is when you’re allowed to stay up late on New Year’s Eve. Middle age is when you’re forced to.”

- *Bill Vaughn*

“An optimist stays up until midnight to see the new year in. A pessimist stays up to make sure the old year leaves.”

- *Bill Vaughn*

“A New Year’s resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other.”

- *Anonymous*

“It wouldn’t be New Year’s if I didn’t have regrets.”

- *William Thomas*



“New Year’s Resolution: To tolerate fools more gladly, provided this does not encourage them to take up more of my time.”

- *James Agate*

“Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better man.”

- *Benjamin Franklin*

“I’m a little bit older, a little bit wiser, a little bit rounder, but still none the wiser.”

- *Robert Paul*

“Never tell your resolution beforehand, or it’s twice as onerous a duty.”

- *John Selden*

“Good resolutions are simply checks that men draw on a bank where they have no account.”

- *Oscar Wilde*

Miners fight company union

The Mexican Miners Union (SNTMMRM) told the media in late October that its members at the Altos Hornos de México and Grupo Acerero del Norte—both steel mills—have been under undue pressure to affiliate with a company union created by their employers.

The company, said the Miners Union, has falsely claimed that a majority of members of Locals 147 and 288 of Grupo Acerero del Norte had voted for the company union during a union meeting.

The company’s actions violate the International Labour Organization conventions, said a union leader.

Monarchy bans all federations

Swaziland’s government, one of the world’s last remaining absolute monarchies, has announced an immediate ban on all trade union and employer federations.

With one of the worst industrial relations records of any country, the decision constitutes an absolute violation of ILO Convention 87, which guarantees freedom of association for workers and employers.

Sharan Burrow, ITUC General Secretary, said, “The Swaziland authorities have for many years shown their contempt for fundamental workers’ rights, and this latest decision, which abolishes workers’ and employers’ organizations, is absolutely shocking.”

“The government claims a technical oversight in existing legisla-

tion needs to be fixed to allow the registration of union and employer federations, but there is no justification whatsoever in banning existing organizations while the government tidies up a legal mess it is responsible for.

“This is the latest in a long list of severe violations of international standards by King Mswati’s regime.”

Bolivia legalizes child labour

Bolivia became the first country in the world to legalize child labour after Vice-President Alvaro Garcia Linera signed a new law July 17 which dropped the legal age of workers from 14 to 10.

The law stipulates children are allowed to work as long as the child has permission from parents and is enrolled in school.

Human rights and anti-child labour groups decried the law saying it goes against international standards.

“Child labour already exists in Bolivia and it’s difficult to fight it. Rather than persecute it, we want to protect the rights and guarantee the labour security of children,” one of the bill’s sponsors told Associated Press.

“Child labour may be seen as a short-term solution to economic hardship, but is actually a cause of poverty,” said Jo Becker of Human Rights Watch.

Child workers are common in most parts of Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa and South America, although outlawed in most countries. They are responsible to making iPhones, garments and even work in mines for minerals used in electronic batteries.

Time for provinces to enforce laws to “Stop the Killing”

LEADERS OF THE United Steelworkers (USW) say the campaign to stop workplace killing through better enforcement of 2003 amendments to the Criminal Code of Canada has gained momentum now that it has been raised with federal, provincial and territorial justice ministers.

“Since it became clear that the amendments holding corporations, their directors and executives criminally accountable for workplace death and injury were not being enforced, the campaign to save lives became one of convincing provincial and territorial attorneys general to get the job done,” said USW National Director Ken Neumann. “That means they must direct police and Crown attorneys in their jurisdictions to investigate and prosecute workplace death and injury as they would any potential crime scene.”

Neumann said a meeting he and USW Western Canada Director Steve Hunt had last spring with Federal Justice Minister Peter MacKay ended with MacKay’s commitment to have the issue raised at the annual Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FTP) meeting of justice ministers, which ended in Banff on Oct. 17.

MacKay was instrumental a decade ago in ensuring unanimous support in the House of Commons for what was known then as the Westray Bill. The Westray amendments to the Criminal Code arose out of recommendations by Justice Peter Richard and the inquiry into the 1992 explosion of the Westray Coal Mine, in MacKay’s Nova Scotia riding.

Neumann said union repre-

sentatives made it known they were available in Banff throughout the three-day meeting to provide information to federal, provincial and territorial politicians, along with an update of the USW’s campaign, launched in the Fall of 2013, to “Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law”.

“After more than a decade, and thousands of workplace deaths, only a handful of Criminal Code charges have been laid,” he said. “And not a single boss has spent time in jail for their crimes. For families, fines are not enough, and justice has not been served.”

“More than 1,000 workers are killed each year at work,” added Steve Hunt. “Corporations must be held criminally accountable.”

Neumann and Hunt vow the USW will continue the campaign for enforcement until there is clear direction to enforce the Westray amendments and there is better coordination between law enforcement and regulations found in occupational health and safety law.

Information about the campaign can be found at www.stopthekilling.ca or www.usw.ca.

Bosses and local officials jailed for fire

Courts in the northeastern province of Jilin have sentenced seven company bosses and eleven local officials to at most nine years in jail for their part in China’s worst factory fire in recent history, state media reported on Dec. 27.

The fire at Baoyuanfeng Poultry Co. killed 121 workers and injured another 76 in June 2013 when an electrical short circuit ignited combustible material inside the factory and set off a series of explosions in the plant’s ammonia pipelines. Nearly 400 people were working at the time and many were trapped inside because the factory’s exits had been locked. None of the workers had been given any fire safety training.

Baoyuanfeng’s chairman, Jia

Yushan, was given the harshest sentence, nine years in prison and a one million yuan fine, for “failing to ensure a safe working environment”. Other managers at construction and engineering companies associated with operations at the factory were sentenced to between three and seven years in jail.

In a separate court hearing, the local fire chief Lü Yandong and his deputy Liu Guicai were sentenced to five and half and five years’ imprisonment respectively.

Most of the fines handed out in this case were between just 200,000 and 300,000 yuan. However, they could have been considerably higher had the recently revised Work Safety Law been in force at the time of the accident.

Will CETA pave the way for more log exports to the EU?

BY JOHN HANRAHAN

LIKE ITS PREDECESSOR, the North American Free Trade Agreement, the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) appears to be less about regulating trade than it is about increasing the rights and powers of multi-national corporations by limiting the rights of democratically-elected governments to make laws and regulations. Recently released documents have revealed provisions in the agreement the CCU sees as significant causes for concern.

- CETA provides a mechanism of dispute resolution called Investor State Dispute Settlement (ISDS), which gives multi-national corporations the right to sue governments that enact laws or regulations that affect their profits. These types of provisions serve to place corporations above the law and set them in a position to dictate laws and policy to democratically-elected governments.
- Under CETA, certain government agencies can be prohibited from choosing to purchase Canadian goods and services.
- CETA appears to open the door to a broader privatization of public services such as water utilities, energy utilities, transit, and health care.
- CETA will likely increase health care costs by adding hundreds of millions of dollars to the price of drugs.
- The agreement could prevent the federal and provincial governments from enacting laws or regulations that protect the environment and sustain resource development.

The raw log export question

The text of CETA was only released in September 2014, after years of secret negotiations by the Canadian government and the European Union (EU). With respect to raw log exports, our research indicates the agreement is vague to say the least. The details seem to have been left to be worked out at a later date and there is some talk about sustainable forest practices; how-

ever, there are no enforcement mechanisms with any teeth. The agreement does say Canada and the EU will: "Encourage trade in forest products, from sustainably managed forests, harvested in accordance with the domestic legislation of the country of harvest."

This seems to mean that, as long as the logs are legally harvested under Canadian law, the EU market is wide open to raw long exports. Not only that, under the ISDS provisions in CETA, European countries could sue Canada if it ever decides to change its forestry laws in any way that effects their profits. This basically creates a freeze on current harvesting practices and limits our right to protect our forest resources in the future.



John Hanrahan

CETA is not a done deal

In order to come into force CETA still needs to be ratified by the EU parliament and by all 28 EU member states. Germany in particular has raised concerns about the NAFTA type ISDS clause that allows multi-national corporations to sue governments

for making laws or regulations that reduce their profits.

Meanwhile here in Canada

The Harper conservatives are CETA's biggest cheerleaders and seemed to be determined to repeat the mistakes of NAFTA and cost this country thousands more good value-added jobs in favour of the irresponsible export of raw natural resources. The NDP has raised much the same concerns as the German government with respect to the ISDS provisions of the agreement. The liberals have said, and I quote: "We are broadly supportive of CETA, though we have yet to see the details." What? Are they kidding?

The Confederation of Canadian Unions

The CCU continues to support our brothers and sisters in the PPWC in the fight against the export of raw logs and the effort to encourage and support good sustainable jobs and practices in what needs to be a value-added conservation-based approach to the Canadian forestry sector.

John Hanrahan is President of the Confederation of Canadian Unions (www.ccu-csc.ca).

AREA REPRESENTATION

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a close, Brother McCormick rose to the floor and moved that the next convention be held in a “free” country, Canada.

As I left the convention hall I felt dirty, depressed, and just a little bit dazed. Could this be the type of democracy we are trying to sell to the rest of the world? I crossed back into Canada and took a bath.

Al Smith was President of Local 494, Woodfibre.

- from Western Pulp and Paper Worker, October 1962



IN MEMORIAM

David Lorne Seright (March 4, 1956-November 13, 2014)



Dave Seright passed away suddenly on November 13. He was 58 years old.

Dave was born and raised in Victoria. In 1977 he moved to Mackenzie, where he got a job at the sawmill. He worked at the mill until his passing.

Dave was a long-time president of Local 18. At the national union level, he was an Audit Committee member and the chairperson of the Resolutions Committee at convention for a number of years.

Dave will be sadly missed by his loving family and all his close friends.

Upcoming events

| | |
|--------------|--|
| January 29 | Wage caucus meets |
| February 3-4 | Environmental seminar |
| February 4-5 | Audit committee meets |
| February 5-6 | Forestry seminar |
| March 9-10 | National executive board meets |
| March 9-10 | Labour school |
| March 10 | Resolutions committee meets |
| March 11-13 | PPWC's 53rd annual convention |
| April 27-30 | WCB claims and appeals seminar |
| May 25-27 | PPWC safety conference |
| May 28-29 | Joint pulp and paper safety conference |



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Area representation really domination

BY AL SMITH

m A N Y delegates from the USA and Canada rose to speak in favour of

each area being serviced by the people of its choice. Before a vote could be taken on the motion to allow representation by choice of areas, the convention was adjourned for lunch.

When the delegates reconvened later the smear artists, cohorts of the hierarchy, took control of the microphones. It was impossible to speak if you weren't "in".

Brother McCormick stood for 2½ hours trying to speak on the issue of area representation, but could not get recognition.

Meanwhile, people—and I use the term loosely—were advancing wholesale to read prepared statements (written no doubt by the International's Truth Reporter)

smearing the Reform Movement.

The chair recognized only those who were favourable to its cause, the maintaining of the status quo.

Now, can anyone tell me what right people from New York, Philadelphia, Florida, Georgia, etc., have to vote on the people who will represent British Columbians?

What the hell do they know about us and our problems? I'll bet half of them don't even know where BC is.

The truth is that they haven't the right, logically or morally. However, it is a necessary thing if the hierarchy is to retain its stranglehold on our union. Their hold could eventually prove to be just that, "a strangle hold".

Another issue that was pushed through, by the machine, was an increase of 25 cents in the per capita tax. The delegates to whom I spoke felt that an increase at this time was unjustified and unnecessary.

After what seemed an eternity of rigging and railroading, Brother McCormick took the floor in disgust and castigated the delegates for allowing themselves to be duped and like so many sheep led to the slaughter.

He explained that before this convention he had a little respect for J.P. Burke and company but, after experiencing the last few days of the convention, what little respect he had had disappeared.

Later, as the convention drew to
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THE CHAIR RECOGNIZED ONLY THOSE WHO WERE FAVOURABLE TO ITS CAUSE, THE MAINTAINING OF THE STATUS QUO.

NOW, CAN ANYONE TELL ME WHAT RIGHT PEOPLE FROM NEW YORK, PHILADELPHIA, FLORIDA, GEORGIA, ETC., HAVE TO VOTE ON THE PEOPLE WHO WILL REPRESENT BRITISH COLUMBIANS?

WHAT THE HELL DO THEY KNOW ABOUT US AND OUR PROBLEMS? I'LL BET HALF OF THEM DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE BC IS.