

HOTLINE



Local 258 I.B.E.W.
FALL 2004

The Voice of Labour Are we being heard?



Business Manager, Doug McKay



**Local 258 IBEW
Business Manager
Doug McKay**

Another labour day has come and gone and I celebrate the lifetime of labour our members have committed to their jobs. Local 258 continues in the tradition of the workers who built this country from a frontier to the prosperous and tolerant nation it is today. There is honour and pride in being an hourly wage earner. There is no honour in building personal wealth on insider trading, bogus stock projections, and dishonest accounting practices.

Americans claim to have originated labour day, but its earliest roots are from Toronto – the 1872 printers strike and a labour sponsored parade in 1882. Following a request from the Trades and Labour Congress, Labour Day became an official holiday in 1894.

The IBEW is the oldest electrical

union in North America, created in 1891 by 10 men. Local 258 was chartered on April 1, 1967 with approximately 4,000 members from BC Hydro. In the 1980's we expanded to include private industry.

In 1983 we were in the fight of our lives. The Social Credit government of the day introduced Bills 3, 11 and 26, a set of anti-union, anti-worker laws. The reaction from the people of the Province was swift and furious, and out of their resistance Operation Solidarity was born.


We face our own fight today with the Liberals. After instituting pay raises for Directors and Executives at BC Hydro, employees were hit with the wage freeze known as the PSEC (Public Sector Employers Council) Guidelines. While the private sector remains able to engage in free collective bargaining (and we've made some gains in this area), the public sector has been bullied by repeated rounds of anti-worker legislation.

Not so long ago collective bargaining was a chargeable offense under the Canada Criminal Code. Through reforms, including the introduction of our own Constitution, workers gained the legal right to join trade unions and express a collective voice with employ-

ers. In Briti
t i s h
Columbia
today that
right is
s a d l y
e r o d e d
due to the
Liberal's

preference for legislating work terms and conditions. Why face a union at the bargaining table if you can map out a deal during closed door sessions of the Liberal caucus? We've never seen a copy of the PSEC Guidelines, although we've asked many times. We didn't bargain it, but our members are bound by it.

We must fight and fight again to convince this government that an honest day's work deserves, at the very least, a wage that keeps pace with inflation. You'd think that much ought to be obvious. It isn't. The freedom to bargain collectively is a basic human right, not a luxury to be offered or refused at political whim.

May 17, 2005. Mark this date on your calendar. This is Labour Day, Part Two. It's BC Election Day and the day BC workers ask themselves if this government has treated them fairly. Let the Liberal record speak for itself. 

HOTLINE

Published by Local 258 IBEW

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The May Labour Protest - What happened?

by Michelle Laurie, President

After the settlement reached between the HEU and the BC provincial government on May 2, 2004, working people across BC stepped down their action, and went back to work. Many of our members have been asking for information about why the action didn't escalate, and why the settlement was accepted. Early in June, I attended an Executive Council meeting of the BC Federation of Labour, where we were able to have frank "de-briefing" discussions about the protest, and about its conclusion.

When the HEU members first took to the streets, it was because they could not negotiate with their employers. Their primary issue was job security, and that had remained the focus of their negotiations from the start; the government would not negotiate on this issue. Early in the morning of April 29, 2004, the government introduced back to work legislation. The HEU membership did not return to work, and the employers sought an injunction to declare the action illegal. Early in the morning of April 30 the employers received that injunction, and the activities of the HEU members were declared illegal. Still, there was no negotiation of the issues going

on, and the HEU members elected to remain off work in protest. Many other working people (including many of our members) joined in this protest in an attempt to tell the government that their behaviour was not acceptable.

The Officers of the BC Federation of Labour met to discuss what was happening across the province, and senior officers of the BCFL, along with the officers of HEU, met with government officials to find a resolve. Plans were made to escalate the protest activity across the province, with other unions taking job action beginning on Monday, May 3. The public was squarely behind the healthcare workers, and the government probably realised that they had once again acted in haste and misjudged the people of British Columbia.

Late on May 2, an agreement was reached between the government and the HEU officers. The agreement guaranteed the priority for the union – job security – but it also involved a wage rollback for the workers. Faced with the option of further layoffs where workers at best would end up working for non-union contractors for about half the wages, the HEU determined that it was in the best interest of

their members to take the offer. They also knew that when the protest activity escalated the next morning, all offers would be off the table, and the government would go all-out to break the union. In addition, the employers were planning further action against certain employees, which would have a devastating effect on the protest lines.

The solidarity shown by working people around BC was greatly appreciated by the healthcare workers. Equally important, though, was that it worked – the government was forced to negotiate and to guarantee job security to a sector they have been trying to strip for the past three years.

The most important protest action will happen next May – that is the one time we will be able to solve the problem of this anti-worker government in a conclusive manner. Your livelihood and your standard of living are directly connected to the ballot box, so make sure that you are actively involved in the May 2005 provincial election. It is the only way we can fight to make sure working people do not have their rights further eroded through heavy handed, draconian legislation. ☐



BC's tax dollars are sailing overseas

BC shipbuilding industry victimized by "privatized" BC Ferries

At a rally in support of local shipbuilders in mid-August at Vancouver Dry Dock in North Vancouver, BC Federation of Labour President Jim Sinclair joined former BC Premier Bill VanderZalm and North Vancouver District Mayor Alan Nixon in denouncing BC Ferries' plan to build three new vessels overseas.

"BC taxpayers don't want to help pay to send jobs overseas," said Sinclair. "The reason the BC Liberals don't want them built here is because the real agenda is to sell off BC's public assets."

government encouraging foreign shipyards to bid for BC Ferries' construction of new ships and refits of existing vessels.

Never before has a provincial government used taxpayer dollars to stimulate jobs and investment in shipyards in countries like China, Korea, the United States and Spain.

Public opinion polling shows that the BC




BC Fed President Jim Sinclair addresses supporters at a rally at the North Van Dry Dock in August in support of BC's shipbuilding industry workers.

Liberals' position is unpopular, with 90% saying it is either very important [58%] or important [32%] for the provincial government to buy local BC goods and services, while 65% said the government should only purchase locally.

Sinclair scorned a plan by BC Ferries to send American CEO David Hahn to a November Conference in the Bahamas where he intends to promote the sale of smaller routes to private operators, as revealed by the NDP.

"I have a message for David Hahn: Why don't you make that trip one way? You can stay in the Bahamas and we'll keep our jobs here in BC," Sinclair stated.

George MacPherson, President of the Shipyard General Workers Federation said there is a wide range of public support calling on BC Ferry Services and the BC Liberal government to treat BC shipyards fairly and let us compete with foreign shipyards on an equal basis.

Sinclair called for a more open and transparent process, saying taxpayers are tired of secret BC Liberal deals to sell off critical transportation infrastructure and policies that bankrupt small communities. 



Members from IBEW 258 attended the rally in support of their union brothers and sisters in the shipbuilding industry.

BC's shipyard industry — with thousands of direct and indirect jobs and millions of dollars in investment — are all at risk due to the provincial

Liberal government's plan to build three new vessels overseas.

QUICK FACTS ABOUT THE SHIPYARD GENERAL WORKERS FEDERATION

- BC shipyards currently employ about 1,500 workers in Vancouver, North Vancouver, Victoria, Port Alberni and Nanaimo.
- A recent study conducted for the Federation found that \$175 million spent in BC on ferry refits and a small new vessel over the next five years would bring benefits that include 1,500 person years of employment, a \$78 million increase in household income, a \$101 million increase in provincial GDP, and a \$32 million return to government revenues.
- It is estimated that BC Ferries needs to spend about \$1.1 billion over the next 15 years to build 18 new ferries. That's thousands more jobs and millions in tax revenues to governments — but only if the work is kept here in BC.

Foreign Shipyards: Worker Repression & Corporate Subsidies

- BC Ferries and the provincial Liberal government are actively promoting the purchase of new ships and the refitting of the existing fleet by foreign shipyards.
- BC Ferries' wrong-headed approach also rewards foreign countries that are severely repressing their workers as well as paying dramatically lower wages coupled with poor working conditions. At the same time, these countries are subsidizing their shipbuilding industries to create unfair competition for BC shipyards.
- Other countries understand the benefits of promoting and supporting their own shipbuilding industries — what's wrong with the BC Liberal government and BC Ferries?

To find out more about how you can help keep BC Ferries' repairs and shipbuilding in BC, please visit their website at <http://bcshipyardworkers.com/help/index.html>

BC Hydro: Our company, our legacy, our power



www.bccitizensforpublicpower.ca

Labour Day is a good time to take stock of our accomplishments. And there is no better example than BC Hydro – a powerful symbol of BC pride and workers' achievement.

Built, owned and operated by British Columbians, BC Hydro is a "made in BC" success story. For over forty years, BC Hydro has given us reliable, clean power at affordable rates.

But now, things are changing. The company has been broken up, it is not allowed to build any new generation, and 1/3 has been privatized to Bermuda-based Accenture. All these changes have increased costs and now rates are on the rise.

That's why labour, seniors, consumer, municipal, and environmental leaders formed Citizens for Public Power, why we launched a class action lawsuit to stop the privatization and break-up of BC Hydro, and why we are fighting every day to protect our

company. We think BC Hydro is too important to let slip away!

Important legal update

As you may know, BC Citizens for Public Power had been aiming to have a certification hearing for the class action lawsuit in late October. The lawsuit argues that the government and BC Hydro have not fulfilled their fiduciary responsibility when they made changes to BC Hydro against our best interests.

Unfortunately, we are being forced to request a delay (what lawyers call an adjournment) of our class action certification motion in BC Supreme Court. The reason is straightforward: at this point we simply do not have enough funding to take this critical case through the certification process.

We are facing the unlimited resources of the BC provincial government and BC Hydro. And with pow-

erful forces like this aligned against us, the case has become more expensive than we ever imagined.

But be assured that we have not and will not give up the fight to have our day in court.

We are currently asking British Columbians to help out – with a big push to raise the money we need to go to court and to win certification for what could be the largest class action lawsuit in Canadian history.

For more information on the lawsuit, to make a donation, or to find out more about the campaign, please take a moment to visit our website at www.citizensforpublicpower.ca

Just as British Columbians came together to build BC Hydro, so can we unite in our determination to protect that legacy. Together, we can and will succeed. ☑

United Way fundraising campaign begins

Autumn is here, and with it comes the annual fundraising drive for the United Way in your workplace. As Union members, we know and value the ideal of looking after our brothers and sisters, and helping to ensure we all support each other on and off the job. Similarly, within each of our communities, the United Way is focused on increasing the organized capacity of people to care for one another. They work from a common ground where labour, business, community leaders, and government come to the table to identify needs and solve problems within their own local area.

Through the funding raised by a United Way campaign, donations are

provided to organizations that will help to build, idea by idea, solution by solution, the communities of tomorrow, delivering health and social services... from prevention, to counselling, to crisis intervention, to address human issues, large and small, and to helping individuals and families to be their best.

Each of us shares in the responsibility to protect and enhance our communities, and I strongly encourage you to contribute to your community by making a new or increased contribu-



tion to this year's United Way campaign. Remember, the dollars raised stay in your community to support your community. If you don't currently have a campaign in your workplace, contact Michelle Laurie at michelle.laurie@ibew258.bc.ca, or at the Local 258 office for information on how to start one. ☑

We Got Mail!



Dear Brothers & Sisters;

I would like to take this time to thank Local 258 and members for the gifts presented to me and my wife at my Cake & Coffee Retirement Send-Off on July 16, 2004.

Over my thirty-six years as a 258 member, there have been established a lot of friendships and fond memories which I will cherish till the end.

Remember, "United We Stand, Divided We Fall", always work union and also have safety at the top of your priority list.

Regards,

Pat Jackman



Dear Michelle,

It was great to see you at the retirement party in Williams Lake. Thanx.

Thanks to all my fellow brothers and sisters in the IBEW Local 258 for the fellowship and gifts on my retirement. I have many fond memories from the last 37 years in the IBEW and am looking forward to many more.

It was great to see so many of you at the "send off" in Williams Lake. Retirement is something we all strive for, and I can tell you, it's the best job I've ever had!!! Every day is Saturday.

Thanks again to you all,

Don Barnes

Williams Lake



Dear Michelle;

While I was off work following an operation and unable to do much of anything, I enjoyed a couple of cheerful "Get Well Soon" calls from Unit 6 Chair Bob Abernethy. Bob is a very caring person. He showed up at my door on his own time with a care basket that he and his wife had prepared. I really appreciated the calls, the basket and the house call. Our union is fortunate to have members like Bob. Please pass on my thanks.

Sincerely,

Don Alger



To members of Local 258;

Thank you for the fruit basket delivered by Mark Davison.

Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated.

Best regards,

Dennis McKeene



Local 258 was proud to sponsor the banner for the "Commemoration and Remembrance" celebrations held in honour of D-Day and the founding of Branch #102 of the Royal Canadian Legion in Fort St. John (see letter below). From left to right are Adrian Thompson, Apprentice PLT who drove the truck in the parade; SF/PLT Mike King and Planner Dan Taylor, a veteran of the 5th Special Forces who also served in Vietnam in 1964-65. SF/PLT Ed Shuster also helped organize the entry.

Hello Doug,

A "Commemoration and Remembrance" celebration was held on the weekend of June 4 - 6, 2004 to acknowledge the 75th Anniversary of the founding of the Fort St. John Royal Canadian Legion, Branch #102 and the 60th Anniversary of D-Day.

I was co-chair of the events for the Legion and also did a parachute jump in commemoration of 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion who jumped into Normandy, France on June 6, 1944 with the 6th British Airborne Division. Many thanks to Local 258 for sponsoring the banner in remembrance of our veterans.

Sincerely,

Mike King



IBEW member Mike King (CI, #2276 RCACC), S/F and Shop Steward at BC Hydro in Fort St. John performed a commemorative parachute jump in honour of the D-Day jump by 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion on June 6, 1944 in Normandy, France.

Accompanying him on the jump were, from left, CWO Leander Volz of RCACC #3080, Burns Lake, BC and Bob Copeland, 82nd Airborne Vietnam Veteran.



Burrard Thermal Generating Station Retirees



At a dinner held at the Executive Inn in Coquitlam on March 26, 2004, retirees from the Burrard Thermal Generating Station were honoured by their union, IBEW 258. From left: Bill Fraser, Tom Matsuno, Alex Colquhoun, Ken Reid, Gerhard Winter, Nick Dinunzio, Bruce Kowalski and Burke Lundy.

Hi Doug & Harry;

I want to thank you both for a magnificent event this weekend! The laughter and camaraderie I heard in that room and on the course shows why this event is so successful. The people you work with are truly supportive of each other and their community and they really enjoy working and playing together. What a team!

I saw once again the reasons why you work so hard on the project Doug, I couldn't be prouder of any association with any group in the communities we serve. There is a genuine sense of appreciation from all your colleagues for the dedication you put into this event, and the terrific attitude that Harry teaches them Way to go you two!

Thank you so much,

Albert Ruel

Manager, Gift Planning & Major Gifts
Canadian National institute for the Blind
BC/Yukon Division

(Editor's note: Doug Maxwell and Harry Dorward of Hydro Nanaimo organized a charity fundraising Golf Tournament for the CNIB; this thank you note was edited for space.)



Dear Local 258;

Thanks so much for the fruit basket which was delivered by Debra and Tom Greenwell. Both the basket and the visitors were a welcome break for me.

Sincerely,

Harry Dorward

Nanaimo



Dear Michelle;

Thank you for the donation to the Nanaimo Child Development Centre. We had a great time at the Silly Boat Regatta and even managed to snag the trophy for the fastest time with our recycled oil barrel boat and raised \$1,400.00 from BC Hydro for the Centre.

A big thank you also to Patty McCann in Safety for all her work in supporting the team.

Thanks again,

Brother Frank Lenk

(Editor's Note: Please see photos of the Silly Boat Team on page 9.)

The fine art and the hard work of negotiating

by Ken McEwen, Editor, Hotline

This past spring saw a flurry of bargaining for new collective agreements that kept the Business Office and negotiating teams very busy. Eight out of ten agreements have been successfully concluded with two more awaiting completion.

Master Line Agreement

A difficult set of negotiations for the Master Line Agreement took place over 5 1/2 months. The Negotiating Team of Mike Scott from Allteck, Jim Greenwell, IBEW 258 Senior Assistant Business Manager and Doug McKay, IBEW 258 Business Manager, obtained a new collective agreement with the assistance of a mediator. Membership ratified the two year agreement that includes increase for Health & Welfare (H&W) contributions from the employer, a wage rollover for the first year of the agreement and a COLA clause in the second year. The employer failed to gain full control of the Apprenticeship Committee which will retain equal representation from both parties.

Utility Arborist Sector

The **Davey Tree** Bargaining Committee members Troy Hudson from Davey Tree and IBEW 258 Assistant Business Managers (ABM) Dan Klassen, Brady Prentice and Susan Longva successfully negotiated wage increase of 25% in each year of a new three year agreement. Increased meal allowances, improvements to annual vacation and an extended health program after three years service were also obtained.

Negotiators Lee Oldham and Mitch Oldham from Asplundh, IBEW 258 ABMs Dan Klassen, Brady Prentice and Susan Longva worked on clarification of apprenticeship language in the **Asplundh Agreement**. The new three year contract contains wage increases of 2% in the first year and 25% in each of the second and third years, and expires April 7, 2007.



IBEW members attend the Arborist negotiation proposal meeting held in Kamloops.

Manufacturing Sector

Four months of negotiation were required to settle the **Cutler Hammer Agreement**. Ed Ouano from Cutler Hammer and Susan Longva, ABM, bargained a three year agreement that includes wage increases and improvements to the H&W Plan. The ratified agreement will expire March 31, 2007.

At **Schneider Electric**, Ron Oulds and Simon Creamer from Schneider along with Susan Longva, ABM, held the line on company proposed reductions to overtime premiums, wash-up time and the proposition of a two-tier wage schedule. Wage increases of 2.25% in the first year and 25% in each remaining year of a three year contract were realized. Pension improvements and a provision for retirees to work on a contract basis were also negotiated.

In the **Hobart** negotiations, Mike Hatada and Bud Omstead from Hobart and Susan Longva, ABM, dealt with the employer's proposals to change the Health and Welfare Plan to include large deductibles as well as changes to pension contributions. Four months of negotiations resulted in wage increases of 25% on April 1, 2004, 2005 and 2006 and no changes to the current H&W Plan. The new three year agreement expires March 31, 2007.

Vancouver Electric Boxes (VEB) wanted the right to choose employees

for lay-off and the right to recall based on skills instead of seniority. In meetings with IBEW 258 negotiators Dave Richardson from VEB and Susan Longva, ABM, the employer was unsuccessful in obtaining these provisions. The Union was successful in negotiating wash-up time and wage increases of 25% and 2% in a two year agreement.

Traffic Control

Anna O'Neil, Deb Richter, Barb Boyle and Barry Stewart, all from **Island Traffic**, along with IBEW 258 ABMs Brady Prentice and Susan Longva were successful in obtaining increases to the travel allowance, and negotiated wage increases of 25% in each of the first two years and 3% in the third year. They also obtained increases in vacation pay to 8% after 10 years service and 9% after 15 years service; \$1.75 per hour premium for members training new employees; and, increased premiums for lane closure and sign carrying. The new three year agreement expires November 30, 2006. ☑

A note from your editor

Shop Stewards, our unsung heroes

by Ken McEwen, Editor, **HOTLINE**

It would be remiss to send out a Labour Day Hotline issue without some mention of our Shop Stewards. The Shop Steward is our first line of defence in the workplace and the unsung hero of organized labour. Stewards are our fellow workers who volunteer to act on our behalf to resolve workplace issues. The key word here is “volunteer”. There is no pay for the Steward. There is no glory. There are not even a lot of thank you’s.

This volunteer, our Steward, is expected to know the Collective Agreement inside out so that at any given time he/she can argue our position with management and emerge victorious. That’s a lot to ask of anybody.


Training and education are the keys to successful Stewardship. Not all that long ago a Steward was issued a Steward’s Card and sent forth armed with nothing

but good intentions. Today, and for the last fifteen years, Local Union 258 provides training seminars for its’ Stewards. As with all their duties, Stewards are expected to “volunteer” some of their own time to gain the information necessary to better represent us in the workplace.

While being an effective Steward is time consuming and hard work, it is hoped that there is some return in knowing that you have helped others. And to reinforce that return, let’s go to our Stewards and say those seldom heard words, “Thank



The June 2004 Shop Steward class held in Surrey saw many IBEW members in attendance. Bottom row, left to right: Rainer Kempf, Brian Crawley, Mike Pelletier, Dwayne Martin. Standing in back row, left to right, Jon-Bevan Pritchard, Dwayne Robinson, Lisa Welland, Lindsay Lambright, Al Cross and Paul Russell.

you.” That would go a long way to demonstrate that we appreciate our Stewards’ efforts in working on our behalf. 

The Nanaimo Transmission Crew, left to right: Fred Hogman, Dick Green, Dan Payne, Dwayne Hruschak, Duane Giesbrecht, Harry Dorwood, Terry Price, Al Ross, Randy King, Tom Greenwell and Dan Flynn.



IBEW at Nanaimo Silly Boat Regatta



The IBEW was well represented at the Nanaimo Silly Boat Regatta charity fundraiser event. From the front Kade Dwolinski, student hire; Steve Lang, Apprentice Lineman;



Mike Mullaley and Frank Lenk. (See letter in “We Got Mail” from Frank Lenk on page 7)



IBEW Photo Opportunity



Utility Arborists from Davey Tree on Bowen Island take a moment for a photo. From left are Mike Davis, Steve Ball, Peter Norman and Dustin Stadler.



The June Unit 5 Meeting saw new members being initiated into the Union by Vice-Chair Cathy Tagseth, far left. Beside her, from left to right are new members Daryl Coumont, Remo Zraggen and Larry Shannik.



Cal Pederson receives his thirty year pin from Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff. Brother Pederson works as a Lineman for BC Hydro in Vernon.



Brother Aamir Khan and Sister Tracy Ball are shown above receiving their Trades Qualification Certificates as Operator/Area Dispatchers. Congratulations to both of you.



Congratulations to Martin Conrad as he receives his 30 year service pin award from Doug McKay, IBEW 258 Business Manager.

Fernie Facing Closure of Senior Centre

The Rewards of Labour

by Leon Arishenkoff, Unit 3 Chair

Retired IBEW member Vernon Uphill deserves to spend his "golden years" in a peaceful and stress free environment. Vernon requires constant care so he and his wife reside in the Tom Uphill Memorial Centre. This facility, named for Vernon's father, a Member of Parliament for 40 years, is a testament to the strong community and pioneering spirit of this small East Kootenay town. The Tom Uphill Memorial Centre has looked after and continues to look after it's seniors in a loving and caring atmosphere. The Centre is staffed by extremely competent and community minded personnel whose only downfall could be that they are Union.

You see, the current Liberal government is closing the Tom Uphill Memorial Centre once a new non-union facility is built. Apparently not all of the employees are being asked to move to the new facility when the Centre is closed. The practice of closing union

staffed senior care facilities that have been well kept and well run (albeit getting old) and replacing them with non-union facilities is happening in almost every community throughout this province. As with a lot of Liberal government initiatives, unless you or your family or friends are directly impacted, you will likely be unaware of what this government is doing.

Moving is one of the most stressful events in a person's life and Vernon, his wife and their co-residents deserve better. The rewards of a lifetime of labour should include a peaceful and stress free environment.



In June 2004, ABM Greg Fanning and Unit 3 Chair Leon Arishenkoff had the honour of presenting an IBEW 55 year pin and plaque to Vernon Uphill of Fernie, BC. Pictured with Vernon are his wife and son Harold (Puppy) who is also a retired IBEW member (43 years). Vernon, 94 years young, is a charter member of IBEW Local 921. Although he is struggling with Alzheimers disease and has difficulty with memory and speech, he managed a huge smile when he read out loud, "55 years IBEW."

Fortunately, the community of Fernie is fighting to save the Tom Uphill Memorial Center. The Uphill family is a big part of that fight and IBEW Local 258 salutes them! 🇩🇪

Labour Day is not just a day off work

by Mark Davison, Unit 5 Chair

The celebration of Labour Day has it's roots in Canadian history and is the result of the brave stand taken by workers in the middle of the 19th century as they demanded the elimination of the 12 hour workday.

The "Nine-Hour Movement" began in Hamilton, Ontario and quickly spread to Toronto. Once there, the cause was taken up by the Printers Union when, in 1869, a petition was sent to print shop owners seeking a 58 hour work week, including Toronto Globe newspaper owner and former leader of the Province of Canada, George Brown. The worker's request was quickly denied.

On March 25, 1872 the Printers went on strike for the shorter work week and a few weeks later, two thousand workers, led by two marching bands, paraded through the streets of Toronto gathering public support until their num-

bers swelled to ten thousand.

The print shop owners were outraged and responded by bringing in scab workers and having 24 members of the strike committee imprisoned. Unfortunately, many of the protesters lost their jobs and were forced to leave the city as a result of financial hardship.

Seeing a golden political opportunity, then Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, who was a long time rival of George Brown, quickly capitalized on the growing public support of the workers and passed the Trade Union Act on June 14, 1872 that legalized and protected unions. He also had the imprisoned workers set free.

We owe a lot to the stand taken by those workers. Because of their actions in 1872, almost all the unions in North America demanded the shorter work week.

Annual parades and festivals were

held in Toronto for many years afterwards celebrating the achievements of these workers. American labour leaders adopted the celebration and organized the first "official" Labour Day in 1892.

Canadian Prime Minister Sir John Thompson made it official north of the border in 1894.

Today most people see Labour Day as the last long weekend of summer and little else. I hope the above article will cause you to reflect on the importance of taking a stand for workers' rights, and perhaps you will raise a cup of cheer in honour of those printers who took a stand so many years ago. I know I will. 🇩🇪



**Unit 5 Chair
Mark Davison**

UNIT REPORTS

Unit 6

by **Robert Abernethy, Unit 6 Chair**

Most of my report for this issue of the Hotline is an article about Labour Day that appears on the next page. Please take a moment to read it and absorb it's message.

I hope you are all having a nice summer and spending time with your families.

Just a reminder about the 258 Social - it's on Sept. 26 and it's free! Please see the notice below or give me a call at 604-574-5146, or phone Mark Davison, Unit 5 Chair at 604-522-9198, for more info.

**Unit 6 Chair
Robert
Abernethy**



Mark this on your calendar!

IBEW Local 258 Family Social

Hosted by Units 5 & 6

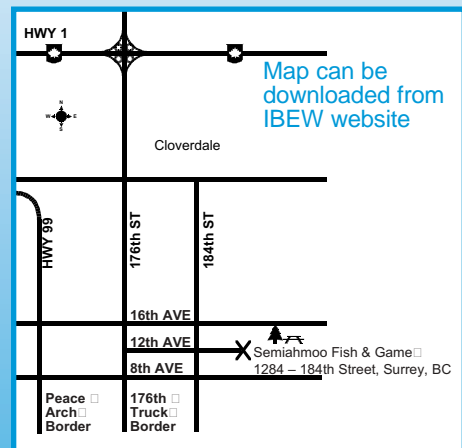
**Sunday, September 26, 2004,
11 am - 5 pm
at Semiahmoo Fish & Game Club,
1284 - 184th St., Surrey, BC**

Everyone is welcome to join the festivities!

- Free Food & Beverages: Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Snacks & Pop
- Bucket Rides
- Tug of War
- Sack Races
- Face Painting Clown, Balloon Characters
- Nature Walk

Look for complete details and directions posted on your IBEW bulletin board, or check the IBEW website:

www.IBEWloc258.com



Lessons to be learned from Labour Day history

by Robert Abernethy, Unit 6 Chair

As Labour Day approaches, for most people it is just another long weekend, a good legitimate excuse to get away from work. I wonder how many people really stop to ponder what it is all about.

The dictionary defines Labour Day, which is recognized in the USA and Canada, as the first Monday in September set aside as a legal holiday in honour of labour. I think sometimes I'd like to published in the paper a list of all those in the last hundred years who have died trying to better conditions for the working class. People like Albert (Ginger) Goodwin who took part in the coal strike of 1912 to 1914 on Vancouver Island. He also organized workers in Trail, where in 1917 they took on CPR's Cominco. He was a member of the Socialist Party of Canada, an official of the BC Federation of Labour, and an official of The International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. Albert Goodwin was shot by Constable Dan Campbell in July of 1918, which triggered the first general strike in Vancouver. Even today there is much speculation on what occurred that day. This was such a tragic ending for such a high profile person as Albert Goodwin. How many other everyday workers, for whom we have no knowledge, have also lost their lives for similar causes?

Most people don't even realize the sacrifices, the sweat, the pain and the deaths of the pilgrims that have gone before us, trying to better the standard of living for working people. One old guy, who was member number six in the IWA, remarked to me about the good old days - there were no good days. Those days of organizing the mills and logging camps along the coast here in BC were hell! If caught organizing, the foreman or the owner would come around with a few of his henchmen, beat you up and dump you outside the gate. Some guys got tarred and feathered, others got beat up so badly they couldn't work again, and some received

a home visit with an offer they couldn't refuse. Many years ago, I met a ninety year old man who helped organize the teamsters in the 1920's. There are many unmarked graves in this country, he said, as the result of people trying to organize. People just disappeared. That happened on both sides.

My Dad grew up on the prairies in the 30's and had a hard go of it through his youth. No money for anything. Then he went from the farm to the war, just to be toughened up a little more if he survived. He flew 20 missions but he only talked to me once about the war. I wasn't going to school yet when he told me a story about a mission that ended in a crash landing in a field. Two of the crew got trapped

in the plane and burned alive. My Dad is eighty years old now and he has never talked about the war again. I've never had the heart to ask.

Those guys who grew up in the thirties, who went to war and made it home again, were no nonsense people. In the early 1950's, when the IWA was in a bitter strike for a shorter work week (six days a week was the standard) and more money, my Dad got one of those home visits. He must have been heavily involved in the union, another thing he doesn't talk about. One day a car suddenly appeared at the end of our long driveway. I can still remember being whisked inside the house. My Dad, cursing, disappeared briefly into

(cont'd on next page)

**Attention Lower Mainland IBEW 258 Members
with 50 or More Years of Service**

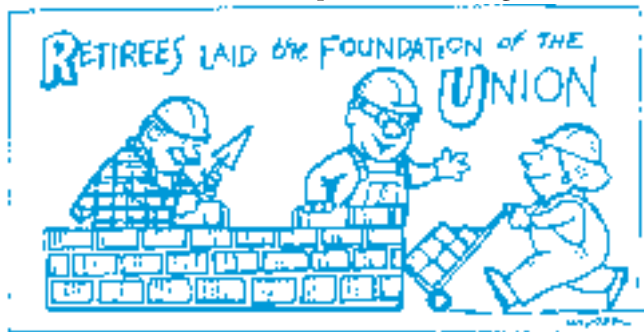
2004 Years of Service Awards Luncheon

Last year, Units 5 & 6 held a joint luncheon at the Hilton Vancouver Metrotown Hotel in Burnaby for Local 258 members who received an IBEW "2003 Years of Service Award".

This year, Unit 5 & 6 members who are receiving a "2004 Years of Service Award" will be contacted directly and invited to a similar luncheon that will take place on Saturday, November 20, 2004.

By popular request, we would like to extend an invitation to all IBEW 258 members in the Lower Mainland to attend this luncheon honouring our union retirees. Tickets are \$25.00 each and are limited to two per person.


For more information or to purchase tickets, please contact Mark Davison at 604-522-9198 as soon as possible as seating is limited.



Tom Forkin Scholarship winners announced

Congratulations to Scholarship Recipients

IBEW Local 258 is pleased to announce the recipients of this year's Tom Forkin Scholarships, awarded in memory of our Local's first president, Brother Tom Forkin. Up to three scholarships of \$1,000.00 each are awarded annually to applicants who are members of IBEW 258 or who are dependants of members. Applicants must write an essay on a pre-selected topic and must also fulfill the requirements of being registered or planning to register in a full-time post-secondary program at a BC educational institution with special consideration being given to those who are attending or planning to attend post-secondary education outside of the province if the program they are attending is not available in British Columbia.

This year's essay topic was "Canada's Public Health Care System" and Tom Forkin Scholarships were awarded to Leah Greenwell of Nanaimo, Shannon Holt of Victoria and Leanne Rogan of Kelowna. Congratulations to these young students and we wish them the best in their future educational endeavours. The full text of their essays can be viewed at www.ibew258.bc.ca 

Dear Michelle Laurie; I would like to thank you and the IBEW members of Local 258 for the Tom Forkin Memorial Scholarship that I received. This award will be put to good use as I pursue my post secondary education at Malaspina University College.



Let me take this opportunity to tell you a little about myself. I have attended Wellington Secondary School for 5 years and during that time have participated in the Student's Council, the Graduation Committee, and Mission Possible. I have worked hard to attain a 4.0 average in my courses with a special emphasis on courses in the math and science areas.

In the community I have volunteered at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital and over the past four years have completed over 200 volunteer hours. I have also been a dance student at Kirkwood Academy for the past 12 years, taking ballet and tap dance classes. It is my belief that my involvement in school and community activities has enhanced my life and made me a well-rounded citizen.

My future plans are to attend Malaspina next year and possibly BCIT in the future

pursuing nursing. When I finish my schooling, I hope to become a nurse, or to have another type of career in the health care field.

Once again I would like to thank you for making this award available to me. I will put the funds to good use as I pursue my post secondary goals.

*Many thanks,
Leah Greenwell*

Dear Ms. Laurie and IBEW Executive Council;

I would like to express my appreciation to the IBEW Local 258 Executive Council and members for awarding me a 2004 Tom Forkin Scholarship. The award money will assist me with my tuition costs as I work toward obtaining a Bachelor of Education at the University of Victoria.



I found the essay topic, "the history and possible future of our medical system in Canada" to be both interesting and relevant to the current crisis in health care. I also appreciated the opportunity to learn more about BC's medical system in the process of my essay research.

*Sincerely,
Shannon Holt*

Lessons to be learned from Labour Day history

(cont'd from previous page)

the bedroom and when he came out he had on a real baggy pair of coveralls. Up one sleeve he had a baseball bat and in his belt hidden under the coveralls was his service revolver. Mother and I hid in the house. I can remember people yelling and the smashing of glass. That car left at a high rate of speed.


Then there was the story my Uncle Mervin told me, about being up the coast in the late 1940's in a logging camp with about three hundred men. Some hot shot manager figured he would make a name for himself by not

paying the men what they had coming. The men stormed the office, grabbed the guy, and made a hangman's rope. The fellow's hands were tied behind his back. He was blind folded and stood on a barrel ready for a hanging. They would have hung him for sure if someone hadn't gotten a gun and backed down the crowd long enough for cooler heads to prevail. The hot shot manager paid up and never messed with payroll again. I'd like to see management today try to push the concept of PSEC or the phrase of 'added value' on those guys who came through the 30's and home from the war. They definitely would not have tolerated that kind of bullshit. The workers of that era would have nailed

management to the cross!

Since those times people have become soft! And so have the unions! Human greed from the company's side is endless. If employees lose a benefit or are cut back on wages, management gets a bonus. Again, I emphasize that the union workers of today, unknowingly, stand knee deep in the blood and sacrifices of the pilgrims that have gone before us.

Let us not lose sight of this fact!

So when you're having your day off, whether it's a statutory holiday, a SWP day, a VO day, or an AV day, someone somewhere at sometime negotiated that clause for you. He or she probably took a lot of pressure and maybe even a shit kicking to get it! 

The Annual Yuma Retirement Get-Together



On February 19, 2004, BC Hydro retirees got together in Yuma, Arizona. This was the seventh year for this event and gathering at the Convention Center Park. We have this location in front of the large water tower every year and the area is already booked for February 17, 2005.

Pictured above are the retirees and one still working: Grant Workman, Bill Blow (still working), Charlie Saunders, Dave Gallie, Warren Byrnell, Ray Daggitt, Paul Sheepwash, Ken Jewell, George Funk, Lee Ruelling, Gary Wallace and Scotty Sneddon.

IBEW supports cross country bike ride for charity



Christa Hauzer and her son Neal spent the springtime biking across Canada to raise funds for the BC Lung Association. Christa's husband Frank is an IBEW member and the union donated \$200.00 towards this worthy fundraising event.



What a catch!

Wayne Chambers, IBEW member since 1966 and dispatcher at BC Hydro Lower Mainland Control Centre had a little R & R this summer with his grandson as they landed these huge salmon. Brother Chambers keeps it all in the family with his son Brock also being an IBEW member and a dispatcher. Congratulations to the Chambers family!

Workplace training is everybody's business

Excerpts of a speech to the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum

by Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress

Apprenticeship is more than a labour issue, and more than a business issue. It is a national, public issue of concern to all Canadians – whether existing workers, students or parents of the members of tomorrow's workforce.

In a recent speech to the Canadian Apprenticeship Forum in Ottawa, Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) President Ken Georgetti shared with those present his thoughts on the state of Canada's apprenticeship programs and offered viable solutions to the critical shortage of skilled tradespeople in today's workforce. The following are excerpts from his address.

When it comes to apprenticeship, British Columbia has entered the twenty-first century with a blinkered ideology better suited to the 1800s. The historic role of apprenticeship training was to generate workers with a reliable, comprehensive set of widely-recognized skills. It was then up to individual employers to fine-tune those skills to meet their particular needs. British Columbia has stood this time-tested model on its head, in favour of so-called 'Task Training'.

This move by the BC government has done more to roll back the clock and frustrate national standards and portability than any other single governmental action in our history. 'Task Training' grants trades qualification certificates to those who complete only segments or modules of a trades program.

BC workers used to receive a 'ticket' that guaranteed them as a fully-trained tradesperson with a full set of skills. Now, they receive piecemeal certificates that have as much value as Boy Scout proficiency badges.

The BC government is now denying



Ken Georgetti
President, CLC

a whole generation of young people the chance to acquire recognized, reliable and portable skills.

Anyone going through the new BC system will have no mobility and little value... except to contractors who want to cut corners by paying handyman wages to turn a quick buck.

Anyone going through the new BC system will have no mobility and little value... except to contractors who want to cut corners by paying handyman wages to turn a quick buck.

This is not portability and mobility; it is in fact thinly-disguised servitude.

Other provinces make decisions that defeat the purposes an apprenticeship must serve. BC's 'Task Training' is just larger than the usual examples.

We, at the Canadian Labour Congress are hearing more and more frus-

trations expressed over the barriers thrown up by British Columbia and other provinces. The discontent has reached the point that we are being asked to consider the feasibility of a court challenge of the BC system, on the basis that 'Task Training' is a breach of the mobility rights laid out in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Apprenticeship should not be subjected to the changing ideological and political winds.

Just as the Charter of Rights is the 'People's Charter', our apprenticeship system belongs to all the citizens. It is unconscionable that governments are weakening their apprenticeship programs at a time when recognition of the value of enhanced apprenticeship training is increasing throughout North America. At a time of growing economic integration, we need to be setting up systems that maximize workers' ability to work anywhere. Governments need to expand – and not tear down – our apprenticeship system. Doing so will enable workers to achieve their full potential. And, at the same time, help the economy to grow and create more jobs.

Much lip-service is paid to this goal. The federal government claims to want a 30 per cent increase in

employer investment in training. But what's Ottawa doing about it? Next to nothing! They have erected huge roadblocks to expanded training and apprenticeship. They have gutted and plundered the same employment insurance program that is now Ottawa's only contribution to training.

As for business... well, the statistics speak for themselves. Averaged over all employed workers, Canadian businesses invest barely \$180 a year on worker training. That amounts to less than

two days a year. And far too much of that meagre amount is spent on training for managers and white-collar professionals. Total employer investment in training is about seven-tenths of one per cent of Canada's total payroll costs.

... Canadian businesses invest barely \$180 a year on worker training...

This sad story begins with absence of leadership at the federal level. The federal government let the people down with their withdrawal from this field. Nationally, we have still not recovered from the repeal in 1996 of the National Training Act. This shortsighted action reversed a long history of federal support for workplace training. And that devolution was done without any matching commitment by the provinces. The result of this was to shift the responsibility and the cost of training to the individual. It has had the predictable consequence of skyrocketing tuition fees and mounting individual debt to get training. That is, it created a further disincentive.

It is time to stop treating employer investment in job-related training as a mere private business decision. Like workplace health and safety, workplace training is everybody's business. There is plenty of scope at both the federal and provincial level for public policy that would recognize and reward employer investment in training and set minimum so that there is a level playing field throughout the country.

Ottawa should take an aggressive lead in developing a federal-provincial-territorial accord on a national training and apprenticeship strategy. This strategy, in which labour and business would exercise key roles and responsibilities, would see agreement on:

- a list of trades required by Canada, based on a National Occupational Analysis;
- a common, appropriate title for each trade; and
- a standard curriculum for each trade.

The end result of this process would be an Interprovincial Seal of Proficiency that would facilitate the movement of workers across the country.

All identified trades would be regulated, with a computerized national test bank ensuring that pan-Canadian

standards are maintained. No jurisdiction could create a trade without input from all stakeholders.

The federal government would play a further role in seeking international

... trades graduates were in fact the only students who moved immediately into secure, well-paying jobs capable of supporting a family...

recognition for Canadian apprenticeship standards. The quid-pro-quo would be the recognition of foreign credentials.

Potential employers still routinely ignore resumés from those with overseas educations. The failure to take advantage of the skills of new Canadians is a major impediment to effective

managing our skilled trades shortage.

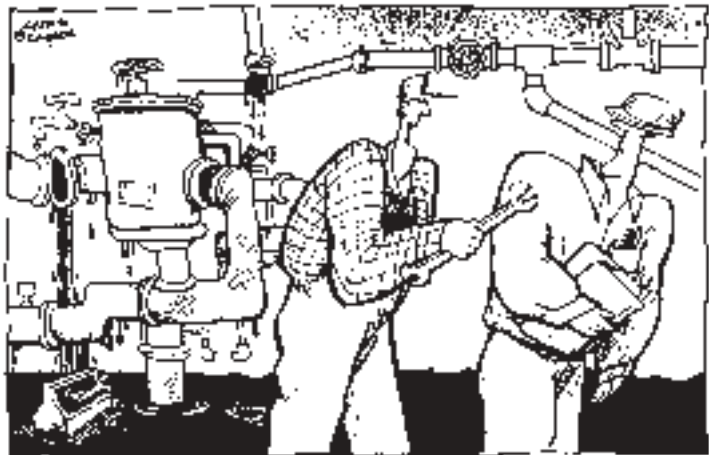
A community college president recently remarked to me that his trades graduates were in fact the only students who moved immediately into secure, well-paying jobs capable of supporting a family.

Skilled tradespeople can earn as much and more as many professionals. This pervasive trades stigma should be aggressively countered at every opportunity. We are late, scandalously late, in recognizing the need to adequately train and recognize the skills of our citizens. We can no longer afford to just talk about the need for action.

Our history tells us that skilled tradespeople created this country's

labour movement. No surprise, then, unions were pioneers in developing reliable skills training and the recognized and portable apprenticeship certification. We have knowledge and expertise that deserve to be heard and seriously considered.

For the complete speech, please visit the CLC website at www.clc-ctc.ca.



"It has been a great pleasure to meet you today. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you."

Congratulation



IBEW member Greg Humphries receives his 30 year service award pin from Vice Chair Ray LaPointe.



Steve Jens receives his long term service award from Unit Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Ken Walters, left, receives his 30 year service pin award from IBEW 258 Vice Chair Ray LaPointe.



Congratulations to 35 year member Russ Calvert. Brother Calvert recently received his service award pin from Vice Chair Ray LaPointe.



Gerry Rheinbart receives his 35 year service pin award from Unit Chair Leon Arishenkoff.



Greg Hughes, right, receives his 25 year service pin award from Brother Leon Arishenkoff.

s IBEW members!



Congratulations to Roger Robichaud on his retirement!



The crew from Merritt, from left, Dave Williams, Brian Stewart and Jim Budd.



Frank McGowan is a Power Line Technician up on the Queen Charlotte Islands and is shown above with his "big catch." Congratulations Brother McGowan.



Bill Dawson, owner/operator of Aerial Contractors in Salmon Arm was recently awarded a 25 year long term service pin.

From the archives...



It's that time again to see if anybody out there recognizes the IBEW members in the photo above. No hints on this one. If you can identify the above photo, we'll award you an IBEW t-shirt and your name in the next issue of HOTLINE!



The "From the Archives" photo in last issue of the Hotline was originally published in your union newsletter in January, 1990. It features StanMac members working near Kennedy Sub Station. From left, L/M Don Hiebert, Assistant L/M Tim Loney and ABM George Morrison. Congratulations to Dwight Stevens, Lineman with BC Hydro in Dawson Creek who correctly identified the members in the photo.

Only one way to keep British Columbians' confidential information away from the FBI and the USA Patriot Act

BCGEU: Leave OUR personal data where it belongs, with OUR government



BCGEU - There's only one foolproof way to keep our personal and confidential information out of the hands of the FBI: leave it in government where it belongs, the BC Government and Service Employees' Union (BCGEU) said in its submission to the BC Privacy Commissioner in early August.

"The Campbell Liberals can try to build a fortress around our personal data, but once it outsources information technology (IT) services to American linked companies, the FBI can use the USA Patriot Act to knock down any legal, constitutional or electronic walls to get British Columbians' personal information," said George Heyman, BCGEU president. "And once that information is released it's impossible to predict how far within American agencies it will be distributed, or how it will be used.

"The BC government claims the risk to our privacy is minimal, assuring us that US authorities would be unlikely to exercise their powers on Canadians. In this era of post 9/11 hysteria, where American authorities call Canada as a haven for terrorists, that's an empty reassurance," Heyman said.

"In our submission, we argue there's every indication that for the United States, homeland security is its first, highest priority – the rights of its own

citizens are a distant second, and it is unconcerned about the sensitivities of other nations."

The BCGEU is rejecting the government's claim that proposed amendments to BC privacy laws and "risk mitigation measures" negotiated into contracts with US-based companies will be sufficient protection for British Columbians. The government can't outsource and meet its obligations under privacy laws (FOIPPA).

"The Campbell Liberals think building firewalls and compelling US companies and their Canadian affiliates to sign confidentiality agreements will protect our medical information and financial records from the prying eyes of the FBI. There's no iron-clad guarantee. And there's far too much at risk to find out after the fact," Heyman said.

Personal information at risk through the outsourcing of Provincial Revenue functions alone includes everything from name, address, telephone number, SIN and family history to employment history, income, credit card and bank account numbers, and even charitable donations and mortgage details. The contract to administer MSP and PharmaCare includes access to an individual's medical reports, psychological and mental health reports, x-rays, photographs, details of surgeries, prescription history, doctors' names, and any restrictions on individual doctors prohibiting them from writing certain prescriptions.

Heyman criticized the government for ignoring widely reported problems with outsourced IT contracts. Media have reported difficulties with at least two of the American companies who have been awarded BC contracts. For example an EDS subsidiary in Texas, National Heritage Insurance Company, was accused in a state audit of overcharging \$31.3 million in 2002 while

administering the Medicaid program. The Campbell Liberals have contracted with an EDS subsidiary here to administer Provincial Revenue functions.

Maximus, the US. company that has been contracted to administer MSP and PharmaCare, has reportedly had contract difficulties in Wisconsin, Arizona and Connecticut. It reportedly cost over \$1 million more to run an Arizona welfare-to-work pilot program than if it had been publicly administered by the state.

"Why would government continue to outsource when the risk is so high?," said Heyman. "Jurisdiction after jurisdiction has experienced cost over-runs, system collapses, service delivery problems, over-charging. Now that the Patriot Act adds the risk of total disclosure of a vast quantity of personal data, it makes outsourcing simply irresponsible."

The BCGEU was the first to raise the alarm about the implications of the USA Patriot Act on the government's plans to contract out the administration of the MSP to the Arizona-based Maximus corporation. The union initiated a court challenge over the contracting out of MSP and requested a public inquiry into the growing number of contracts the government is negotiating with American multinational corporations, including PharmaCare, government payroll, Provincial Revenue, disaster recovery, and workstation support services. In response to a growing concern by civil liberties groups, academics, unions, advocacy groups, legal community, and privacy commissioners elsewhere in Canada, BC's privacy commissioner initiated a public inquiry.

A summary of the BCGEU submission to the BC privacy commissioner appears on the following page. The entire submission is available at www.bcgeu.ca.

QUICK FACTS - Powers of the USA Patriot Act

The USA Patriot Act (acronym for Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism) dramatically expands the authority of US federal agencies by giving them unchecked search powers and secret processes. The USA Patriot Act permits:

- greater access to business records
- increased use of secret searches
- increased ability to do surveillance, wiretapping

The FBI can obtain an order to search any type of record and does not have to go through any judicial assessment. They can investigate an individual with no obligation to show probable cause. There is no procedure to challenge an order for disclosure. Failure to comply with an order constitutes contempt. Anyone served with an order for disclosure is forbidden from telling anyone that the order exists. Individuals will not even know that their personal information has been handed over to authorities.

Five government contracts are being outsourced by the BC Liberal government:

1 PROVINCIAL REVENUE

The BC Liberal government is contracting with **EAS Advanced Solutions Inc.**, a subsidiary of EDS Canada which is a subsidiary of EDS International, an American corporation, to provide access to all its records. Services to be contracted include account management, billing, payment processing, and collections.

This gives the company access to confidential financial and personal information of many British Columbians, including:

- driver's licence records, vehicle registration, insurance information
- income assistance and student loan applications
- medical information (all MSP billing history)
- ambulance (where you were picked up and driven to)
- SIN
- birthdate
- address (current and historical list of address from opening of any account to present)
- personal property and asset information
- credit information
- liabilities (who you owe money to currently and in the past, how much, monthly payments, credit card numbers)
- bank account #s
- if you are an owner (or otherwise) of a company
- place of employment (current and historical)
- your income and sources of income (EI, etc.)
- income of your spouse or common law partner
- amount of child support payment you receive or pay
- amount of child tax benefit and or GST you receive
- your monthly expenses (rent, mortgage, how much you spend on food, telephone, cable, utilities, bus passes, car loan, child care, clothing)
- stocks, bonds, RRSPs
- BC Online: Personal Property Registration; Site Registry; Corporate Registry; BC Assessment; Land Titles; Rural Property Tax; Home Owner Grant (current and history of houses or property owned)
- Skip Trace Unit (BC Hydro uses to search out of province driver's licence in Canada or the US)
- Equifax (all credit information; an inquiry by Provincial Revenue does not show up in Equifax history sent to individual).

EDS's record:

EDS ran the Medicaid rolls in Florida. It was widely reported in the media that in its first two years, EDS racked up \$260 million in errors, failed to remove 235,000 ineligible people from the rolls, and was blamed for \$232 million worth of mistakes in the Aid for Dependent Children and Food Stamp programs (Eye on Privateers, September 1999, AFSCME).

In Indiana, media reported an EDS computer system created a major backlog processing Medicaid claims. Reportedly, after one year, Indiana's hospitals were on average 136 days behind in receiving Medicaid payments and nursing homes were owed \$86 million in back claims. (source: Eye on Privateers, Sept. 1999 AFSCME).

In Texas, a state audit revealed the contractor that had administered the Medicaid program for 25 years overcharged the state by \$31.3 million in 2002, and \$20 million the previous year. The contractor, National Heritage Insurance Co., is a subsidiary of EDS Corp. – the parent company that the BC Liberal government is contracting to administer Provincial Revenue. The company lost the contract following a year-long probe by the Texas Attorney-General's Office into alleged contract violations including overbilling, improperly hiding expenses, charging taxpayers for an executive's luxury apartment, and questionable employee bonuses. (Knight-Ridder/Tribune, June 12, 2003).

EDS is also responsible for a flawed computer system to track international students as part of the tighter security measures in the US that routinely loses sensitive information about foreign students and faculty. Schools have also been unable to print documents of international students and visiting scholars in order to obtain visas, impeding their entry into the country. A student from Thailand visiting a university in Washington, DC was arrested because the computer database incorrectly listed her as having dropped out. (Knight-Ridder/Tribune, March 17, 2003).

2. MSP and PharmaCare

The BC Liberal government is contracting administration of MSP and PharmaCare to a Canadian subsidiary of **Maximus**, an American corporation. This action will give the company access to British Columbians' private medical information:

- medical reports
- psychological reports
- mental health reports
- x-rays
- photographs
- operation reports
- doctor's visits
- 15 months of drug history, drug expenditures, and any methadone use
- patient restrictions
- doctor restrictions (disallowing doctor from writing certain prescriptions)
- residency in long term care facilities
- if you're a diabetic
- special authorities you may have for drugs not normally covered

Also:

- date of birth
- family status and history
- address
- phone number
- criminal record (in order to determine whether a beneficiary is in jail)

- employment history
- income
- financial information including bankruptcy (to determine eligibility for premium assistance)
- immigration and refugee status
- disabilities

Maximus' record:

Maximus cost the people of Arizona \$1 million more to run a welfare-to-work pilot program than had it been publicly administered by the state.

A Wisconsin State 2001 Legislative Audit Report found Maximus spent more than \$400,000 on unauthorized expenses and \$1.6 million the company couldn't properly document.

In Connecticut, half of the 17,000 bills Maximus was supposed to pay to child care providers were over 30 days late. (Dollar & Sense, January 2001)

3. GOVERNMENT AND PAYROLL

The BC Liberal government is contracting with **TELUS** to deliver all payroll and information management services for the BC Liberal government. The contract was initially going to be awarded to a consortium of TELUS, Accenture and Sierra Systems Group but Accenture has been dropped. Sierra Systems will continue to be a member of Team TELUS, responsible for "long-term systems development".

This move will give the company access to personal information of over 30,000 public service employees:

- contact information
- SIN
- birth dates
- income
- benefits
- all leaves taken (sick, parental, medical, dental, adoption, appointments, union, disciplinary, maternity)
- pension (start date, contributions)
- charitable donations
- garnishment
- Canada Savings Bonds (amount of contribution)
- personal income that is reduced at source because of special circumstances

4. DISASTER RECOVERY

The BC Liberal government is contracting with **Sungard**, an American corporation, to provide recovery of government data in the event of a disaster. The contract includes running annual tests to ensure the recovery system is in place. Beginning March 8, 2004, the Ministry of Management Services has been shipping tapes of enormous amounts of government data to Sungard in Philadelphia. Data is sent as is with no encryption or coding. This procedure gives access to all government data on the mainframe which is then stored offsite in Philadelphia in the event of a disaster for later recovery.

5. WORKSTATION SUPPORT SERVICES

The BC Liberal government is contracting with **IBM Canada**, a subsidiary of IBM, to provide all information technology services for all government departments. This contract gives access to everything on the government's computer system:

- every e-mail in government
- access codes
- all legislature workstations (including premier's office); everything on individual hard drives
- highly sensitive files (cabinet documents, intergovernmental documents, etc.)

Why contractual, technological and legal risk mitigation strategies won't work

- To date, no contract with such safeguards has been negotiated with any contractor and the proposed mitigation strategies are untested. US courts have already dismissed corporate non-disclosure agreements.
- There's no firewall or other technical means that can't be by-passed.
- The US government places its own security before other concerns and US courts will assert their jurisdiction to the fullest extent when there is a real or perceived threat to US security.
- US courts have the power to order disclosure of records beyond their borders.
- The US believes Canada is a haven for terrorists and is interested in access to databases.
- The US has demonstrated little concern for sensitivities of allies, or rights of its own citizens; it has a history of abusive search and surveillance, and invasion of privacy rights.
- Having international treaties like MLAT does not guarantee the US government will refrain from using Patriot Act.
- Even if mitigation strategies were agreed to and included in the contract, the proposal that a violation would mean the termination of the contract would leave British Columbians without critical services. ☒

For more information, please visit the Right to Privacy Campaign website www.righttoprivacy-campaign.com



Ruminations of a Retiree

by Ken McEwen, Editor, **HOTLINE**

I think the last time we talked I was still in southern California. Now we are in New Westminster enjoying southern California type weather. Hey, it's been a grand summer for us old idle guys that don't have to work. I guess it's been a little uncomfortable for trees and for people that have to work in the heat.

Earlier this spring we found a bunch of rain. We did a wander in the camper east of the mountains to Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. That's where we found the rain - about five days worth. During that wander I was surprised and disappointed by the Trans Canada Highway. I used to think that California had about the worst roads for bumpy. Well, the TCH, east of Canmore, Alberta beat California, hands down. It sort of reminded me of the Pan American Highway in Costa Rica.

And straight! Boy, those prairie roads are straight. You know, I've got this compass thing in the camper that kind of tells you what direction you're going. I'm not sure why I have it. I guess there's some comfort in thinking you know where you are. Anyway, this compass thing is electric and is made for old forgetful guys. Like, if you park the camper and forget to turn it off, it will shut down after ten minutes of no change in direction. See, it assumes that no change in direction means the vehicle is parked. It was obviously built for BC roads where you can't go much more than 100 metres without turning a corner. On the prairies, while we were driving, that thing shut down every ten minutes all day long.

A lot of people (well, more than a couple of people) have asked why we chose the destination of Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. There really isn't any reason other than it is there. And Sesame (the dog) had never been there before. Neither had I for that matter. It was kind of novel, travelling with a destination in mind. Normally we just sort of wander from place to place. So, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan it was. Catherine Dear, who is in charge of maps while



we drive, determined that the best route home was the one that took us right past the West Edmonton Mall. I'm not sure if that route was considered best because it is quickest or shortest or most scenic or because it takes you right past the West Edmonton Mall. Actually, when Catherine Dear is navigating, you don't go past a West Edmonton Mall - or any other similar facility. You stop. That was another two days worth of rain intermixed with some shopping opportunities.

I think I mentioned before that one of the areas I didn't do well in during my "Retiree Apprenticeship" is golf. To this day, the concept of golf remains problematic, kind of like calculus when I was in high school. Between the West Edmonton Mall and Tete Jaune Cache there are dozens (well, a good number anyway) of golf courses. Most of these golf courses advertise "grass greens". Now here's where I have to go back to the Apprenticeship Manual. If the greens aren't grass, what are they? On the courses that don't have "grass greens", are the greens even green? I'll tell you, those questions occupied a lot of rumination time on the rest of the trip home.

And then there is the question of people. Do people drive all the way from the West Edmonton Mall to play golf on these golf courses with grass greens?

Because when you look, there aren't a lot of houses or anything around the grass green golf courses. There's a lot of prairie, and closer to Tete Jaune Cache there's a lot of mountains, but there's not a lot of houses.

Anyway, once we got back to BC, the weather improved and the roads became more interesting. And all the golf courses have grass greens. Have you seen that TV promotion for BC where they say "Best Place on Earth..."? You know, I think they got that right.

Just before I go, do you remember those straight prairie roads we were talking about? Well, they provide a lot of opportunity for rumination. Especially during Catherine Dear's "quiet time". Now, I could fill pages with my ruminations about the 2010 Olympics and building ferries in Germany and the price of gasoline and the recently concluded federal election and next year's provincial election and Wal-Mart and a lot of other stuff. And you know what? If I remember I probably will fill some pages about that stuff. Next time. Or the time after that. However, there are a couple of niggly things I have been ruminating about that I would like to get off the books. I was watching the news on TV a while ago and the announcer told a story about robbing an "ATM machine". Like, ATM stands for Automatic Teller Machine, so that guy didn't need to stick in another "machine". It's kind of like when you read in the newspaper and they say SIN number. Or PIN number. Or the new one, GPS system. You'd think that at least TV announcers and newspaper writers would want to get it right. I know, I know... things like that aren't really a big deal in the scheme of things. But I am a Retiree and those prairie roads were really straight.

Well that's it until next time. Please work and play safely because even though retirees don't get statutory holidays like Labour Day, retirement is worth getting to. Happy Labour Day!

From the Back Corner...

Fall is here, the schools (those we have left here in British Columbia) are full of learners again, and another Labour Day has gone by. At one time, way back, Labour Day was that last chance you had to say you were on vacation before it was back to school books and homework. Later, it became the day for last minute panic shopping, trying to be sure the kids had all the necessary pens, notebooks and suitably cool binders they needed. Now, it signifies an increase in traffic on the roads (oh, the joys of urban living), and an increase in workload as people come back from holidays to take on new tasks or proceed with old ones. The purpose of the holiday, a celebration of working people, too often gets lost in the bustle of that last long weekend of summer.

Labour – with a big L – is you, is me, maybe your neighbours or your brothers and sisters, and for many of us now, our children. Unionized workers understand that the unified voice of many has more power than isolated cries for justice. Unionized workers realise that their own needs are sometimes quite different from their employer's needs. In BC, unionized workers represent 34.7% of all the working people in the province. For most of us, when we formed or joined the union, the purpose was clear – to stand up to the employer for the common good of the people in the workplace. More recently though, there has been a slight shift in that responsibility. Increasingly, we have found ourselves becoming more and more the “social conscience” that tries to keep our governments in check. As corporate interests become increasingly dominant on the world stage, governments appear to be burying their responsibility to manage a just society in favour of taking on the role of economic enablers, helping corporations succeed, often with inhuman costs.

Our governments tell us that the critical social structures we need to survive are becoming too expensive - so

we need to cut our social programs. Our governments tell us we need to pay public sector workers less. Our governments tell us we need to sell our resources and infrastructures wholesale and we need to enter into public-private partnerships to make our society stronger. Our governments tell us the P3s can do the job “cheaper”.

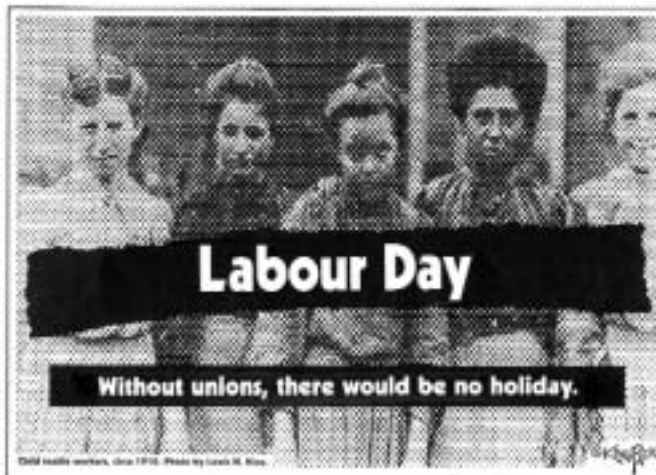
For each of these demands our governments make, the cuts mean that there are less wages for working people, and less jobs for working people. Lower wages and less jobs means we can't support our economy, so more people have to shop at Wal-Mart, because they can't afford the quality local business anymore. As a result, more people get those wonderful minimum wage jobs that don't pay a living wage, and don't provide working people with the basic necessities of life.

Unions are the people at the forefront in the fight for social justice, calling governments to task when they try to shut down our schools or our hospitals, or when they try to sell our valuable assets like railroads, highways, and dams. The pictures that you see on the cover of this issue show that our members take that social responsibility seriously, and this year, on Labour Day it was those people I celebrated – the

people who stand beside me, in front of me and behind me, looking out for the welfare of every person in our society, to raise us up to the standard of community and life that we are entitled to. Your task has become enormous, and your unflinching strength of purpose in tackling that task is what makes us a proud and powerful singular working voice – the Voice of Labour.



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