

THE UNION OF HEARTS AND MINDS

HOTLINE



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

SAFETY

It s **THE** top priority

with our

union

members —

but is it

threatened

with changes

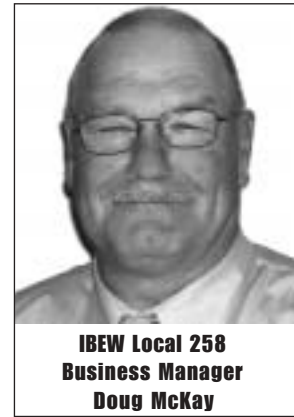
to health

& safety

regulations?



Business Manager, Doug McKay



**IBEW Local 258
Business Manager
Doug McKay**

At the start of the year, many people make a New Year's Resolution. Those who make these resolutions claim that they are going to be better "this" or better "that"; some also state that they are going to do more of "this" and less of "that", and so on and so forth. As we all know, it is much easier to "say it" than to actually "do it", and for all those resolutions that are made, very few are actually fulfilled. I believe there is one significant factor that applies in most cases as to why these commitments go unfulfilled, and it is due to a lack of "heart", or in some cases no "heart" at all.

To clarify, a person can have a lot of money, time, skill and/or ability, but little or no "heart." Without "heart", your personal attributes have little or no value at all. On the other hand, "heart" can

compensate for what you may lack in skill and/or ability. As the old saying goes, "It is not the size of the man in the fight, but the size of the fight in the man" that makes him or her a viable opponent or challenge.

There are many mechanisms that can measure one's mental and physical capabilities, or skill level, however, there are no means to measure one's heart, until it is demonstrated in a situation of great adversity or challenge. If you have been tested in this arena, then these challenges will either "make you" or "break you", and those who have witnessed such will make one of two determinations in reference to your character; either you will have "it" (heart) or not.

This "heart" that I am referring to is not of the physical sort, but that of the spirit. There are those who do much to enhance their physical well-being but often neglect the condition of their spirit and their mind and having this balance is critical. Great leaders are not solely those with the attribute of remarkable physical dominance – great leaders are individuals who have a lot of "heart", good minds AND the unique ability to transfer this internal fortitude to others.


At this point, you may be wondering where I am going with this issue relative to the union and union workers. First of all, if your Union Representatives did not have "heart", then I can assure you that we would not have the quality full-time staff that we all benefit from today. If any member reading this article wishes to take on a great challenge, one where you will never make everyone happy, then take on the position of a Union Representative for Local 258, or for that matter, any union. I can assure you that whatever job you presently have would seem preferable to the daily struggle of addressing members' concerns, grievances and complaints, and to negotiate with difficult or unreasonable employers and their representatives. In regards to Local 258's membership, it is clearly those who have "heart" and participate in some type

of union activity, even if it is just attending the monthly unit meetings, who truly represent our membership.

At the workplace, true safety comes from the heart as well. Those workers who have a "heart" for safety sincerely promote it outside the presence of their supervisors and are respected for that genuine stance by their peers. It is those members with "heart" who are self-motivated, self disciplined, determined and committed to give their best effort in doing their job, regardless of the task at hand. That is how IBEW members will become the employer's, and thereby the customer's, first choice to do the work.

Furthermore, performing your job half-"heart"edly is probably worse than not doing it at all. I state this because too many of us have had to follow behind those that have done shoddy work due to their half-hearted effort and it probably would have been better if they had not even done anything to begin with. In many instances, there is more involved in undoing a half-hearted effort than there is in doing the job "right" the first time.

For those of you who think you may lack "heart", take a look around, you likely know someone who has "heart". Attempt to find out what makes that person operate the way they do and try to uncover the source of their inner strength.

If you are one of those who are blessed with much "heart", then share your blessing when exposed to those that are struggling with theirs. Your challenge is to have positive effect on someone's life. This is how you promote safety, productivity, brotherhood and unionism. 

HOTLINE

Published by Local 258 IBEW

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Change of address notices should be sent to:



Local 258 relaunches website



IBEW Local 258 has relaunched our website on the internet with a new address. We can now be found at www.ibew258.bc.ca and we invite you visit us at any time.

Your union has relaunched the IBEW Local 258 website and we invite you to visit us at www.ibew258.bc.ca.

The website will be used as our union's presence on the internet and as a resource for our members and the general public to find out more about IBEW Local 258.

All of the union's contact information is available on the website, includ-

ing telephone numbers and e-mail addresses so you can easily get in touch with your union.

The website also includes information about your Unit Meetings, where they are and when they occur - www.ibew258.bc.ca/resources.html.

We look forward to any feedback you may about the website and extend the invitation to visit. ☑

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The United Way recently presented IBEW Locals 258 and 213 with this year's "Spirit Award" for exceptional service and commitment over the years to United Way campaigns and the Union Counselling program. Brothers Dan Klassen, who is the Union office Campaign Chair, and Gaetan Myre, who was last year's Loaned Labour Rep from IBEW and BC Hydro, are shown above with the award, an original painting by artist Jose Suganob.

Late Breaking News Item

At press time, hundreds of IBEW Local 258 members are showing their support for striking HEU members by standing with their union brothers and sisters on the picket line at numerous facilities and institutions across BC.

Many of our members who work at BC Hydro and a number of our other employers are walking the lines with HEU members who were legislated back to work with the passage of Bill 37 - a draconian piece of legislation created by the Campbell Liberal government that includes a 15% wage rollback and continued job cuts. Bill 37 was introduced on April 28, the National Day of Mourning, and shoved through after an all night session in Victoria.

The union is proud of it's members who are showing their solidarity with their union brothers and sisters.

Plans are being made at press time for a May Day Rally in downtown Vancouver and a province wide Day of Action on May 3 - coverage will continue in the next issue of The Hotline. ☑

Safety is everyone's responsibility!

By Nicole Biernaczyk
IBEW Local 258, Unit 6 Vice-Chairperson
OH & S Educator & Trainer



As summer fast approaches, we all look forward to the sunshine, long days and BBQ's with friends and family, enjoying each other's company.

But for at least four families in British Columbia every year – summer is nothing to look forward to. Why, you might ask? Because summer was the season they lost a child to a workplace accident, most often the first job the child ever had. Tragic as this may seem, it is a reality. Accidents are called accidents because most of them could have been prevented if only we were a pro-active society instead of a reactive one.

S

Summer... to a Safety Professional, such as myself, is a time to hope and pray that those children embarking on their first summer job have parents who are willing to take the time to talk to their kids. Caring about your child is more than feeding them and buying them clothes, it's educating them in subjects they don't get taught in school, like the real life and what happens in it and how important it is to stay safe at work.

A

Workers between the ages of 15 and 24 reported 8,630 workplace injuries in 2002. Each day in BC, 34 young workers are hurt on the job – one every 42 minutes. Every week, five workers are permanently disabled in work related accidents. The scariest statistic of all is that five young male workers also died in 2002 in work related accidents.

F

As a mother of three boys aged 18, 19 and 20, I believe it is my moral responsibility to help with education about on the job safety. The following page features a few simple things we can do as parents to try and ensure our children don't become a statistic.

E

Children also need to know that there is help available. They need to know about Rules and Regulations and safe work procedures that are in place for everyone's safety. Let's help keep our kids safe at work - it only takes a little bit of time.

T

Y

F

I

R

S

T

Help me to help you and yours. Get involved and stay involved.

For more information on this subject and other related Health & Safety programs you can contact:

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IBEW Local 258, Unit 6 Vice-Chairperson,
Occupational Health & Safety Educator & Trainer
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FACT: More than a quarter of a million workers in British Columbia are between the ages of 15 and 24.

FACT: More than 50 percent of work-related accidents happen during a young worker's first six months on the job.

FACT: Males under the age of 25 are much more likely to be injured on the job than any other workers.

AS A PARENT YOU PLAY A SUPPORTIVE ROLE IN YOUR CHILD'S SAFETY AT WORK. THEY NEED THEIR PARENT'S GUIDANCE.

A few simple things parents can do to ensure their children don't become another statistic

Ask questions...

- inquire about the tasks your children doing at work and any safety training they are receiving
- ask your children their opinions about hazards at their workplace
- ask about duties or equipment that may be beyond their capabilities
- do your children know how to recognize workplace hazards and what to do about them?

Be Prepared...

- inform yourself about Health & Safety
- talk to your children about the risks of workplace injuries
- encourage your children to ask questions about Health & Safety at their first job interview

Stay Involved...

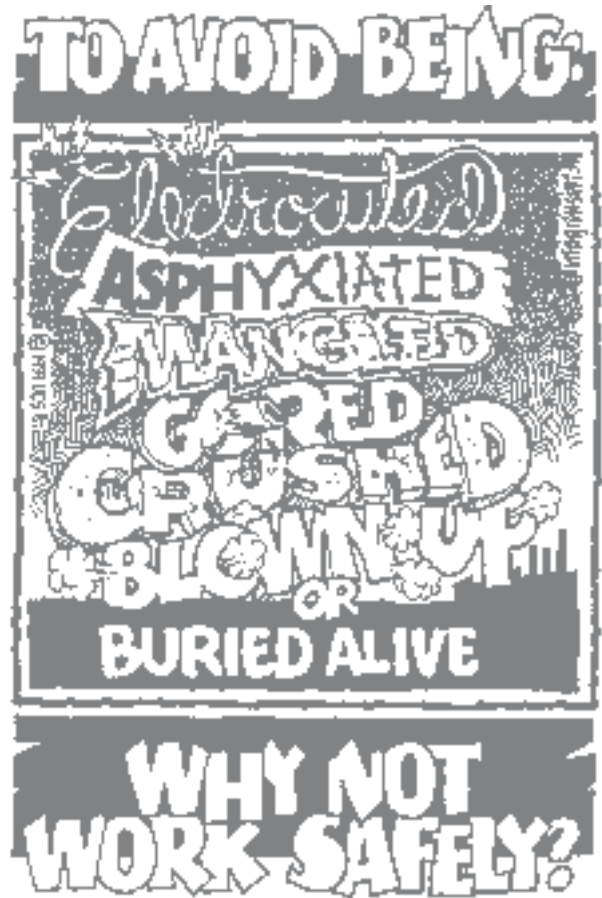
- frequently ask children what they did at work and discuss any problems or concerns
- watch for signs that the job is taking too much of a mental or physical toll on them

Support your children...

- encourage your children to think through the job and identify risks before they start
- tell children to trust their instincts - if someone asks them to do something that feels unsafe, they should check with their supervisor before doing the task
- support children in reporting unsafe practices to their employer or to the Workers Compensation Board

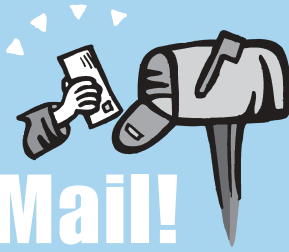
Take Action...

- bring the issue of Young Worker Health & Safety to the attention of Youth & Parent Groups
- talk to other parents with working children
- get involved and support Young Worker Health & Safety Programs



Model safety at all times – set a good example.

We Got Mail!



Dear Jim Greenway;
Gordon and I want to thank you and Mark Davison for the beautiful afternoon we spent together with Ivan and Eileen Smith at Pebbles Restaurant. It was a delicious meal and the company was terrific. Gordon and I often show off the last two pins he received, the 50th and the 55th year pins. Thank you for all the trouble you went to – it was a very special occasion for us.
Thank you again,
Sincerely,
Geraldine and Gordon Reeves



Dear IBEW Local 258;
Thank you very much for the lunch and picture.
Lorne & Janet Vadnais



Dear Brothers;
My wife Val and I would like to thank all of you for your support through these trying times with cancer. The phone calls, the visits and cards have been emotional boosters. Greatly appreciated is the monetary gift you donated through your U.C. banks. This money will come to good use.

I don't know how to thank you enough.
Your brother,
Arnie Martin



Dear IBEW Local 258;
Thank you for your support of the Kelowna Community Food Bank through your recent donation of food. This donation, brought in to us by Laura Monteiro of American Income Life was recorded as having a value of \$378.00.

Without the help of such dedicated people as you we would never be able to assist those requesting food securities.

It is due to the generosity of service clubs, businesses and individuals alike who make it possible for us to help those requesting food sustenance.

Once again, thank you for your dedication and hard work! We certainly appreciate that you support us as your choice of charity.

Yours truly,
Kay Roberts, Co-ordinator
Kelowna Community Food Bank

Dear Friends;
Thanks for the sympathy card. Peter was a great person and he will be greatly missed.
Love,
Doreen Kather



Dear Ms. Laurie;
Knowing that Gerry is remembered so kindly certainly helps as does this generous donation. This is not the way Gerry would have wanted to spend his last years but we are so fortunate that he is getting such wonderful care.

Our family appreciates your thoughtfulness and caring words.

Sincerely,
Lynne Wellard



Dear IBEW Local 258;
Thank you for the fruit basket.
Kathy Maron



Dear IBEW Local 258;
In a community the size of Hudson's Hope it is very difficult to get sponsorship for things like Minor Hockey Teams as the business base just isn't there, but we do what we can to keep things like Minor Hockey going for the kids. We really appreciate your support of the Hudson's Hope PeeWee Hockey Team and I would like to thank you for your donation again this year.

Sincerely,
Stan Burkitt
President of Hudson's Hope Minor Hockey



Dear Sirs;
I would like to say thank you for all the messages of good will I have received since my heart attack and in particular Brother Abernethy who spent last Sunday afternoon visiting me and delivered a wonderful get well basket on behalf of the union. I am healing well and will be as good as new in about another month. Sincere thanks to all.

Regards,
Steve Harding
Surrey, BC



Dear IBEW Local 258;
I would like to thank you for the meat tray that Ray Lapointe delivered. We had a good visit. My family really appreciated it and enjoyed the lunch we had.

I am on chemo treatment and seeing progress. It is a long process and we'll know the outcome in June.

Yours truly,
Paul J. Dalgarno

Units 5 & 6 Years of Service Awards Dinner, December, 2003



Front row, left to right: Donald Tibbel, Fred Allison, Joseph Belmas, Frank Hogan, Bill Moyseyuk,. Back row, left to right: Tony Brand, Lawrence Vadnais, Wilson Martinou, Brian Morton, Norman Morton, Norman Loveng, Michelle Laurie.

Dear Sisters & Brothers;

I feel I must take time out to thank you both for the dinner in December of 2003 for 50 year members of the IBEW and the photograph of those who were there.

I am pleased to mention that I recognized all the faces of the old timers there but couldn't remember their names! Special thanks to Mark Davison who picked me up and took me to the lunch.

I remain yours fraternally,

Fred Allison

From: Barbara Judd, Nanoose Bay, BC
To: BC Hydro, Attention: Administration

To whom it may concern;

I feel I would be remiss if I did not write this letter to commend and sincerely thank one of your crews. On Thursday, February 26, 2004, one of your BC Hydro crews were working installing new power lines. Consequently, we had been well forewarned that the power would have to be shut off for approximately 6 hours. Currently I have my mother at home. She is in a palliative state and requires an air bed and oxygen. She is totally bed bound and in an extremely fragile state.

When we were first informed of the power outage to occur on Thursday, I was panic stricken. Within minutes, a gentleman whom I assumed was the supervisor was at my door. He observed the situation and asked me as much information as he needed and then he went away.

He came back and asked me if I would be willing to accept a generator and if it would be all right to run an extension cord into the house through the front door. That plan was agreed upon.

On Thursday morning they arrived with the generator and the extension cord. They tested the generator before we plugged in my mother's bed and oxygen, then when the men were satisfied all was good, we plugged her in. They

then took time to reassure me that they would check the generator every hour or so and if anything went wrong at all to just go outside and holler and they'd be right up.

They dutifully kept their word.

Then they let me know after the six hours that the power was back on but wanted to wait just a little while before we switched the bed and oxygen tank back to regular power. I was out when the final events took place but my respite care giver mentioned to me how impressed she was with the courteousness and concern shown by your men.

I know this seems like a long epistle to say thank you, but I was really grateful for how considerate and caring and careful these men were regarding keeping my mother safe and not allowing her to suffer any further discomfort.

I would appreciate it if you would pass my gratitude along to these men as I didn't have a chance to thank any of them personally. Well done everyone!!

Sincerely yours,

Barbara Judd,

on behalf of my mother Alice Judd

P.S. The letter above was originally sent to Marty McMinn and forwarded to the HOTLINE by Dan Payne. The BC Hydro workers involved were:

D. Giesbrecht; D. Payne; J. Stites; C. Gunson; T. Price.

Fight for the living, Mourn for the Dead

20th Annual Day of Mourning

Delegates of the New Westminster & District Labour Council made the following presentation to a number of City Councils around the Lower Mainland in April of this year.



Workers from the Building Trades were part of those who gathered to pay their respects to working people killed and injured on the job at ceremonies held by organized labour at The Workers' Memorial at Vancouver City Hall on April 28.

April 28 is the International Day of Mourning, the day workers, labour organizations, governments and communities around the world take time to pay tribute to workers who have died from a work-related injury or disease and to renew their commitment to fight for safer workplaces. On April 28 we commit to "fight for the living, mourn for the dead."

In 1984, the executive council of the Canadian Labour Congress unanimously passed a resolution to set aside a day to remember workers killed on the job, and forged ahead to lobby the Canadian government to proclaim a National Day of Mourning. In 1991, Bill C-223 received Royal Assent from Parliament and April 28 was acknowledged, commemorating the Third Reading in the Ontario legislature of the first comprehensive Workers' Compensation Act in Canada in 1914. This year, 2004, marks the 20th anniversary of the proclamation of the National Day of Mourning.

National union organizations in other countries have also taken up this issue and today, working people around the world take time on April 28 to remember lost co-workers, friends and family, while renewing their commitment to safer workplaces.

The International Congress of Free

Trade Unions (ICTFU) has officially adopted the Day of Mourning and, in conjunction with the local labour council, holds a memorial at the United Nations building in New York City every year.

The ICFTU has also begun an international campaign to make corporations and their executives criminally liable for deaths in the workplaces for which they are responsible. Building on success in the UK and Australia, Canada has also been an important contributor to this campaign.

In November 2003, the Canadian government passed Bill C-45, known as the Westray Bill, making corporations, their directors and executives criminally accountable for putting workers' lives at risk. The law is known as the 'Westray Bill' because of the 1992 explosion that killed 26 miners at the Westray Coal Mine in Stellarton, Nova Scotia. The Bill is the result of a 10-

year campaign led by the United Steelworkers of America and supported by the wider labour movement who have vowed that there will not be another Westray.

The current situation

The theme for this year's Day of Mourning is "20 years later - the struggle continues." While workers' health and safety has improved somewhat over the last 20 years, there are still far too many workers seriously injured or killed on the job.

Since 1984:

- 16,452 Canadian workers have died from work-related injury or disease
- 2,961 BC workers have died at work

In British Columbia:

- an average of 3 workers die every week
- almost 3,000 work injuries are reported every week
- 20 workers are permanently disabled every working day

Clearly we have a lot of work to do to ensure that workers can feel confident that they will return home from work healthy and safety.

But in British Columbia, the provincial Liberal government is making the situation of workplace health and safety worse, not better, and are waging a major attack aimed at workers injured on the job. In 2002 and 2003, the provincial Liberal government passed two bills, Bill 49 and Bill 63, that reduced disabled workers' compensation benefits and services dramatically. Compensation benefits were cut by an average of 20% and benefits such as life-time pensions were completely eliminated.

At the same time, the provincial Liberal government has also eroded worker's rights to work in a healthy and safe work environment and has

made it much more difficult to prevent workplace accidents and diseases.

Health & Safety Regulations

In its desire to cut "red tape" by cutting all government regulations by one-third, the provincial Liberal government has directed the WCB to not only cut Occupational Health and Safety Regulations, but to also "water down" the remaining regulations by making them "performance-based" regulations. Performance-based regulations are very general, open for interpretation, and leave it up to the employer to determine what steps they will take to implement the regulation. This is in contrast to prescriptive based regulations, which clearly inform employers of the steps they must take.

Workers cannot rely on the good nature of their employer to do the right thing. Employers must be required to implement regulations that we know save workers' lives and the WCB must ensure they comply.

Most employers lack the resources to employ health and safety professionals or to consult with professionals to find out what is required. Clearly, comprehensive regulations take the guess-work out of creating a safe and healthy work environment.

In 2003, the WCB made major cuts to Occupational Health and Safety Regulations that have resulted in serious impacts in two major areas - First Aid and Workers Exposure to Hazardous Chemicals. These significant changes have resulted in employers being able to decide what level of First Aid they will provide in the workplace, what qualifications a First Aid Attendant will have, how many First Aid Attendants will be in the workplace, the type of emergency transportation they will use, etc.

These changes also mean that work-

ers are exposed to higher levels of chemical hazards designated as reproductive toxins, carcinogens, and chemicals that cause major respiratory disease.

In March 2004, the WCB held public hearings around the province proposing further dramatic changes to a wider range of Occupational Health

The statistics are staggering when one remembers these are people - not just another set of numbers.

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and Safety Regulations. Under attack are regulations covering fall protection, ladders, scaffolds, temporary platforms and crane operator certification. These targeted regulations affect workers in many different types of workplaces; however, it is a particular attack on construction workers. One of the most significant proposed changes is the elimination of the requirement that crane operators be certified.

Crane operation is a high-risk activity which, if not carried out appropriately, can result in devastating accidents that injure or kill workers and members of the public. Due to the high-risk nature of crane operation, all the provinces in Canada have adopted mandatory certification of crane operators and this is the trend internationally. We believe that BC must maintain and implement mandatory certification.

WCB enforcement on the decline

WCB statistics show that the WCB enforcement activity increased between 1993 and 1995; however, since 1995 there has been a steady decline, with 2000-2003 seeing the sharpest drop in enforcement activity:

- inspection reports decreased by 54%
- orders fell by 57%
- penalties declined 72%

Since 1995, the WCB has used the consultation approach to convince employers they should comply with Occupational Health and Safety Regulations. Between 1995 and 2003, consultations increased by 120%, but the injury and fatality statistics show consultations alone have not worked. It is true that minor injuries have declined, however, serious injury and fatalities are on the rise.

At the same time that Occupational Health and Safety Regulations are undergoing serious revisions, the WCB has also made major cuts to their staff. 550 positions have been eliminated and 3 offices across the province have been closed. Enforcement activity had already seriously declined prior to the cuts and

with these cuts, it will be much more difficult for WCB Officers to be out in the field, making sure employers are complying with the Regulations.

In conclusion

Workers are too important and life is simply too precious to leave health and safety to chance. Workplace injuries and fatalities can, for the most part, be prevented. Until that day, we continue to fight for the living, while sadly mourning for the dead and injured. ☒



Seeking original participants

UBC researchers to do a 15-year follow-up study on lung health

Remember the Lockerbie plane crash, Ben Johnson at the Seoul Olympics, 'Sweet Child of Mine' by Guns and Roses, and... the UBC Lung Health Study? Answer yes to all four of the above and you are probably one of a group of over 300 former apprentices that took part in the UBC Lung Health Study in 1988.

When they first enrolled in the study, the group of apprentice machinists, electricians, painters and insulators had just begun their training at BCIT in Vancouver. They were tested again in their third year and this revealed that the machinists in the group had a significant drop in lung function.

Now, with the benefit of funding from the BC Workers Compensation Board, researchers will retest the entire group 15 years after they began their apprenticeships. According to the study's director, Dr Susan Kennedy of UBC's Centre for Health and Environment Research (CHER), "This is the first study to take a forward look at what effect exposure to irritants has from apprenticeship on into working life. If this current leg of this research can show that early changes in lung function predict disease in later life, it will have a significant impact on the prevention of lung disease and asthma among Canadian workers. Millions of workers are exposed to irritants in the workplace from smoke in bars to dust to metal working fluids, as in the case of the machinists in this study."

For further information please contact:

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www.cher.ubc.ca

The importance of the Lung Health Study has been recognized by unions and employers, many of whom are part of the advisory committee, which has been set up to ensure that the results are widely disseminated. Cathy Walker, who is the Director of Health and Safety at the Canadian Auto Workers union, says, "The study will provide us with new and much needed knowledge about the long-term respiratory consequences of exposure to irritants."

The first stumbling block that the research team must overcome is to contact each of the participants in the original study. Although the participants consented to being contacted, many of their addresses and phone numbers that were current in 1988 are no longer so. Dr Kennedy continues, "A large number of the group have been contacted, but we are still short of the target. The more participants we can contact, the greater the statistical significance of our results."

The research team have set up a Lung Health Study website www.cher.ubc.ca where participants can make contact. Alternatively phone 604-822-0837 or email kennedy@interchange.ubc.ca.

CHER represents researchers from more than 40 UBC departments and has been established with funding from the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research to conduct innovative, world-class research aimed at primary prevention of disease related to hazards in the environment.



Centre for Health &
Environment Research



Michael Smith Foundation for
Health Research

UNIT REPORT

Unit 5

by Mark Davison, Unit Chair

My words this month will be brief. Safety should not be taken for granted. For many years safety has been a large part of our working culture. But we must be diligent! Changes are being made to the WCB Act, BC Labour Code, and many of our employer's Safety Programs. The present government is changing the way safety is done. The time to be informed and keep a watchful eye are here. Do not turn your back on safety. Too many people have paid the price already.

A testimonial from Brother Jon Keen

Safety is as important at home as it is on the job site. On February 12, 2004, Burrard Thermal Operator Jon Keen was mountain biking with

friends and fellow co-workers, Dave Pulman-Tuin and Ross Baker on Eagle Mountain in Port Moody. While doing a jump that he has done many times before, things went terribly wrong. Jon was thrown from his bike and landed on a boulder. Hearing a crack he knew instantly that he had broken a bone. Unable to stand and in severe pain, Dave and Ross immediately took action. By using their Level 1 first aid training from work they had the knowledge to help Jon in his moment of need. Realizing how difficult it would be for paramedics to reach Jon before he progressed into a state of shock, they were able to assess and stabilize his injury by creating a sling to immobilize Jon's arm. As Dave assisted Jon down the mountain, Ross rode ahead to call 911. Because of their extensive efforts and training, Jon was soon in the hands of medical professionals.

After undergoing a four-hour surgery to pin his shattered humerus together, Jon is slowly recovering from the accident. While recuperating, he was visited by many concerned friends including Mark Davison who, on behalf of the Union, presented Jon and his family with a stunning gift basket. Jon would like to thank Dave, Ross, Mark and all his friends and co-workers for their many thoughtful wishes. Jon also wishes to remind all the membership that accidents can happen at any time. The more knowledge and training we have, the better we can deal with any situation. ☑



Unit 5 Chair
Mark Davison



Congratulations to Ross A. Dinwoodie, right, receiving his 50 years of service award in Squamish, BC last November from Unit Chair Mark Davison.



Norman Loveng displays Golden Cap Award from 1982. He had a #6 wire strike his hard hat. Cut up but alive!



The Simpsons together have contributed over 100 years of service to the IBEW. From left, Lloyd, retired from Burrard Thermal; Don, retired from the cable dept. with 60 years of service; and, Collin, presently working at Burrard Thermal.



Ivan Smith, left, with his 60 years of service award and Gordon Reeves with his 55 years of service award at the beach in Sechelt.

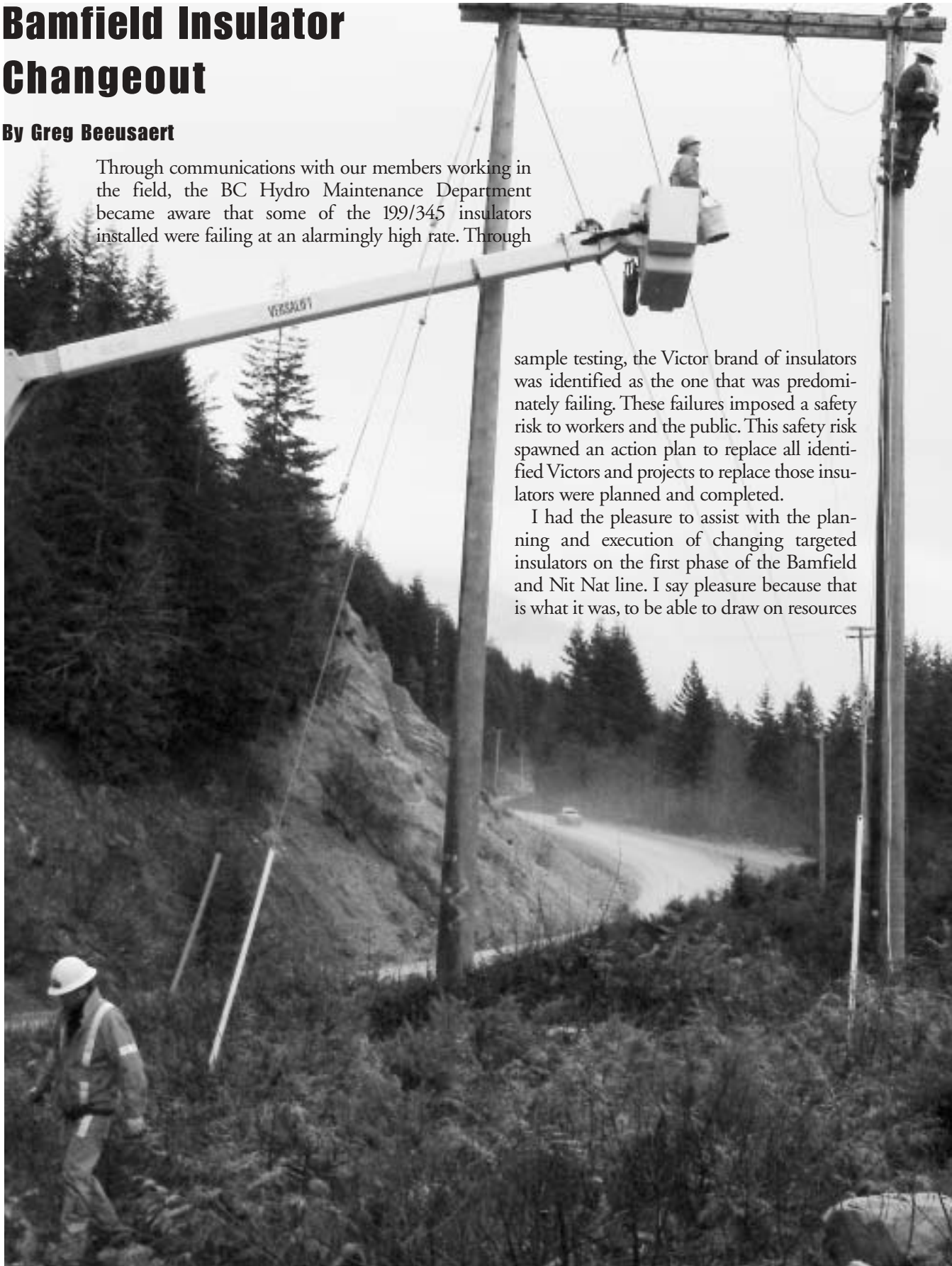
Bamfield Insulator Changeout

By Greg Beeusaert

Through communications with our members working in the field, the BC Hydro Maintenance Department became aware that some of the 199/345 insulators installed were failing at an alarmingly high rate. Through

sample testing, the Victor brand of insulators was identified as the one that was predominately failing. These failures imposed a safety risk to workers and the public. This safety risk spawned an action plan to replace all identified Victors and projects to replace those insulators were planned and completed.

I had the pleasure to assist with the planning and execution of changing targeted insulators on the first phase of the Bamfield and Nit Nat line. I say pleasure because that is what it was, to be able to draw on resources



from the Line Contractors, Construction Business Unit, BC Hydro Field Services, IBEW flagging personnel, and to watch them join together to work safely and productively towards the successful completion of a project. I feel that this is just another example of how IBEW members can come together to demonstrate their trade and safety skills in accomplishing the tasks assigned to them. We see it during the storm responses and other major disasters where the skills of all need to come together to tackle all obstacles at hand in a safe and timely manner.



Planning Committee for the Bamfield Insulator Changeout were, from left, Earl Radu, Greg Beeusaert, Tom Franklin, Bruce Adams, Martin McMinn and Tim Somerville.



IBEW members gather for the pre-job meeting.

Certainly as with all jobs, discussions on how the project was to be executed were held. Many aspects of the

plan were debated with safety being the driving factor. I would like to bring up one aspect of the job that certainly

got its fair share of discussion, Personal Protective Grounding. Many of us have worked in various areas of the country and even the world. As with many other procedures the grounding methods used may vary with the locations. Through discussions with all those involved in the planning stages it was mutually agreed that the approved and established method of Personal Protective Grounding with equal potential bonding, was the only way to go. This definitely brought up more discussion on the topic and brought forward many ideas of what could be an alternative. There were comments on the extra time it would take, the added labour, etc. etc. I heard them all



and I agreed with some of them. I too thought it would add time to the project and would be easier to do it another way. I was wrong. The project was completed earlier than anticipated and there was no need for any crews to back track and remove grounds or restore additional or enhanced isolation points.

Each crew worked in the complete safety of an equal potential zone and would be protected in the event of any accidental re-energization, be it caused by back feed, lightning or wind. In talking with individuals after the project the positive feedback relating to the grounding procedures used far outweighed the negative comments. I actually heard a comment from one journeyman stating that he is now “a believer.” I too am a believer, I believe that we have safe working methods for a reason. These methods may seem to take up more time or cause extra work to some, but in reality they are designed for one purpose, to enable us to enjoy our home and working life long into the future. It is projects like these that can help train our apprentices for their future careers as IBEW tradesmen. Whether you are working for BC Hydro or the Contractors we are all working for the same goal, a long and safe future and following all safe work procedures can only enhance that goal.

In closing I would like to thank all those involved in making the project safe and successful and I can only hope that there are more “believers” out there striving for our common goal. 🚧



Earl Radu.



Ron Boffey, left, and Debbie Weiss.





Taking health and safety seriously finally?

by Tim Gleason/CALM

Every Canadian jurisdiction has extensive health and safety regulations. Most large workplaces have health and safety committees, health and safety training and a significant level of worker input. But the notion of internal responsibility – where everyone is responsible for safety – is about to take a back seat to the idea that employers should take responsibility for industrial accidents.

The internal responsibility system has at its heart the principal that workers and employers have a joint interest in, and responsibility for, safe workplaces. But this has resulted in a system where many decisions, fortuitous or tragic, are attributed to joint committees instead of where the responsibility really lies – the employer. The issue of liability sometimes becomes clouded. Workers find the penalties listed under provincial and federal laws are ineffective or not applied aggressively.

Since March 31 2004, however, employers must take note of their potential liability for workplace safety. The Criminal Code has been amended to create new criminal offences that can be applied to corporations, organizations and their directors and managers. The changes impose a positive duty on those who “undertake or have authority to direct how another person does work or performs a task.” That positive duty requires companies “to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to any person arising from the work.”

Before we get too excited, remember that such duties already existed. However, the criminalization of this conduct does suggest that it will be taken more seriously.

Add to that recent pronouncements of politicians, such as Ontario’s new labour minister, about the primary importance of workplace safety, and

you might think this is a serious and emerging issue.

After decades of bad news like the story of the Westray Mine owners and managers escaping prosecution and liability for the deaths of 26 miners in 1992, the changes are a welcome development.

The Criminal Code changes apply across the country and will supplement provincial regulatory offences. Although it remains to be seen how police, crowns and courts will apply the new law, there’s no doubt the development is a positive one for working people. It provides us with one more tool to hold employers accountable.

• *Tim Gleason practises law with Sack Goldblatt Mitchell in Toronto. For more information on labour law issues, visit the firm’s web site at www.sgmlaw.com*

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



Sub-foreman lineman Ken Lew (above left) and lineman Jim Orser (photo on right) were recently photographed at work in East Vancouver.

Unit 5 & Unit 6 hold Shop Steward Training Course

On February 7 & 8 of this year, Local 258 members from the Lower Mainland, the Sunshine Coast and the Queen Charlotte Islands gave up their weekend to attend a Local 258 Shop Steward Training Course.

Many of the brothers in attendance were new stewards who were eager to learn about their roles and responsibilities as union representatives on the jobsite. The more experienced stewards in the group took the opportunity to refresh their skills and to share their knowledge and experience in dealing with grievances and issues that arise in the workplace.

The Local Union appreciates the extra efforts the stewards make to assist their sisters and brothers, as well as the extra time they spend learning about and carrying out their union responsibilities.



From left, back row standing are Ed Woolfries, John Heinrichs, Rod Russell, Jim Orser, Mike Scott, Frank Nassachuk, Andy Andersen, Alex Berezcki, Dave Lachuk. Sitting in front from left are Scott Peebles, Reid Page and Greg Stack.



From left are Rod Russell, Scott Peebles and Dave Lachuk.



From left are Ed Woolfries, Rod Russell and Scott Peebles.



Participating in the Shop Steward's Training Course are, from left, Alex Berezcki, Reid Page and Mike Scott.



From left are Greg Stack, Reid Page, Michelle Laurie and Jim Greenwell.



From left are John Heinrichs, Doug McKay, Frank Nassachuk, Andy Andersen, Alex Berezcki (foreground).



Congratulations



John Heinrichs receives his 15 year service pin award from Unit Chair Rob Abernethy last December in Chilliwack.



Randy Klassen receives his 25 year service award at the December Chilliwack area meeting.



Business Manager Doug McKay presenting Byron Wood, Mechanic, Surrey garage, with 30 year pin at Abbotsford meeting in January.



Brother Tom Rafter receives his 15 year service pin award from Unit Chair Rob Abernethy at the December Chilliwack meeting.



Congratulations to Grant Young who was presented his 30 year service award by Business Manager Doug McKay. Brother Young is a Vehicle Instructor/Mechanic at the Surrey Garage.



Floyd Combs receives his 35 year service pin from Brother Abernethy.

IBEW members!



IBEW member Ed Gallant receives his 25 year service award from Doug McKay at the Abbotsford meeting in January. Brother Gallant works at Burrard Generating.



A celebration dinner was held on the occasion of Brother Len Androski's retirement. He is shown above on right with Business Manager Doug McKay. Brother Androski joined the IBEW in 1973 in Arizona, moving to BC in 1975 where he started working in Prince Rupert. Len was a Sub/Foreman with BC Hydro, and retired from the Maple Ridge/Coquitlam line dept. Over the years, Len also assisted at the union office in the role of Dispatcher from time to time.



Congrats to Graduate Linemen Brad Ezelyk and Dwain March.



From the archives



It's that time again to see if anybody out there recognizes the IBEW members in the photo above. A hint - it's from the North. If you can identify the above photo, we'll award you an IBEW t-shirt and your name in the next issue of HOTLINE!



Surprise! Nobody was able to identify the members who appeared in "From the Archives" in the last issue of HOTLINE. From left were: John Hiebert, Len Farkus, Gene Rose and Greg Fanning.

For Paul Martin, the end does justify the means

by Murray Dobbin/CALM

Perception is a big part of politics and, unfortunately for Paul Martin, the perception doesn't look good on the sponsorship scandal.

Our new prime minister keeps saying he feels "outraged," but he just doesn't look it. And his determination to punish "those responsible" seems too little and, most importantly, too late.

If the first polls since the scandal broke are credible, 80 per cent of Canadians believe that Martin knew enough, and knew it early enough, that he could and should have done something about it.

This belief is rooted in the available facts and in our sense that Martin is not a man content to be left in the dark about anything important. The former is revealed in stark detail by the one Liberal who seems to have had some integrity in this whole matter—Akaash Maharaj, chair of the party's national policy committee, who, in a letter on February 7, 2002, pleaded with Martin to deal with an issue he felt was a serious threat to the party.

Many, many Liberals across the country, said Maharaj, were alarmed by stories that money from the sponsorship program was being "diverted to partisan purposes connected with the 2000 election campaign in Quebec." In other words, taxpayers' dollars were going illegally to "public relations firms connected with the Party," presumably for services rendered in that campaign.

Akaash clearly believed what so many Canadians now sense by instinct—that Martin, as the senior minister from Quebec, had the power, authority and connections to deal with this issue. Akaash wanted a "fact-based" reply from the one man he trusted to get it. He got nothing back but a form letter.

The day before the letter was leaked to the National Post, the prime minister insisted that all he knew was that

there were "administrative" problems with the program. After the letter appeared, Martin changed his story to say he had heard "rumours" about corruption.

The question that Canadians can't ignore is a simple one: When Paul Martin originally heard the rumours why on earth did he not do something about it?

Martin subsequently said that his "advice was not routinely sought on issues related to Quebec." An interesting declaration, but not an answer to the question.

The powerful suspicion left hanging is this: If he did not know, it was because he did not want to know. This strategy of "plausible deniability" comes right out of the corporate boardroom.

In the prime minister's case, however, the deniability is simply not plausible. First, Martin has a decade-long reputation for creating one of the smartest, most thorough and ruthlessly efficient political teams in Canadian political history. Many of them have been with him since his 1990 leadership run, and they are fanatically loyal, absolutely determined to protect their man from any danger, working tirelessly to know everything they needed to know to advance his goal of becoming prime minister.

To suggest that these high-powered operatives did not know about the scandal is inconceivable. And whether or not they told Martin is irrelevant. They should have, and, if they didn't, it was because they had an understanding with Martin on how plausible deniability works.

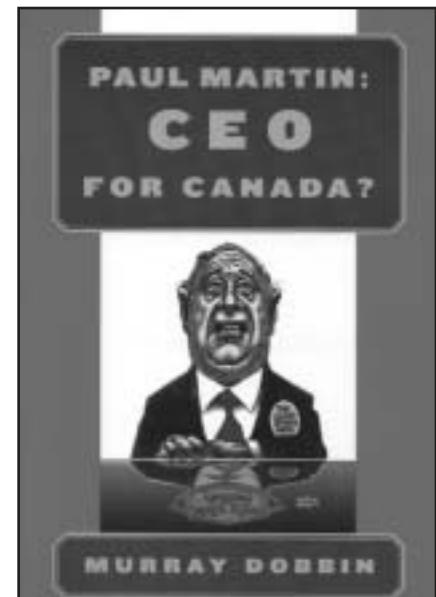
The second reason Martin's denials are not believable is the incredible degree of control that he has long exercised over the Liberal Party. Martin's team spent the better part of the 1990s seizing control of most riding associations in Canada, as well as the national executive.

In his response to the scandal, Martin has declared repeatedly that the sponsorship program's goal of keeping Canada together was laudable but not good enough, because "the end does not justify the means." Yet it is now common knowledge that this is exactly the basis on which he took over the Liberal Party—through bulk membership-buying, hostile takeovers of riding associations, and fixing the party's rules to put other leadership candidates at a fatal disadvantage.

Ironically, the fatal disadvantage is now Martin's. His ruthlessly loyal staff know all the political tricks in the book, but there is no chapter on how to regain trust and rebuild integrity. They aren't capable of writing it.

It could bring Paul Martin down before he is even up.

• *Murray Dobbin is a Vancouver-based writer and Research Associate with the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. His latest book is Paul Martin: CEO for Canada?, published by James Lorimer Ltd.*



Ruminations of a Retiree

by Ken McEwen
Editor, **HOTLINE**

Okay. Here we are again. Another issue of The Hotline. We are still in southern California. It's getting really hot so it must be about time to head north. One of the biggest problems about heading north is trying to decide which way to go. See, we don't like to go the same route all the time. We haven't been the coast route for a few years so maybe we'll go that way. Or, we could take what Catherine Dear thinks is the straight route home, through Las Vegas, Pahrump and Reno, Nevada. Then there's the Grand Canyon. That would be kind of nice to see. I have also been informed that Catherine dear has never been to Yellowstone Park, so that's a possibility. I'm relating all this to illustrate that retirement doesn't necessarily mean relief from serious decisions and pressure.

Speaking of decisions and pressure, we're moving. Again. See, we have a lot in an RV park. A few years ago we put a park model trailer on the lot. That's kind of like a mini mobile home. Our neighbours decided to sell their lot and park model. Their lot is bigger than our lot. They also had a washer and dryer in their shed. Catherine Dear says it is important to have our own washer and dryer. (One of the park laundry places is only about 213 feet from our lot). We bought the neighbour's lot. (There may have been less expensive ways to acquire a washer and dryer). The lady that lived there cleaned the park model before they left. When they left, Catherine Dear, with some assistance from me, cleaned the same park model. Then some flaws were noted in the interior paint job. So, the interior was painted. Then, of course, it had to be re-cleaned. I think we are getting close to the carry stuff over part of the move. We will sell our old lot and park model. (Perhaps "old" isn't the correct



word. Maybe I should say "first"). Before we move out Catherine Dear will clean our "old" park model. It will be interesting to see if the lady that moves in does the re-cleaning thing.

What with all the route planning, cleaning and moving I have neglected to keep current on world events. I haven't heard any news from home nor have I heard or watched any news down here. While I have no doubt that the universe is unfolding as it should I am rather short of ruminations at this time. But I have not been completely idle. There are some things I have considered.

Like, in planning for the trip home there is the question of what tools to take along. It has been my experience that vehicles know when you are travelling toolless. Have you ever noticed that if you neglect to bring a specific tool the vehicle will sense that and the part that requires that tool for repair and/or replacement will fail? The same is true for spare bits and pieces. If you carry a spare fan belt you will never need to install it. Just once, leave the spare one at home and the fan belt will break. Radiator hoses and hose clamps

are another favourite of any vehicle, RVs in particular. For a trouble free trip it's best to show the vehicle that you have them before you start out. Vehicles will also be cautious of causing parts to fail if they are aware that a good supply of duct tape and baling wire is on board. I have ruminated about this phenomenon at some length and have concluded that it is best to carry as many tools and spare bits as you can.

Another subject for serious rumination is the number of ants in the world. This time of the year, when Sesame (the dog) and I are out strolling in the desert, I tend to keep my eyes on the ground. It's necessary to keep vigilant and watch for sticks that move. Generally they are not sticks at all, but sidewinders. It's also good to be aware of sidewinder tracks because Sesame likes to root around under bushes and investigate holes in the ground. If sidewinder tracks lead to a particular bush or hole we avoid it. Anyway, in watching the ground it quickly becomes evident that there are a lot of ants. Everywhere you look there are ant hills with millions of the busy little creatures milling about. If one small 40 acre section of desert has millions and millions of ants, how many must there be in 400 acres? Given that ants don't exclusively live in the desert, how many billions must there be in the world? It kind of boggles the mind and is certainly worthy of further rumination.

Well, that's it for this time. The next time we talk Catherine Dear, Sesame and I should be at home or somewhere in British Columbia or maybe even Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. See, there will be more decisions to make. Please continue to work and play safely. Retirement is the best job I have ever had! ☞

The Power Play



The BC Citizens
for Public
Power has been
participating in
a number of
community
forums speaking
out on the
planned changes
to BC Hydro by
the Campbell
Liberal govern-
ment. Following
is a

February, 2004 - To date, the government of British Columbia has introduced and passed three bills that directly affect BC Hydro, and one that may indirectly affect it. Given the government's massive majority in the legislature, all of these bills were pushed through the legislative process and made law with virtually no debate.

The first piece of legislation was Bill 10 - passed in February of 2003. Bill 10 took one third of BC Hydro and handed that chunk of the publicly owned crown corporation to Accenture Business Systems (ABS), a subsidiary of the multinational Bermuda-based consulting firm called Accenture. The local subsidiary was created for the sole purpose of taking over a third of BC Hydro, a deal that initially cost us \$60 million - the long term costs are still unknown.

The government's press releases all claim that, over ten years, the deal will yield \$250 million in cost savings, but no business case has ever been presented to prove that statement. Key portions of the ABS deal were "blacked out" - hidden from scrutiny so that we may never know many of the intricacies of the contract the government made. What we do know is that the deal hands assets and extensive "support" functions to ABS for a contract term of 10 years. Everything from information technology to human resources to customer service and more are now in the hands of a private company.

The government has repeatedly said that the deal with Accenture is simply "outsourcing," not privatization. Well, the facts are simple:

- Employees transferred from a publicly owned company - BC Hydro - to a private company - ABS.
- Assets transferred from a publicly owned company - BC Hydro - to a private company - ABS.
- Major functions of a publicly owned company - BC Hydro - transferred to a private company - ABS.

You be the judge - is that privatization?

That wasn't all Bill 10 did though - it also barred the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) from holding public hearings into the Accenture deal. The BCUC has broad powers to inquire into matters of significant public interest and those powers are entirely applicable to privatization and it's impact on citizens and ratepayers.

When the news broke about a possible deal with Accenture, the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) applied to the BCUC, seeking public hearings so that British Columbians could have access to discussion about the privatization deal. Apparently wishing to avoid this kind of public interference in their plans, the government legislated that those hearings could not take place - making a mockery of the Premier's claims, made both in opposition and in government, that the BCUC should play a strong, independent role without any political interference.

Next came Bill 39, which took another piece of our public electric utility and split it off into a separate company created under the company act - the BC Transmission Corporation (BCTC). Although it is still publicly owned, BCTC was not created as a crown corporation but as a private company. Private companies are shielded from the freedom of information act and they do not have to provide the same reports to the public that crown corporations are subject to. The creation of a new transmission company may well be another step on the road to outright privatization.

We should also be concerned about this new company as it seems it may have been created mostly to appease the US Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). For some time, FERC had been saying that integrated utilities should be split up if they wish to participate fully in the lucrative world of energy trading in the US market. The debate about FERC's role continues in the US, but our government seems willing to go ahead any-

way, possibly to make BC Hydro more appealing to "RTO West", the proposed regional transmission operator for the Pacific Northwest region. RTO West would be controlled by the US, since we will always be a small player in this larger market, and a foreign player as well.

The language of Bill 39 is remarkable in its arrogance - it is retroactive and it uses the phrase "despite the common law". In other words, in writing this bill, the government attempted to give itself the power to sit beyond the reach of the courts in the event that the legislation was challenged, as indeed it has been.

Then came Bill 85, which sailed through the legislature last November. This bill has a comforting title: The B.C. Hydro Public Power Legacy And Heritage Contract Act. When introduced, it was touted as the great protector of BC Hydro's core assets. On close read of this short Bill, we see that the truth is, however, quite the contrary. Rather than ensuring that core assets like dams and transmission lines could not be privatized, the Bill creates four enormous loopholes that allow the government to sell off core assets whenever they wish to do so. Section 2 (1) states: "Subject to subsection (2), the authority must not sell or otherwise dispose of the protected assets". That sounds great, until you read subsection (2) - these are the loopholes - which states:

"Nothing in subsection (1) prevents the authority from disposing of protected assets if

(a) the assets disposed of are no longer fit for their intended purpose,

(b) the assets disposed of are no longer used or useful,

(c) the assets disposed of are to be replaced with one or more assets that will perform similar functions, or

(d) the disposition is in accordance with one or more of the agreements designated by the Lieutenant Governor I Council under section 3 of the Transmission Corporation Act".

Ask yourself (and your MLA, please) why the government would go out of its way to write those loopholes

into the legislation if they didn't plan to take advantage of them at some point?

Finally, there was Bill 75, the Significant Project Streamlining Act, passed into legislation on December 2, 2003, when the media was distracted by the Ferry Workers' strike. This law gives BC Cabinet ministers the power to make orders replacing any provincial or local government laws, regulations or bylaw perceived to be a "constraint" to projects that cabinet deems to be "provincially significant." The Act doesn't set criteria to define what makes a project "significant", or to establish the nature of perceived "constraints". It does, however, give the minister responsible extraordinarily broad authority to over-ride provincial or local laws, regulations and bylaws, as well as any other government policy or program. The supposed constraint doesn't even have to be real - it only has to be "perceived" by the person wishing to drive through the "Significant Project". The Act is supposed to be subject to the Environmental Assessment Act, but the EAA has now (thanks to this government) been deregulated, and allows for projects to be excluded.

How does this impact your public electricity system? Well, the government made it clear in their energy policy that any new electric generation facilities will be built by the private sector, so that market will open to competition. Suppose a large private company wanted to build a generating plant in, oh say, a provincial park - not possible you say, that is illegal, and taxpayers wouldn't stand for it. Sounds like a constraint to me - time for Cabinet to step in and remove the obstacles. We know that the Port Alberni City Council recently blocked development of a natural gas fired power generation plant that threatened the air quality in a residential area. Under the Significant Projects Streamlining Act, the Province could have declared the project provincially significant and more important than local concerns. Local nuisance bylaws and zoning bylaws would also not

apply, and the project could have been pushed through.

So, that's the legislation to date - four bills that collectively:

- Seek to place the government above the common law;
- Prevent the BC Utilities commission from exercising its public interest powers;
- Privatize one third of BC Hydro;
- Split the transmission arm of BC Hydro off into a separate company;
- Pave the way for the sell off of core assets while promising the opposite;
- Allow cabinet to override the BCUC rate issues;
- Allow cabinet all encompassing powers to push through a project they deem important.

So what is your union doing about all of this? Well, as you may recall, we have provided significant donations to the BC Citizens for Public Power Society over the past two years, and we hold a place on their Board of Directors. The Society has launched a class action lawsuit aimed at overturning the privatization of any part of BC Hydro. Furthermore, the Society is part of a Charter Challenge, claiming that the people of BC were denied their freedom of expression by not being allowed access to debate and public hearings over the legislation. Local 258 is pursuing the violation of rights of the members who were impacted by Bill 39 as well - since the employees of BCTC were identified in the legislation, those workers were denied the ability to seek severance from their employer, BC Hydro.

With respect to the Charter challenge, the hearing was held in December of 2003, and we expect a decision sometime this spring. Following that decision, the same judge will hear the class action application, and will first have to decide if we qualify as a class to go ahead with the suit. If we are successful at this level, we will be the largest class action in Canadian history - there are over 70,000 people signed on, proving that this issue is crucial to the people of our province. ☑

From the Back Corner

Another winter done, spring is budding up and summer is just around the corner. This is the time many of us are planning our holidays, weekends at the lake, fishing trips, ball games and golfing. Good times are to be spent with family and friends, telling stories and laughing over memories. We are so incredibly fortunate to live in a part of the world that is reasonably free of strife, where we have the ability to make choices about what we do, where we go, and can expect relative safety for ourselves and our families, if we take responsibility for our own actions. We just have to turn on the news to see that there are far too many places on this planet where there is no such thing as safety, where people have no individual control over the risks that they are faced with on a daily basis, where survival is threatened and at the mercy of powers beyond individual control.

Safety and security are becoming political currency – words tossed around by politicians trying to convince us that they are righteous. In many ways we take that safety and security for granted, because it has been there for our entire lives. We hear about safety at work, and we wear the right footwear, protective clothing, safety glasses and hearing protection. Mostly, we follow safety procedures because they make sense, and because it is easy to follow them. Sometimes though, it is simpler to bypass a step in the process, cut corners to get the job done quicker, or to impress the crew or the boss with your confidence, your skill. Put our own safety at risk?! Well, I don't think any of us would look at it that way, but often we do because - hey, we've never been hurt, and sometimes all that extra effort is just a hassle.



Working people, union members and families of those injured and killed while at work gathered in front of the banner at Vancouver City Hall on April 28 to pay their respects.

April 28th was the National Day of Mourning, when we pause each year to remember those that have died or were injured in the workplace. One person who doesn't come home at the end of the workday is too many, but the numbers are staggering – 170 workplace-related deaths last year in British Columbia, each one somebody's child, father, sister, mother, or brother, each one a life-altering tragedy for everyone close to them. While we mourn their loss, it is also a time to reflect on what each second spent at work can mean. How precious is our ability to say that we can work safely, and to know that we have laws that will guarantee us that right. As seasoned workers, we have the additional responsibility to make sure that those following in our footsteps are given the right tools and the right knowledge to keep the workplace a safe place for everyone. When you are laying out the day's work in your mind, ensure that you are doing it just the way you would want your child or your brother to do it – the safest way possible.

Earlier in this issue you saw pictures of and letters from members receiving 50, 55 and 60 years of service certificates.



We all aspire to reaching those milestones, and to do so, we must seriously evaluate all of the risks that are inherent with our daily work. Take care to come home every day and take pleasure in the sunshine and the leisure time that you have worked so hard to enjoy! ⚡

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