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NEWSLETTER**

INSIDE

Wall and Ceiling ballot underway p 3
Lathers vote on new local and stand alone collective agreement

School Board Report p 4
Public Sector Negotiations will not be common front this year

CATC closes its doors p 5
Apprentice office shuts down for financial reasons

Privacy Act affects Benefit/Pension Plan p 6

Bursary Application p 8

Carpenters Union offers \$500 bursaries for six districts

Compassionate Leave available p 9
EI provides six-week coverage for those looking after terminally ill

Federal Election coverage p 10
Harper not honest about plans

Council Comment p 11
Negotiations proceeding slowly

President's Corner p 12
International tries trusteeship against Vancouver Local

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ON THE LEVEL



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BC Carpenters win injunction against International

Vancouver Local leads fight against McCarron

By Doug McCorquodale

The International has again launched "legal" action against the BC Carpenters. In April, Vancouver Local 1995 received a letter demanding the attendance of the Local at a supervision hearing in May. The Local Union immediately filed an injunction and an unfair labour practice application at the Labour Relations Board.

The application, filed under Section 10 of the Code, stated that the International General President McCarron is exercising discretionary power and such power cannot be exercised in bad faith. The application also seeks provision of natural justice as protection against the bad faith of the International President's powers.

The injunction, which was granted, was applied for in order to deal with the bias and bad faith application at the Labour Board before McCarron can have his trusteeship hearing.

McCarron's justification for a trusteeship hearing is based on the most frivolous allegations. For example, McCarron charges that Local 1995 did not use the UBC approved installation ceremony for some newly elected officers or distribute the International constitution to some new members. He also alleges the Local did not use the UBCJA issued number to identify a member on his dues receipt and referred to the BC Carpenters Union Constitution as authority on the dues notice. McCarron also quotes hearsay that the Local "is no longer paying per capita tax to the United Brotherhood" although his own records don't confirm that. These are among the list of frivolous matters the International is using to try to put Local Union 1995 under trusteeship.

All part of a plan

The bad faith conduct of the International drips heavily onto the BC Carpenters. The International's renegade Local Union 1598 leadership launched a raid on BC Carpenters bargaining structure with the intent of weakening collective bargaining in British Columbia. They did this at a time when the BC Carpenters are trying to negotiate a renewal of their province-wide standard agreement (see the last issue of *ON THE LEVEL*). The International did nothing.

Local Union 1541, another International-led Local Union of Floorlayers, drove members that opposed their leadership out of the Local and launched a frivolous lawsuit against those members and the Provincial Council. The Provincial Council was named presumably because the Council sought to defend these members from Local 1541's politically motivated attacks. Still, the International does nothing.

But the International does plenty when it comes to attacking the livelihood of BC Carpenters.

Last fall the BC Carpenters formed a joint council with the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union Local 470 in order to secure more work for its members and develop closer ties to the CEP. This spring the International with their proxy minions in the leadership of Local 1598 Victoria, Local 527 Nanaimo, Local 1907 Chilliwack-Mission, Local 1370 Kelowna, Local 1541 Floorlayers, and Local 2397 Fort St. John School Board appeared at the Labour Board to oppose the creation of the joint council. This opposition was dismissed, but it took time and time lost is work lost to our members.

See Trusteeship page 2



Court Costs awarded to BC

BC Provincial Council of Carpenters Secretary-treasurer Dave Flynn and President Len Embree celebrate receiving a \$60,000 cheque from the UBCJA for costs awarded in the 10B lawsuit that BC Carpenters won last year. The judgment stated that International President Douglas McCarron acted in bad faith when he attempted to seize the BC Carpenters' books and records.

CMAW now official

Joint Council awarded first cert

The Provincial Council of Carpenters has formed a joint council with the Communications Energy & Paperworkers Union of Canada (CEP) Local 470 (See the previous issue of *ON THE LEVEL*). The CEP is one of the largest private/public sector unions in Canada. The CEP is the dominant union in pulp and paper, media, energy, and telephones in Canada. In addition, the CEP holds bargaining rights and collective agreements in a

wide range of other sectors including: manufacturing, mining, school boards and other public workers, electronic information companies, and many more industries.

This alliance between the CEP and Carpenters can mean more job security and employment opportunities for Carpenter members.

This partnership, the Construction, Maintenance and Allied Workers Bargaining Council

(CMAW) was legally brought into activity with its first certification on April 1, 2004 with Above Grade Flooring. The International opposed this certification in an attempt to frustrate the Provincial Council from securing more work for its members and the members' desire for autonomy.

The International is not recognized as a trade union by BC law so their intervention at the

See CEP 470 page 2

LEVEL LETTERS



Who watches out for contractors during negotiations?

Dear editor:

Recently, Mike Lang, BC Provincial Council Vice-president for Vancouver Island & Sunshine Coast, was informing me on how the current contract talks were going. He said there was progress being made but there were no Island contractors at the table because they (the contractors) felt that with Wayne Cox not present, no one from the union side was looking out for their interests.

I must be missing something.

I thought that the CLRA was charged with looking after the interests of all their contractors and a union rep was charged with looking after the interests of the union membership.

Better not let the Victoria members know that the contractors feel that Wayne Cox looks out for the interests of the contractors or the members might be contacting the BC Provincial Council legal coordinator, who happens to be a member of Local 1598, to find out what their rights are.

Yours truly,

Jim Senior, President

Vancouver Island Sunshine Coast District Council of Carpenters

California retirees applaud Council

Dear Sirs:

We, the members of Carpenters Retirees Club #20 of Orange County, California, **were** a chartered organization of the International Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America. I say **were** because since Douglas McCarron took over we are no longer recognized as chartered.

Nevertheless, we wish to send to you our congratulations for standing up to Douglas McCarron and stopping him from taking over the British Columbia Council of Carpenters. We applaud you taking him to court.

Our Local Unions, 2203 Anaheim and 1815 Santa Ana, never had a chance to fight. They came in and put everyone out of the union offices and padlocked the doors. They confiscated the money in the bank, plus the building, selling it and pocketed the money. Not a move suggesting a democratic organization.

We have been asking for a raise in the monthly pension for 15 years and have not received an increase even though there was plenty of money in the Trust, which now seems to be disappearing. None of the politicians we have asked for help seem to be able to help us.

So we congratulate you for taking your problem to the courts and winning over Douglas McCarron. We would appreciate hearing from you. Maybe we could use some pointers from you on pursuing your objective.

Thank you.

Edward Santry

President, Retirees Club #20, Irvine California

ON THE LEVEL

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CEP 470 is a bonafide trade union under BC law—the UBCJA is not

Cont'd from page 1

Labour Board was initiated by the leadership of Local Union 1598 Victoria, Local Union 527 Nanaimo, Local Union 1541 Floorlayers, Local Union 1370 Kelowna, and Local Union 2397 Fort St. John School Board.

The Local 1541 and Local 2397 applications to intervene and oppose the creation of the joint bargaining council were dismissed because Local 1541 is not affiliated to the Provincial Council and Local 2397 is not involved in construction.

Furthermore, the creation of the joint council has proceeded because CEP Local

470 is a bona fide trade union and the Provincial Council has the authority to establish the joint council. In fact, the Provincial Council of Carpenters has jointly worked in councils with other unions to obtain bargaining rights and conduct collective bargaining (Allied Hydro Council, Highway Constructors, etc.)

The CMAW Council will address the growing problem of non-union contractors and gate hires doing construction and maintenance in the industrial plants. It will also address how to secure more work for our members in other sectors.

Trusteeship is attempt to gain bargaining rights

Cont'd from page 1

The International clearly cares for nothing in regards to obtaining more work for BC Carpenters.

The International was found not to be acting in good faith in regard to its treatment of BC Carpenters in the BC Supreme Court last year. Nothing has changed. Since the Supreme Court decision, we have received more legal actions against the BC Carpenters and now a "set up" trusteeship hearing. This International union is hated in BC by its members for its anti-democratic behaviour and by British Columbians for being a USA ap-

plicant that initiated (and still supports) the softwood lumber duties against Canada. You really have to be self-serving and arrogant to think that carrying this kind of baggage, the International can come to Canada and attempt to put Canadians under trusteeship.

This trusteeship application is nothing more than an attempt to obtain bargaining rights and seize control of the BC Carpenters. The BC Carpenters rejected the International by an 83 per cent vote in a province-wide mail in ballot referendum last year.

Make the Internet connection

Internet news and views of interest to Carpenter Union members can be reached through the union friendly website hosted by Local 2300 member Dave Livingston at:
<http://www.carpentersunionbc.com>

Other sites of interest include:

BC Federation of Labour	www.bcfed.com
Canadian Labour Congress	www.clc-ctc.ca
Canadian Autoworkers	www.caw.ca/index.asp
CEP (main page)	www.cep.ca/index_e.html
CUPE BC	www.cupe.bc.ca
Labour Start (labour news)	www.labourstart.org/canada/
Straight Goods (news)	www.straightgoods.com/
Working TV	www.workingtv.com/index.html
Carpentry Workers Plans:	www.cwbp.ca/index.shtml
David Shreck (analysis)	www.StrategicThoughts.com/

Contact your Local Union for Local Union websites



Off the Beaten Track

from Lancaster House

Too much jingle in the bells, unions complain

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — Trade unions in the Czech Republic launched protests over the Christmas holidays to the playing of Christmas carols in retail outlets. The unions claimed that the carols emotionally traumatized the sales clerks who had to listen to the same songs repeated over and over again during their shifts.

The unions wrote letters to the major retailers in Prague asking them to refrain from playing Christmas carols and demanding compensation, in the form of approximately \$25 (Canadian) or two days off, for any employee forced to suffer through another season of Christmas classics.

Alesandr Leiner, a union leader in the Czech Republic, stated: "To listen to it for eight hours a day is not healthy, that's for sure ... And for the customers, it's almost unbearable as well." The unions received no response to their letters from retailers who claimed that they had not received any complaints from their customers. One can only imagine what kind of reception the Little Drummer Boy might get at a Czech labour convention.

Auditor's death at his desk unnoticed for days

HELSINKI, Finland — A tax official in his sixties died at his desk on Tuesday, January 13, but his death went unnoticed by co-workers who assumed the man was silently going through tax returns.

It was the following Thursday before the staff, of over 100 people, realized the man was dead. Director Anita Wickstroem explained the incident as a strange set of coincidences: "He was very much working alone and often visiting companies, while his friends and colleagues who used to have lunch with him were busy in meetings or outside the office at the time."

A spokesperson for the office has also admitted that "procedures will need to be reviewed." Readers who work at a company that hasn't yet reviewed its procedures in such matters may want to make a quick tour of the office, just in case.

CLC of little or no help**Industrial Local wins court case against IATSE**

At the Auto Show in March of 2003 an Alberta company, Exhibit Installation Services (EIS), had contracts to install exhibits for Mercedes Benz and Mitsubishi car dealers. They decided to use the labour provided by International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees Local 118 (IATSE Vancouver).

However, in 1987 both IATSE and Local 1928 agreed to a Letter of Understanding drafted under the auspices of the Canadian Labour Congress. That agreement spelled out each Union's jurisdiction and commitments were made that either party would respect each other's area.

Local 1928 would continue to have jurisdiction over all trade shows and exhibitions and IATSE would continue to represent workers in the music and theatrical industry.

IATSE President Mike Phalen, called Local 1928 President Pat Haggarty, to see if some agreement could be reached between the parties which would allow IATSE to perform work in the display industry. No agreement was ever reached. Nevertheless, IATSE decided to take on the contract to install the exhibits for EIS at the 2003 Auto Show at BC Place.

When IATSE workers showed up, the show manager refused to allow them entry into the facility. She was concerned that a labour disruption could occur and put the show in jeopardy if Local 1928 were to object.

EIS then had no choice but to sub its work out to a display company signatory with Local 1928, Derrick Exhibits.

At the conclusion of the show, IATSE launched a lawsuit against Local 1928 and its President claiming loss of wages and benefits due to a breach of contract between IATSE and the Employer, EIS. This was followed by two days of discovery hearings and finally two days of BC Supreme Court hearings. Madam Justice Gerow heard the issue on January 13 & 15, 2004.

The 2004 Auto show was upon us again in March of this year. The local was gearing up to send out 300 workers for the one week of installation and dismantle. Finally the word came down that EIS had contracted again with IASTE to supply labour for the two exhibits.

The local was not in a legal position to cause a labour dispute nor was the show manager allowed to intervene with an exhibitor to decide whom they can use for the install. The fine line from last year to this year was whether there was an expected labour dispute. If the show manager thought there was, then she had the authority to remove that threat. However, in court the Local was forced to admit that it had no legal authority to cause a labour dispute or to pull its crew. The only thing that Local Union 1928 could do was to launch a formal complaint at the CLC.

Unfortunately, at the same time, the CLC office staff went out on strike. Communication between the CLC and us was limited. However, David Rice of the British Columbia CLC office was finally able to get our request through. After weeks of waiting, the CLC appointed Len Rule as mediator to resolve the dispute. IATSE refused Rule's request to schedule meetings between the parties. They argued that the 1987 agreement was invalid as a result of Local 1928's refusal to employ IATSE members for additional work in our industry when we could not supply. Of course our position was that IATSE refused to supply every time Local 1928 requested help.

Mediator Rule attended the site during the setup of the Show where he observed the violation by IATSE first hand. The following day Rule wrote his report, which stated in part:

I would also find it unreasonable to suggest a cease and desist decision by the CLC at this late date against IATSE as their members are already performing the work at this year's Auto Show.

A solution to these overlapping work jurisdictions between the parties was reached in 1987 and unless IATSE can make a successful case before the CLC that the 1987 agreement no longer applies, they should be prepared to live by its terms in "good faith" in the future.

That report went to CLC president Ken Georgetti. His response was:

"The procedure to enforce the Letter of Agreement is one that has to be determined by the parties to the Agreement, either singly or jointly. This does not

constitute a raid or violation of Article IV of the CLC constitution."

Did anybody expect anything different?

On that same day, the long awaited 20-page court decision finally came down. Madam Justice Gerow pursued every aspect of whether there was an inducement of breach of contract or interference with contractual relations.

She concluded with:

As stated in Pacific Western Airlines Ltd. V BC Federation of Labour (1986), "the legitimate exercise of a contractual right obtained prior to the right allegedly interfered with cannot give support to a claim in tort for interference with contractual relations. The commercial world is founded on the premise that individuals are entitled to exercise their contractual rights for their own benefit, even though the incidental result might be to prevent another person from making or performing some other contract. (further)

The plaintiffs have failed to establish that the Letter of Agreement between IATSE and the Carpenters was invalid or that Mr. Haggarty was exercising the right given to the Carpenters by the Letter of Agreement in an unlawful way.

Having found the plaintiffs failed to establish the elements of the torts of inducing breach of contract or interference with contractual relations, I am dismissing the plaintiffs claim with costs to the defendants.

It appears to be pretty obvious that the CLC will do nothing about our claim to defend our jurisdiction that we

have had for over 40 years. However, it appears that the courts understand what an agreement is and that rights afforded by that agreement cannot be dismissed or superseded by another agreement made after the fact.

In solidarity

Pat Haggarty, President Local 1928

Lathers holding referendum**Wall and Ceiling pact ballot underway**

Lather members of Local Union 1995 Vancouver-New Westminster are conducting a mail-in referendum ballot to determine whether to establish a separate collective agreement and local union for lathers.

The balloting will be conducted in June, with the ballots being counted in early July.

For many years, lathers have expressed a desire to administer their own wall and ceiling industry. Previous Provincial Council of Carpenters' conventions have passed resolutions for establishment of a Lathers' Local Union. Other Lather Local Unions in North America have been very successful, given that the scope of the industry generally can be looked after more easily than general carpentry because of its clearly defined jurisdiction.

In Local Union 1995, a Lather Committee appointed by President Randy Smith determined that the first task was to achieve a lathers' collective agreement before setting up a separate Lathers' Local Union. It would not be effective to have a local union without a collective agreement.

Currently, the construction industry is in negotiations for a new Standard Agreement. The committee realized that the first step was to take advantage of this window of opportunity to negotiate a separate Lather Agreement. It would not be advantageous to first set up a local union and miss the opportunity to conclude an agreement while the construction industry is in negotiations.

A new lathers' agreement would include the benefit and pension plan provisions that are currently in the Carpenters' Standard Agreement. Like the Carpenters, the Lathers will be seeking improvements in this round of collective bargaining.

A newly established Lathers' Local Union, affiliated to the Provincial Council, will be guaranteed positions(s) on its executive board. This bold move to establish autonomy for the Lathers is all part of the general fight to protect democracy and autonomy. We know that the International will not approve. We don't care. We know that they want to remove our right to vote and they want to appoint people to leadership positions, and generally turn the union into a "Labour Ready" dues collection agency to funnel monies to Washington, D.C.



30 years: Jit Prasad, Don Pengilly, Jim Lecluse



15 years: Kelly Brennan, Bill Burnett, Bill Young, John White



25 years: Louie Cheer

Vancouver Shop Local 1928 Annual Pin awards

Industrial Local 1928 held its annual pin night earlier this year and honoured several members with long-service pins.

US companies may control BC Hydro

Teacher/BCTF/CALM

Plans are under way to have Regional Transmission Organizations West, which is controlled by US corporations, run BC Hydro's transmission system.

The RTO will decide how much to invest for electrical infrastructure, who has access, and how much will be charged to transmit power. Even public power utilities in the United States, such as Seattle City Light, oppose the RTO West proposal, but the BC government thinks it's a great idea.

Local 1598 leaders on direct collision course

International ignores Victoria raids

By Doug McCorquodale

Victoria Local 1598 filed raid applications with the Labour Relations Board last December (See previous issue of *ON THE LEVEL*). Local 1598 is attempting to displace all the other carpenter local unions in the province as the sole bargaining agent for nine companies including Farmer and Campbell Construction. The Business Manager, Wayne Cox, and the leadership of Local 1598 have positioned themselves in a direct collision with the Provincial Council and its constituent locals.

The International was informed December 22, 2003 that Local 1598 was raiding the other locals. The International ignored this and instead issued letters to the BC Carpenters complaining about other matters such as "the installation ceremony" used in Vancouver, and that all new members must be given a copy of the International constitution.

The conflict between the Provincial Council and the international supporters such as

Mr. Wayne Cox and Mr. Michael Autzen, Business Manager of Local 1541 Floorlayers, is not new. Mr. Douglas McCarron (the International President), Wayne Cox and Mike Autzen were all co-plaintiffs in a Supreme Court action where they were found to be acting in bad faith towards the Provincial Council. They shared legal counsel and collectively gave instructions to conduct that lawsuit. Mr. McCarron approved Mr. Cox's legal fees and indemnified Mr. Cox, Mr. Autzen, and another co-plaintiff Mr. James Smith (the International Vice-President—Canadian District), for court costs, which they had been ordered to pay by the court when they lost the case.

The British Columbia Supreme Court specifically found that McCarron, Autzen, Smith, Cox, and International Representative David Wright, all co-plaintiffs, are continuing the protracted political battle against the BC Carpenters and that McCarron's directive to the Provincial Council was not for a proper contractual purpose. The Court was satisfied that

McCarron was seeking a political advantage and that the plaintiffs' actions were in bad faith.

Now McCarron is getting his co-plaintiff Smith to investigate complaints made by his other co-plaintiff Wright to justify a supervision hearing to place the Carpenters Vancouver Local 1995 under trusteeship. Co-plaintiff McCarron has ordered a hearing.

Likewise, Cox has been filing complaints with the International about the Provincial Council and his co-plaintiffs Smith and McCarron have been demanding responses and investigating the matter. Since this court case, the co-plaintiffs have been acting in tandem in prolonging and extenuating the political battle against the BC Carpenters. The members are tired and angry at this constant interference and are looking forward to any International types showing up in BC so they can give them the welcome that they so richly deserve.

Canadian OPEIU wins court battle

Office Employees moving to autonomy

Canadian members of the Office and Professional Employees International Union have won a major victory in BC Supreme Court in their efforts to become an autonomous Canadian union. Justice Ian Pitfield rejected an injunction application filed by the American OPEIU president attempting to stop an ongoing national membership campaign for autonomy and ordered the International to pay costs to the Canadians.

Pitfield said the International had not made full, frank and fair disclosure and that their case to stop the vote, which is guaranteed in the union constitution, was weak.

The 35,000 members of the Canadian section of OPEIU are being asked if they support establishing their own "autonomous national Canadian union" by returning authorization forms to the union to support the position of the union's Canadian National Committee.

The issue arose, says OPEIU Canadian Director Jerri New, after the International indicated earlier this year that it wanted to increase the per capita paid to Washington by 30 per cent over three years. The Canadian National Committee then voted to exercise its rights under the International constitution to form an independent Canadian union, with a token affiliation to the International. Their Washington head office subsequently launched the legal challenge and threatened to amend its constitution at this month's International Convention to remove the independence clause, to bar Canadians from holding office, from voting on many issues, and from accessing the strike fund, which the International administers.

New, president of the 11,500-member OPEIU Local 378 (ICBC, BC Hydro, Terasen, Accenture, and others) has demanded an apology and retraction of "inaccurate and defamatory comments contained in newspaper ads placed (in newspapers across the country) ... by International OPEIU president Michael Goodwin." She urged all members to send in their autonomy authorization forms, preferably before the International convention convening June 20 in Florida.

OPEIU Local 15, which is taking part in the autonomy drive, represents workers in many union offices, including the BC Carpenters. Construction Industry Trade Union members are currently in negotiations and have turned down a "Final Offer" of 34¢ in 2005 that would represent a mere 4.9 per cent increase since 1993, says Local 15 business agent Paul Bjarnason.

School Board Report

School bargaining unlikely to be united front this year

The Carpenter School Board Local Unions met on April 24, 2004 in Quesnel to discuss the current political environment in British Columbia and its affect on collective bargaining in the public sector.

In the last round of collective bargaining within the K-12 public school system, the predominant public school union, CUPE, had a united front of its locals in confronting the employer on a province-wide basis. This front was successful in making gains that had not been realized in previous rounds of bargaining. For over ten years now, the provincial governments have imposed wage controls on the public sector. Now it appears that CUPE is not pursuing a united front in the public school system for this round. This was obvious, even before the Hospital Employees Union strike debacle.

Given the role of the BC labour leadership and the fallout of the HEU strike, it is unlikely that they will lead a province-wide confrontation with this government at any time soon.

At the April 24 meeting, representatives of the School Board Local Unions were hopeful that the hospital workers' struggle in the health sector would generate support throughout the public sector to

get the government to back down. This did not occur. Everyone is now anticipating that the gutting and privatization of medical care in this province will soon be extended to the education sector.

In February this year, the BC Teacher's union hosted a one-day conference on the problems in the education system. They invited all the other unions and School Trustees. While this conference laid out problems and sometimes offered a proposed solution, it was not intended as a tool to organize against the government.

In addition to discussing collective bargaining and the general political situation on April 24, our School Board Local representatives discussed how to organize themselves in the new union. All Local Unions indicated the desire to leave the International and become part of the new union except Local 2397, Fort St. John. Local 2397 told the other School Board representatives they had not made a decision on which union they would affiliate to following the dissolution of the International presence in British Columbia.

Most of the School Board representatives indicated that collective bargaining won't commence before this fall.



Brian Zdrilic Local 2736, George Jalava Local 1998, Len Embree Provincial Council President and Frank Nolan Local 2736 at Prince George Multiplex

Prince George hosts community apprentice trades event

Prince George Local 1998 and Millwrights Local 2736 manned the CMAW display booths at the trades demonstration event sponsored by the Nechako Aboriginal Employment & Training Association and HRDC, May 10-12, 2004. Hundreds of local young people took the opportunity to watch and learn as tradespeople demonstrated construction, welding and fabrication techniques over the weekend. Local 1998 members built Garden Gazebos for auction while the Millwrights let youngsters weld small pieces of steel together. Most visitors were greatly impressed by the union exhibits and promised to return next year.

Savings to pass to regions**Training committee closing its doors**

The Carpentry Apprenticeship and Training Committee office in Vancouver is closing its doors at the end of June and laying off its staff. Committee co-chair Tony Heisterkamp of the Okanagan District Council of Carpenters, says the closure was necessary because the current decline in contributory hours made it impossible to maintain the same degree of administration when the training budget has gone from \$50,000 to \$25,000 per year.

"If one forklift course in Vernon for 18 people cost \$4,000 it isn't hard to see where a half-dozen courses will eat up your entire training budget for the year," he points out.

Savings from not having a centralized administration are to be passed on to the regions, according to Heisterkamp.

"As we will have to have more regional involvement in administering apprenticeship on a local basis, the proposed budget from the CATC will increase funding to the regions. The apprentice service money will almost double under the new proposal from \$13.50 per apprentice per month (\$162 per year) to \$300 each per year," he says.

"When putting on courses, the locals (or regions) will have to do more of the leg work. They will have to lineup instructors, find course material and venues, as well as building material and equipment," Heisterkamp says.

Vancouver Local 1995 will get service money for the first time now that they have to look after their own apprentices. The rest of the province has always serviced their own apprentices while the Lower Mainland apprentices have been looked after by the CATC. That will now have to change, he says.

Heisterkamp says there will be a library of course material assembled for distribution around the province. "We are trying to set up a system whereby the Vancouver Local will have the originals of all the courses and background material and the other Locals will contact them for copies, either electronic or on paper," he explains.

The union's eventual goal, says Heisterkamp, is to build our own training centre to offer a well-rounded training

for carpenters based on work experience. We oppose the move to modular training suggested by the Home Builders Associations and the Independent Contractors and Businesses Association which is designed to turn out semi-skilled workers who won't be able to take their trade outside the province.

Heisterkamp suggests the union will need to put on more courses like forklift training and H₂S Alive if our members want to work in industrial plants. "Unfortunately," he says, "these safety issues have been offloaded by the contractors onto the union but our members must have them if they want to work safely in pulp mills and refineries."

"The CATC, although vastly reconfigured, will still have to meet at intervals to discuss policy and budget for reallocation of funds," says Heisterkamp. "We will also have to find a mechanism to stay involved in program advisory boards and bodies like the National Apprenticeship and Trades Advisory Committee."

The administration of the training funds — including reports and accounting — should probably be done through the Provincial Council office, suggests Heisterkamp, stating that the Council has demanded a meeting with Construction Labour Relations to discuss taking over these responsibilities from the CATC.

"The training fund money belongs to the members," Heisterkamp says. "It was negotiated into the collective agreement as part of the wage package and should be under the members' control."

The two employees being laid off have almost 40 years experience at the CATC between them. Eileen Baldwin has staffed the office for 25 years. She originally worked three days a week just cutting bursary cheques for the many apprentices the union then had around the province. Bob Whitaker was hired as co-ordinator in the summer of 1990, replacing Bill Darnell.

ITA works against Red Seal

According to Tony Heisterkamp, the Okanagan District Council Business Agent and the co-chair of the Carpentry Apprenticeship and Training Committee which currently runs the Carpenters Union Training Fund, the present direction of the provincial Industry Training Authority and the Gordon Campbell government "is to screw the Red Seal and offer limited modules of instruction that will not turn out the skilled workers we need in construction."

"The colleges don't care what they teach — they are just interested in butts in seats so they get paid."

The "new model" training being touted by the Liberals will not be recognized by other provinces, Heisterkamp predicts. For example, the six-week house framing course currently being offered in Kelowna, (as well as North Vancouver and Vancouver Island), will not be transferable to other jurisdictions like the Red Seal program is now, Heisterkamp says. "Workers could be stopped at the border if they don't have their Red Seal," he claims.

ITA is the provincial Liberal government replacement for the Industry Training and Apprenticeship Commission which used to develop courses and oversee apprentice training and counselling. When ITAC was dismantled in a cost slashing effort last year, 115 of its 125 employees were let go, leaving only one office to service apprentices across the province. Senior administrators in ITA have allegedly fudged test scores for some apprentices writing their interprovincial Red Seal exams in an effort to boost pass rates.

BC Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair points out in a Business in Vancouver article that the dismantling of ITAC and its replacement by ITA proves the government doesn't understand how apprenticeship training works. "The firing of ITA manager Phil Turpin for allegedly artificially raising test scores shows that the Liberal government's new system is not working and is in fact weakening the value of trades training in BC," Sinclair charged.

"It appears that one of the main motivations behind the fudging of test scores was to deal with bottlenecks in the provincial training system...to just get them through," Sinclair said.

Asbestos Alert

Health Canada recently warned home owners that vermiculite insulation may contain asbestos. there's a risk associated with the vermiculite ore produced from the 1920s to 1990 by the Libby mine in Montana: it may contain asbestos. The ore was available in Canada and used in Zonolite attic insulation, as well as in other brand names. Vermiculite from Libby mine hasn't been sold in Canada for 10 years, but the insulation may be in older buildings. Asbestos poses no significant health risk when sealed up, so the best way to minimize health risks is to avoid disturbing vermiculite based insulation or have a professional remove it.

The insulation is a pebbly substance and can be identified by its silvery grey or blond colour. It's particles are about two to 10 centimetres in size and visual identification can be confirmed by a test, although there are few labs equipped to check for the substance.

**We have a Winner**

Labor Notes-CALM

"If class warfare is being waged in America, my class is clearly winning."

— Warren Buffet, CEO of Berkshire Hathaway Inc., criticising the Bush administration tax cuts

Province-wide May Day rallies took aim at provincial back-to-work legislation

Protests in some areas, like Quesnel, ran over into Monday and many workers were disappointed they couldn't stay out on a General Strike

Tens of thousands of demonstrators marched in communities around the Province to mark the first of May and protest the Liberal government of Premier Gordon Campbell.

The protesters, including members of most of the province's unions, were unanimous in their support for striking health-care support workers.

More than 40,000 health-care support workers in BC, members of the Hospital Employees Union, had been off the job for nearly a week.

Bands played labour-oriented tunes as union organizers handed out flags and called for a general strike.

Despite back-to-work legislation passed earlier and a BC Labour Relations Board ruling that declared the walkout illegal, strikers maintained picket lines at hospitals, schools, shopping centres and industrial sites across the province.

Bill 37, The province's legislation ordering health support workers back to work, imposes a contract that cuts wages and benefits by 15 per cent, for reputed savings of \$200 million.

Carpenters and other have protested that the HEU was subsequently fined \$150,000 for contempt of court.



BC Carpenters Union flag amongst the thousands who marched in Vancouver on May Day in support of Hospital Workers and others resisting Campbell's tyranny.

Privacy protection in effect

Member information protected from public scrutiny

New Privacy legislation came into effect in BC on January 1, 2004. We want to be sure we are protecting your privacy. While we do release information about your worked hours to your Union Local so that they can do their job, we want to be sure that we don't give out any personal information about you without your permission. If your Union Local, wife or child wants information about the Plan in general, we are happy to give it to them. But if they want to ask about your own benefits account, we will ask for your consent in writing before we release any information.

Legislation also says that Social Insurance Number should not be used as an employee identifier except on income tax forms. You may have noticed when you call in that we have asked you for your Member Number. Your member number can be found on last year's pension statement. If you are already retired or don't receive a pension statement, ask for your member number next time you call in and keep it handy for future reference.

Last year we mailed out a Release and Authorization form for you to fill in if you want to give permission for someone else to get information about your individual benefit or pension

status. Please note that this is not a Power of Attorney – the Authorized Representative you name will **not** be allowed to initiate any elections for plan coverage or make any transactions on your behalf other than making payments. What the form does is give us permission to **release confidential and personal information** to your named representative.

The form is also available from our website at www.cwbp.ca or by calling the Plan office to request one.

It could be that there is someone, your Union Local, your spouse or your child for example, that you want to be allowed to call us anytime on your behalf. There may be others, your pharmacist for instance, that you don't mind calling for you about something that is happening right now but you don't want to give them permission for the future. For that reason, you can put an end date on the form if you want. You can also cancel your permission anytime by writing to us or sending us a new form that updates your permission.

Please note that this form is optional. Please only complete and return it to us if you want others to be able to call about your personal benefit information.

Please call the Plan office at 604-438-2434 or 1-877-411-2806 if you have any questions.

Eligible but not enrolled

Carpenter Union members listed below have not enrolled in the Carpentry Workers Plan and as a result may not be earning Pension or Benefit coverage. They should contact their Local Union and complete the necessary Enrollment Form. Once the proper Enrollment Form has been completed and filed with the Carpentry Workers Benefit and Pension Plans office, in accordance with the Plan rules and Trust Deed, the enrollment date can be back-dated a maximum of six months.

NO LOCAL	LOCAL 1346	LOCAL 1735	Capuani, Peter N	Thompson, Philip K
Alliston, B N	Allgaier, Roy H	Martin, Bruce E	Carroll, Andre J	Valade, Tommy H
Elder, R R N	Crawford, Chris N	Dunn, Edward A	Chatt, Kyle N	Webster, Kim C
Gerry, Lgrrl N	Gilbert, Byron M	Weston, Ed J	Chin, Carl C	Wrightson, Allan D
Green, T N	Menard, Lucien J	Rudderham, Polly M	Erickson, Wayne B	LOCAL 1998
Higgins, B N	Rivet, Kevin J	Belina, Clayton L	Fuller, Matthew D	Barnhart, Mark S
Machado, A N	Talerico, John A	Spencer, Matthew C	Gamble, John N	Blair, Crystal D
Nelson, B N	LOCAL 1460	LOCAL 1812	Grant, Chris N	Booth, Kris'tofer K
Rhodes, S N	Cook, Niki N	Baldwyn, Mike C	Haslam, Timothy N	Chabot, Roger L
Robertson, J N	Jamieson, Doug N	Batchelar, G N	Holliday, Rodney N	Gait, Thomas G
Sales, J N	LOCAL 1598	Mitchell, Jerry N	Jartved, Niels N	Geensen, Jos J
Soares, N N	Abraham, A A N	South, Clifford A	Kaiser, Brian R	Hanson, Dennis H
LOCAL 27	Bellamy N N	Worth, D N	Keating, Craig N	Jakonen, Teuvo T
Rody, Ryan N	Bomford, Leslie G	LOCAL 1907	Kyne, Patrick N	Jarvis, Andrew D
LOCAL 513	Cain, Douglas J	Liebe, Thomas M	Lyons, David G	King, Lloyd F
Hamilton, Randy J	Carr, Greggor B	Lockman, David N	Magnuson, Ronald N	Lachapelle, Martin P
Poirier, Mike J	Collins V N	Maki, Ronald E	Moore, Melvin D	Rasmussen, Gavin V
Veenkamp, Arjen N	D'eramo, Anthony N	Nelmes, Brad B	Morgado, Luis N	Scott, Denton R
	Fisher, Arthur N	Schoeffel, Rainer N	Murati, Fabio N	Strachan, Willard G
LOCAL 527	Irving, Cliff N	Sinclair, Dave C	Ng, Michael S	Taron, Diana D
Amson, Charles L	Keddie, Mike T	Swain, Rob L	Ottens, Rex N	LOCAL 2068
Bishop, Brian G	McDowell, Ian N	Turner, Bruce N	Payer, Michel N	Lange, Allen D
Brawner, Brad D)	Mckay, Matthew N	LOCAL 1989	Peacock, Daryl N	LOCAL 2300
Doyle, Kevin N	Schmegelsky, Rn	Anderson, John A	Reidegeld, Frank N	Andrews, Doug C
Kenny, Gavin N	Scroggs, Ben N	Dennis, Tim D	Richards, Michael N	Gustavsson, Thomas G
	LOCAL 1719	Oakman, Dennis N	Rimes, Erick R	Kozler, Lyle N
LOCAL 785	Babiak John H	Strachan, Michael W	Rovers, John G	Lloyd Kevin N
Leblanc, Joseph N	Grant, Byron N	LOCAL 1995	Scott, James F	Lyall, Rhet D
	Johnston, Brian R	Agalou, Evangelos N	Singh, Gurudav N	Moro, Jeff A
LOCAL 1325	Leeson, Dale H	Anderson, Ken S	Sommerfeld, Wally E	Roy, France J
Cayer, Alex P	Slingsby, Terry G	Buckshaw, A T N	Steinberg, Howard N	Waneck, Douglas E
Poirier, Bradley N	Smith, Dwight L	Calvert, Jeramiah N	Thomas, Jessica J	

Questions a

The following questions have been frequently asked by BC Carpentry Workers staff lately. To further the understanding of the Plan and benefits available to union members, ON THE LEVEL will publish selected questions and answers about the Plan on an ongoing basis. Please feel free to write to ON THE LEVEL with a question you would like to see in print, or call the Plan office for a copy of the BC Carpentry Workers Benefit and Pension Plans for further information.

Q&A beneficiary

Q: I retired several years ago and my previous spouse is listed as my beneficiary. I'm in a new common law relationship. Can I change the pension so it continues to my new partner after I die?

A: It depends on the pension option you chose. The option is printed on your Pension Reduction statement that was sent to you last year or you can call the plan office to ask.

If you selected:

A – (7 year guarantee) or

B – (10 year guarantee) and you haven't been retired as long as that guarantee period, you might be able to change your beneficiary to your new partner. We would need the consent of your previous spouse, if still living. If you got that consent, if that spouse has died or if you weren't married when you retired, you could change your beneficiary to your new partner. After your death, pension payments would be paid only for any remaining guarantee period.

If you selected C or D, you may not make any change. The pension is guaranteed for your lifetime, and the lifetime of the spouse you had when you retired. If that spouse dies before you or you divorce, that original designation still applies. Our Plan must follow this rule in order to comply with legislation – we can't make exceptions.

Notice to Those Approaching Age 65

Effective May 1, 2004, the Pension office will no longer be automatically sending retirement packages out to members who are reaching age 65.

We found that many members didn't respond to these applications. Rather than continuing to waste valuable Plan resources, we think it makes more sense to have you confirm that you are interested in retiring before we prepare your option package.

Although the packages of retirement forms will not be mailed out automatically, the Plan office will be sending a letter on an annual basis to all members who will be reaching age 65 within the coming year, to advise them that they have a pension with the Plan and will need to contact the Plan office if they would like an application package.

We remind members that pensions are **not** payable retroactively, so please ensure you contact the Plan office at least 1 – 2 months in advance of your retirement date to ensure you don't miss any payments. If you would like to apply to receive your pension before you reach age 65, this request must be submitted to the Plan office in writing, in advance of your proposed retirement date.

Please contact the Carpentry Workers' Pension Plan of BC at (604) 438-2434, or toll-free at 1-877-411-2806, if you have any questions.



about your Plans

...ked of the Carpen-
...nding of the rights
...HE LEVEL will pub-
...Plans on a regular
...VEL if you have a
...all the Carpentry
...information.

**Come in or send your questions to:
Carpentry Workers Benefit and Pension Plans
Suite 300 - 2806 Kingsway Vancouver, BC
V5R 5V1
604 438-2434
Tollfree 1-877-411-2806**

Q&A eye exams

Q: I remember reading last year that some eye exams are covered by the Plan. Is that true?

A: Yes. Since October 1, 2002, eye examinations have been covered under the Dental/Optical/Hearing Aid Plan and are subject to the overall Dental/Optical maximum. Dental/Optical/Hearing Aid coverage is part of the Employer Paid Full Plan or the Major Self-Pay Plan under the Regular Option. Those who selected the MSP+ Option or are in the Mini or Retiree benefit plans do not have this coverage.

You or your eligible dependent must have Dental/Optical coverage at the time of the examination to be eligible for the 80 per cent reimbursement. Any reimbursement counts toward your annual reimbursement limit in the Dental/Optical Plan (\$2,120 if you are covered all year).

Some examinations are covered by Medical Services Plan. They pay for medically required eye examinations, or routine eye examinations for those 18 years of age and under and 65 years of age and over. Your optometrist or ophthalmologist will know whether or not your medical condition would result in MSP paying for your eye exam.

One examination for each covered family member will be allowed per year (365 day rolling period), but only if Medical Services Plan will not cover your exam. By rolling period, we mean that if you had an eye exam on February 2 in 2003, you would have to wait until February 3 or later this year before having your next exam.

Extra charges over and above the actual eye exam fees such as: contact lens evaluations/consultations, retinal exams, visual field testing and optical fitting fees are not covered under the CWBP optical exam benefit nor does MSP cover them.

Also, please note the following items are ineligible expenses under the Benefit Plan:

- cleansing products
- warranties and/or lens insurance
- side shields
- clip-ons (purchased separately)
- freight or shipping fees
- non-prescription lenses (i.e. magnifiers)
- any frames or lenses purchased at a non-recognized optical or department store.

If you have any questions please call the Plan office at 604-438-2434 or toll-free at 1-877-411-2806.



June Benefit Plan deadline rapidly approaches

June 30 is the deadline for 2003 claims to be received for the following plans:

Extended Health Care	Bereavement Leave
Dental/Optical/Hearing Aid	Jury Duty
Employee Assistance	Hour Bank Credits
Travel Assistance	

Each year we have members who thought they mailed their claims in plenty of time but missed the deadline. They were horrified to learn they would not receive *any* reimbursement. Don't wait – do it now!

Claim forms are available on our website at www.cwbp.ca or by calling the Plan office at 604-438-2434 or toll-free at 1-877-411-2806.

Dental Cheques are changing

This year has been extremely busy with system updates and a complete restructuring of the Dental / Optical / Hearing Aid cheques. We have updated the format of our Explanation of Benefits statements that are printed as enclosures to the dental/optical/hearing aid reimbursement cheques.

The new statements are more informative and easier to read. This should be helpful for our members as well as any second benefit plan if you are claiming any unpaid balance under your spouse's insurance. Later this year, we will be switching to standard dental claim codes, which will also help second insurance companies adjudicate claims.

We apologize for the additional waiting period for any claims received earlier and any inconvenience it may have caused.

Announcement Plans appoint two new administrative managers

The Trustees of the Carpentry Workers' Benefit and Pension Plans of BC recently appointed two new managers for the administration office.

Daphne Green, who has been acting as Administrator, will be leaving her position by mutual consent on June 15, 2004. Her position will not be replaced.

Instead, Catherine Thomas CGA, formerly the Manager of Accounting, has been appointed as Manager, Finance and Administration. Thomas will be responsible for all of her former accounting and finance duties as well as the Carpentry Workers' Fund, and will handle all staff and general office administrative functions for the Plans.

Sharon Moore has been appointed as Manager, Pensions, Benefits and System Development. Moore, who was formerly contracted to conduct an in-depth review of all of the present office processes and system functionality, will be responsible for the day-to-day management of both

Plans, including liaising with the actuaries and system development firms.

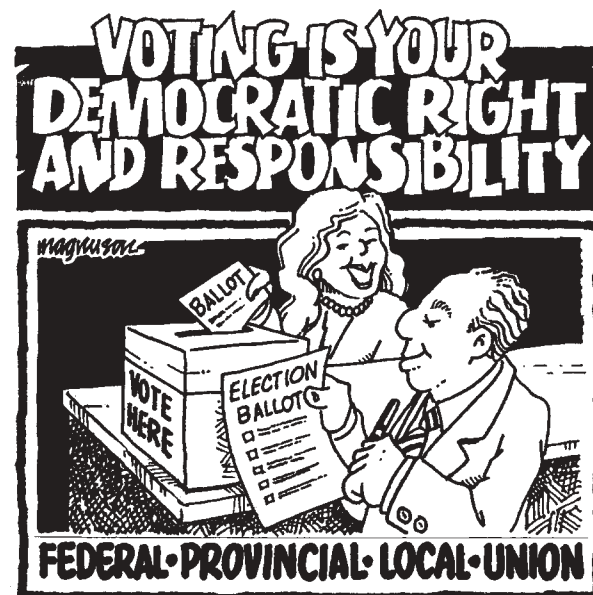
Thomas and Moore will work in co-operation to ensure smooth functioning of all required Plan processes while continuing to improve overall service to the Plan membership. Both will report directly to John Davies, Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.



Sharon Moore



Catherine Thomas



Retired members

The following BC Carpenter Union members have recently taken normal, early or disability retirement and are eligible to receive a Carpentry Workers Pension

Ainsworth, Richard
Barisenkoff, Paul
Bontorin, Bruno
Frojan, Antonio
Gajek, Graf Roger
Grewal, Harbhajan
Hadland, Raymond
Hakansson, Berne

Hirner, Adolf
Jordan, Peter
Kosa, Laszlo
Moller, Jurgen
Piovesan, Carlo
Silleta, Giovanni
Thompson, Gerald

Post-secondary bursaries set at \$500 this year**BC Carpenters Union continues student bursaries**

The BC Provincial Council Education Committee is pleased to continue offering some small financial assistance to members, or their immediate family, who are taking post secondary education or training. The provincial bursary program, established in 1992, will make available two \$500 bursaries for each of the six District Council areas this year for a total of 12 bursaries possible for the province. As the fund had been depleted, this may be the last year bursaries are offered unless the Convention this fall finds alternate funding.

Any member, or the immediate family of a member, of any Local of the BC Carpenters' Union is eligible to apply for a bursary. This includes spouses, children and grandchildren of members. Bursaries are not limited to academic institutions, but are also available for commercial, technical, vocational or art school programs.

A selection committee of impartial community leaders decides the winners based on a 500 to 1000 word essay on some aspect of trade unionism in history, politics, economics or social reform. Academic student essays will be judged on proper essay style so should include references and bibliographies. These will not be calculated in the final word count. Non-academic essays can be more personal and anecdotal but should also have some attribution or reference if articles or books are quoted or ideas or facts are borrowed from someone else.

The deadline for applications to be received in the Provincial Council office is September 10, 2004. Applicants are welcome to apply for successive bursaries even if they applied or won previously.

BC Carpenters Union Bursary Winner

This bursary winning essay by Svea Vikander from Victoria is very slightly abridged for publication. The references have been removed and grammar and punctuation converted to newspaper style.

Strike inspired work of great literature

From Preston to Hartford: Challenges Faced by Union Organizers 150 Years Later. A Case-study Comparison

by Svea Vikander, Local 1598 Victoria

"Ignorant and violent speeches may keep up fading enthusiasm for a short time longer, but the wintry cold, the fireless grate, the empty cupboard ... will deprive the oratory of their leaders of the power to persuade them that no bread is better than half a loaf, or that charity wrung from their fellows is pleasanter to live upon than their own honest earnings." — The Illustrated London News, December 10th 1853, in regards to the Preston workers' strike.

Exactly one hundred and fifty years ago, the workers of a small town in the north of England organized a year-long strike, experienced the forceful closure of every mill in their town, and became immortalized in a great work of literature. This was the 1853 strike in Preston, an organized response to the textile mill owners' refusal to increase the workers' wages by ten percent. At the time, the strike was considered unsuccessful — after eight winter months, 7,700 workers returned to their looms. However, a few years later, it was evident that one well educated ear had been listening; for 150 years later, that great critic's voice can still be heard. Charles Dickens used his experience and knowledge from the strike at Preston as inspiration and material for his 1854 work, *Hard Times*. Dickens had a keenness for detail and an ability to access the reader's most heartfelt emotions that bring his characters to life in our present day. Although he did not write an historical account of the strike in Preston, by choosing to represent the strife, poverty, and very hard times of the Preston workers, Dickens ensured that their story would be told for hundreds of years to come.

Just as it is important from an historical perspective to tell the story of the Preston workers, it is also important to actively consider the questions about unionization that Dickens posed, and to evaluate the answers that have since been provided. What challenges do unions face 150 years later?

A case-study comparison can be made to the city of Hartford, Connecticut, in the 1990s. The people of Hartford faced many similar economic problems to those in Dickens' novel, and their unions faced exceptionally challenging circumstances. In addition to an unequal distribution of wealth, they faced the challenge of unifying an ethnically diverse population. Like Dickens' characters, they found that the law was inadequate to protect workers' rights.

The first issue that *Hard Times* presents to the reader is that of poverty versus power. The workers of "Coketown" are uneducated and perpetually exhausted; they must work extremely hard for very little pay. One such worker is the character of Stephen Blackpool — a kindly and aging man who has survived many misfortunes. He is employed by Mr. Bounderby, an abusive and coercive merchant, who, by merit of education and higher social status, enjoys more power and privileges than the sum total of his workers combined. Mr. Bounderby's main concern is keeping the union organizer — a similarly dislikeable character by the name of Mr. Slackbridge — out of the town and unable to persuade the workers to unite.

The union members of Hartford city faced a similar unequal distribution of wealth, as Louise Simmons states in her appropriately titled book, *Organizing in Hard Times*, "... poverty in Hartford grew to 27.5 per cent ... [and] had become the eighth-poorest city in the country... while it is the capital city of the state with the consistently highest per capita income in the country." In addition to an unequal distribution of wealth, the citizens of Hartford had the issue of ethnicity to contend with. While it is assumed that every character in *Hard Times* is Caucasian, whether wealthy or impoverished, Hartford city had an extremely segregated population, with predominantly Caucasian-populated suburbs and most African-American and Hispanic populations residing in the downtown core (65 per cent and 76

See Segregation page 9

BC Carpenters' Union 2004 Bursary Application

Deadline for applications is September 10, 2004

RULES:

1. A \$500 bursary shall be awarded to a maximum of 12 students representing the six geographical regions of British Columbia (District Council areas).
2. The awards will be presented to successful applicants after entrance to a recognized vocational institution, Canadian university or affiliated college, art school, or other place of training acceptable to the Carpenters' Union Education Committee.
3. **Eligibility** - to be eligible for the bursary, the student must be:
 - a) a member of an affiliated Local Union of the BC Provincial Council of Carpenters; or an immediate family member of an active, retired or deceased member (spouse, child, grandchild), and —
 - b) able to meet the requirements for entering the educational institution chosen.
4. Applicants will be judged on the basis of need, ability and a double-spaced, **word processed** essay of 500 to 1000 words on some aspect of trade unionism in relation to politics, economics, social reform, history, personal experience, etc. Proper essay style (including references) is expected for academic papers and would be appreciated but is not required for **non-academic** students (i.e. vocational, technical, fine arts).

Completed applications and essays should be forwarded to the Provincial Council Education Committee, 305 - 2806 Kingsway, Vancouver, BC, V5R 5T5. Applications must be received no later than **September 10, 2004**. Phone (604)437-0471; Fax (604)437-1110. email: info@bccarpentersunion.com

Selection will be made before the end of October and winners notified by their Local Union office.

Please print clearly

Applicant's Name _____

Address _____

Postal Code _____

Phone _____ Birthdate _____

Are you a (check one)

member Union Local number _____

immediate family Relationship _____
of member

Member's name _____ Local _____

Specify your immediate educational plans (academic, technical, vocational) and institution and program applied for:

Signature of applicant _____

Signature of sponsoring member _____



Deadline for applications is September 10, 2004

OPEIU15



Local 1995 President Randy Smith (R) congratulates Vancouver Mayor Larry Campbell at COPE fundraiser

Ethical purchasing policy a winner at Vancouver City Hall

By Tom Sandborn, Columbia Journal

It was a quiet moment at the end of a long day of ordinary city business, but the decision taken in that moment was historic, and will have big implications for the lives of workers around the world. On April 6, 2004, Vancouver City Council voted unanimously to create an ethical purchasing policy for the city. The resolution, moved by Councilor Tim Louis and seconded by Raymond Louie, won the unified support of a Cope caucus that has been beset in the last few months with high profile internal divisions, and also garnered yes votes from the two opposition NPA councilors.

The policy is due to be in effect by the end of the calendar year. It will apply to all goods purchased by the city (such as uniforms for city workers and coffee to be served in city venues) and will require city suppliers to reveal the locations of all contractors and subcontractors involved in their supply chains, and for this information to become public knowledge, thus making it more possible to identify producers who are abusing their workers. The policy will require that suppliers who want to do business with the city must explicitly guarantee that their products are not created under conditions prohibited by International Labour Organization standards and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights, (for example, such conditions as child labour, forced labour, discrimination against women workers, sexual exploitation and union busting).

Segregation proved to be an organizing challenge

Cont'd from page 8

per cent, respectively). It is possible that the mixing of different ethnicities could be a boon to union organizers, with each ethnic group contributing its perspective to create a more multicultural, inclusive, and stronger organization; however, with such little wealth, and it being so poorly distributed, the competition between groups often exacerbates existing cultural tensions.

With high unemployment and high racial tension, the segregation of Hartford city provided a challenge to the union organizers that is absent in Stephen Blackwell's description of his fellow workers:

"God forbid as I, that ha known an had'n experience o' these men aw my life — I, that ha' ett'n an droonken wi' em, an seet'n wi' em, and toil'n wi' em, and lov'n em, should fail fur to stan by 'em wi' the truth..."

Stephen Blackwell's words are notably full of camaraderie and a sense of solidarity with the other "hands," showing a collective mentality that aids the union organizer, Mr. Slackbridge.

The second major challenge faced by Mr. Slackbridge's union is that of the law. In Dickens' Coketown, unions are forbidden, as Mr. Bounderby says, "We will make an example of half a dozen Slackbridges. We'll indict the blackguards for felony, and get 'em shipped off to penal settlements."

While Dickens raised the question of legalization, Simmons questions the validity of our answer. In Hartford city, unions were no longer illegal, but may actually have become too embroiled in the legal process. As Simmons writes:

"The system of labour law in the United States no longer facilitates worker organization. The NLRB has ceased to be a vehicle to ensure workers' rights, but instead is itself a battleground. Its processes are lengthy and cumbersome. Employers flagrantly violate labour law with a type of impunity that the lengthy processes ... allow."

Albeit from different sides of the fence, both Dickens and Simmons had complaints about the law; both found that it was inadequate for the protection of workers' rights.

Large changes have occurred over the last 150 years — social structures have been reinvented, technology has progressed, and the world population has increased dramatically. These changes have presented new challenges for union organizers: the challenge of working with a fragmented ethnic population, for example. However, many challenges of modern-day unionization seem to be stuck in the 19th Century. From the simple issue of workplace safety to the more complex power struggles between the wealthy and poor, it is evident that while some change has been made, more change is necessary.

New Benefits available from EI

From CAW, HRDC, BMW and CALM

Workers with relatives who are terminally ill finally have access to a program that may ease the tough times a bit.

Workers can qualify for up to six weeks employment insurance benefits to care for a family member who faces a significant risk of dying within 26 weeks. Known as compassionate care benefits, the new six-week provision came into effect on January 4, 2004. There is a two-week waiting period.

Compassionate Care benefits are a recognition that people shouldn't have to take vacation time to be with dying relatives. Compassionate Care Benefits are available to workers caring for a child, parent, or spouse who is gravely ill or dying. Eligible family members will be able to share the benefit. But to qualify,

workers must show that their regular earnings have decreased by at least 40 per cent and they must meet a stringent qualifying period. Workers also must provide a medical certificate as proof that the ill family members needs care or support.

Employees working under the federal labour code are entitled to eight weeks compassionate care leave and job protection. Federal employers may not dismiss, suspend, lay off, demote or otherwise discipline an employee for taking compassionate leave. Some provinces also provide similar protection for workers, but British Columbia does not. Workers who are entitled to the benefit should have their jobs protected as well.

The labour movement has been very critical of the federal

government's eligibility rules for employment insurance generally. In the past, the Unemployment Insurance Fund, as it was then known, was well managed and actuarialized for maximum payout. Then, up to 75 per cent of workers qualified for benefits. Recently, the fund has run a huge surplus because only 38 per cent of unemployed workers are eligible for benefits. New benefits rates, application procedures and guidelines for training have complicated the eligibility qualifications enormously. The number of hours to qualify range from 420 to 910 depending on the regional unemployment rate.

To see whether you qualify, check Human Resources Development Canada's website, watch for public announcements or call HRDC's offices for information.

Compassionate Care Benefit Highlights of the Program

(from: Human Resources Development Canada - www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca)

As of January 4, 2004, you can receive compassionate care benefits up to a maximum of six weeks if you have to be absent from work to provide care or support to a gravely ill family member with a significant risk of death within 26 weeks. If you are unemployed and on EI, you can also ask for this type of benefit.

To be eligible for compassionate care benefits you must apply and show proof that:

- your regular weekly earnings from work have decreased by more than 40 per cent; and
- you have accumulated 600 insured hours in the last 52 weeks or since the start of your last claim. This period is called the qualifying period

The qualifying period is the shorter of:

- the 52-week period immediately before the start date of your claim, or
- the period since the start of a previous EI claim if that claim started during the 52-week period.

Who is considered a family member?

You can receive compassionate care benefits to care for one of the following family members:

- your child or the child of your spouse or common-law partner;
- your wife/husband or common-law partner;
- your father/mother;
- your father's wife/mother's husband;
- the common-law partner of your father/mother.

Common-law partner means a person who has been living in a conjugal relationship with that person for at least a year.

Definition of care or support

Care or support to a family member means:

- Providing psychological or emotional support, or
- arranging for care by a third party, or
- Directly providing or participating in the care.

Medical proof

You must provide a medical certificate as proof that the ill family member needs care or support and is at significant risk of death within 26 weeks. The medical certificate, called "*Medical certificate for Employment Insurance Compassionate Care Benefits*," must be completed and signed by a medical doctor.

How, where and when to apply

To receive compassionate care benefits you must submit an EI application on-line or in person at your local Human Resources Development of Canada (HRDC office). You should apply as soon as you stop working.

When will you receive your first payment?

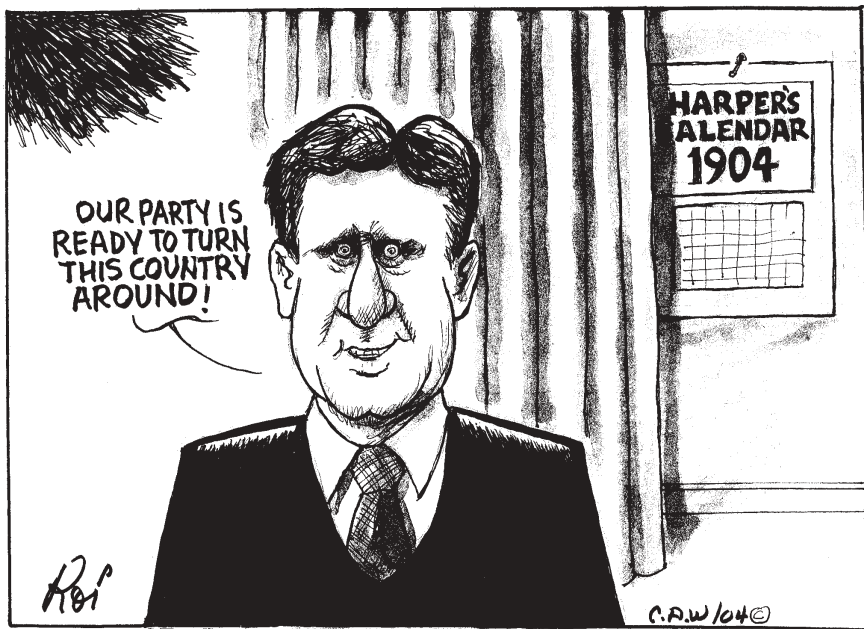
If you provided all the required information and if you qualify for benefits, your payment will usually be issued within 28 days of the start date of your claim.

A two-week waiting period to serve

You must serve a two-week unpaid waiting period before your EI benefits begin to be paid. Generally, this period is the first two weeks of your claim.

How much will you receive?

The basic benefit rate is 55 per cent of your average insured earnings. The maximum EI benefits is \$413 per week. Your EI payment is a taxable income, meaning provincial (if it applies) and federal taxes will be deducted.



BACK TO THE FUTURE.

Harper is not being honest about his plans

from CUPE website: <http://election.cupe.ca>

The Conservative platform just doesn't add up. An independent analysis of major party platforms released recently by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) found the Conservative platform of spending and tax cuts would lead to a deficit of \$11.4 billion over five years.

The CCPA study is based on the revenue, taxation and spending projections of the 2004 Federal Budget and assumes any political party could balance its budget as long as tax and spending changes do not exceed \$78 billion over five years.

- The Conservative package of new tax cuts and new spending adds up to \$89.4 billion, leaving a cumulative deficit of \$11.4 billion. Stephen Harper would have to cut more than \$13 billion in program spending in his first two years in office.
- The Liberal platform would cost \$53.8 billion over 5 years, generating surpluses totaling \$24.2 billion. Past practice suggests they would ignore pressing social needs and use these funds to pay down debt.
- The NDP platform would introduce a combination of fair taxes and new expenditures totalling \$63.4 billion and running surpluses amounting to \$14.6 billion.

What will Harper cut to make things add up? Clearly, a bigger army and tax cuts are sacred to him. He has also promised more funding to health care but in the absence of limits on privatization, more money may just end up in his corporate pals' pockets. Virtually every social program would be at risk. A Harper victory would be a defeat for public services everywhere.

Canadians have seen this kind of mean-spirited agenda at the national level before, under Paul Martin as finance minister. Massive cutbacks to social spending, underfunding of health, education and social supports. A decline in environmental health and fewer decent jobs. Downloading to provinces, and in turn, to municipalities. The rise of homelessness and a bigger gap between rich and poor Canadians. The Liberals' record is clear. Stephen Harper would just ramp it up. But Canadians are sick of it, and will not stand by as services are slashed and their rights are skewered.

Harper's economic agenda is not so "hidden" – it has played out in too many provinces. Working people from coast to coast have seen what this vicious agenda is really about – cutting services, attacking public sector jobs and wages, increasing privatization and undermining free collective bargaining. Imagine the worst of Ralph Klein, Mike Harris, Gordon Campbell, Jean Charest and Danny Williams all rolled into one federal wrecking ball – and you have Stephen Harper.

Harper must come clean, and tell Canadians what he is planning to cut.

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Majority of Canadians want independence

Our Canada Project urges voters to embrace Canada's traditions

The Our Canada Project — which was launched earlier this year before the Federal Election was called — says the vast majority of voters support its call for a return to the Canadian traditions of peace-keeping and environmental protection.

The Project — an unprecedented initiative of 25 major environmental, women's, labour, student, arts, and social justice organizations — released polling sponsored by The Council of Canadians and The Polaris Institute showing Canadians in overwhelming numbers support peace-keeping over joint combat operations with the United States, and reject President Bush's "Star Wars" program.

"The Our Canada Project says the upcoming election is going to be a watershed. We can either move closer to the Bush Administration or we can embrace our great Canadian traditions of compassion, peace-keeping, and environmental stewardship," said John Doherty, Chair of the Board of Greenpeace Canada, one of the groups signing the Our Canada declaration.

The Our Canada Project represents the first major intervention by citizens' groups in the upcoming federal election.

"While the Project is non-partisan, we urge voters to use the ballot box to affirm Canada's position as a peace-maker, defender of universal social programs, and champion of human rights", said Maude Barlow, Chair of The Council of Canadians, one of the signatory groups.

The Our Canada Project urges citizens to use the ballot box to affirm Canada's position as a peace-maker, environmental advocate, defender of universal social programs, and champion of human rights. It is within our power to create a Canada that — both at home and abroad — leads the world in the advancement of equality and social justice and the elimination of poverty and violence.

Also speaking at the launch: Father Paul Hansen and Sara Stratton (KAIROS), Paul Moist (CUPE), and Heather Allin (ACTRA).

For further information or for full poll results, contact: Guy Caron, The Council of Canadians, (613) 795-8088. or Fred Wilson, CEP, (613) 266-3044; or John Doherty, Greenpeace, (416) 735-9886



Need help with Alcohol, Drug or Family Problems?

The Construction Industry Rehabilitation Plan is set up to assist you with any problems you may be experiencing with alcohol and other drugs, family or spousal conflicts and emotional dilemmas relating to your substance abuse problem.

Confidentiality is guaranteed. In no case will your name or circumstance be made public.

In most situations we can offer full or partial financial assistance.

We at the PLAN are here for you and your family—Confidential and Caring.

If you are experiencing any problems with substance abuse, please:



Call the Plan

**Our number is 604-521-8611
toll free 1-888-521-8611**

CLR better pay attention to what their members and employees are saying

Negotiations proceeding very slowly

**Our members
in the field
are growing
more
impatient**



**COUNCIL
COMMENT**
by
Dave Flynn

It is now over a month past the expiration date of the current construction Standard Agreement, and the question on the minds of many members is, "How are negotiations going?" The short answer to that question is "very slowly."

Since the seventies, all the Building Trades Unions have been compelled to negotiate their construction agreements with the Construction Labour Relations Association under one roof through the Bargaining Council of British Columbia Building Trades Unions.

The Bargaining Council constitution was legislated in an effort to end the practice of the trades leap frogging each other in negotiations. One trade would settle and the next would strike for a better deal, creating extended periods of jobsite disruptions. Now, under one roof, the trades all bargain at the same time, settle at the same time

or strike at the same time. The problem with the system, though, is that the constitution requires that every decision requires either a double majority (a majority of trades representing a majority of members) or in some cases a two-thirds majority.

The trades are trying to avoid similar delays this time around.

The Bargaining Council met in December to elect new officers. Each trade was required to submit their trade issues and main table proposals by the end of February. CLR was given no-

proposals going forward as main table proposals. The first is duration, with the trades proposing the term of the agreement be for three years. The second is a proposal for a five-cent per hour contribution to a new fund called the Industry Promotion Fund.

CLR was then advised that the trades were ready to enter into trade negotiations under one roof in an effort to reach a timely settlement. That is where things fell off the rails.

CLR has taken the position that they will not enter into trade negotiations until after all main

table issues have been settled. Their list for the main table is considerably longer than the Bargaining Council's.

CLR is proposing a six-year duration, and they are proposing that hours of work and overtime be negotiated at the main table. The Bargaining

Council is firm in their position that hours and overtime are trade issues, and that all trade issues must be settled before main table bargaining begins. It appears that we are at an impasse before we have even sat down to exchange proposals.

The Bargaining Council Executive will be meeting in early June to consider its options. If the parties can't reach an agreement on a bargaining format, and in which order the main table and trade issues should be bargained, the Bargaining Council will have to consider making an application to the Labour Relations Board in an effort to compel CLR to come to the table. This, of course, will only add further delays to the process.

In the meantime, our members in the field are growing more impatient. They recognize that there is a growing shortage of skilled trades people. They are tired of working for enabled wage rates, and they want a new agreement with a long overdue and well deserved wage increase.

This time around the Bargaining Council and CLR better pay attention to what their members and employees are saying, because they won't have the luxury of letting negotiations drag on forever.

Industrial Rate Increase

The final rate increase negotiated in the 2000-2004 collective agreement came into effect May 1, 2004. For all industrial work, the wages and holiday pay were increased by 25 cents. This brings the base rate for carpenters on industrial projects to \$26.93. The Provincial Negotiating Committee will be seeking further wage increases in both the Commercial/Institutional and Industrial sectors in the current round of bargaining.

With fifteen unions at the table, getting the requisite numbers to move forward on any issue can be an extremely frustrating exercise. The last two rounds of negotiations took more than two years past the expiry dates of agreements to reach a settlement.

tice to commence negotiations and a Wage and Policy conference was held to establish what would be agreed to as main table demands, common to all trades.

As in the previous two rounds, most demands remained as trade issues, with only two

Workers must draw a line in the sand with government

School Union Gears Up for Fight in the Woods

By Josh Coles Provincial Organizer

Sandra Backer loves the Cariboo Interior of BC. Property is cheap, the living is relaxed and the backcountry is filled with hidden beauty.

But like many living in small towns in BC, Backer worries about the overwhelming dark cloud that hangs over the sunny hills of Cariboo Regional District.

"There is not much work in town," says Backer from her union office in Quesnel where she is the elected representative for over 200 of School District 28's employees.

The region's tourism boosters pump the four R's: "Riding, Roping, Rodeoing and Relaxing." But politicians play down the fifth R of recession, which has been caused by a forest industry stuck in a stubborn downturn.

Backer says the combination of government cutbacks and depressed economics has caused a perfect storm for the members she represents as president of BC Carpenters Union Local 2545.

"Layoffs at the mills and layoffs at government offices means fewer families in town which means layoffs at the school board," says Backer.

School District 28 is not the only administration hit with a double-whammy of cuts in government services combined with a depressed economy.

The cutback combination lights a match to the powder keg of economic depression for other School District employees represented by the BC Carpenters Union, such as in Prince George and Hope.

But there is some tweaking of the system that Backer says could improve the morale amongst her members.

"Management could use a shake-up of their own. We question their judgment on some major decisions they have made." Nazko Community School construction cost overruns were initially charged to the operating budget, jeopardizing union staffing levels, the district closed Maple Drive junior highschool and several new busses went missing off the books for a while.

"But," Backer continues, "it is ultimately workers and their unions who need to act in unison and draw a line in the sand with the government."

Backer and her membership strongly supported the HEU's "Political Protest" a province-wide action oppos-



Local 2545 President Sandra Backer at the boarded up Maple Drive School in Quesnel

ing the BC Liberals' policies and dealings, especially around Health Care and health unions. She was on the picketlines all day and says the community support for the protest was "phenomenal." She said, "The entire town was shut down for the day."

In lieu of working that day, school board employees marched on picketlines and volunteered at social agencies that have been hurt by government cutbacks. The walk-out is something Backer says her members got behind because conditions were right.

"But educating members about a walk-out is a full-time job. Strikes don't just happen, they are organized," she argues.

Organizing coordinated efforts among school districts local unions is Backer's most urgent campaign. She, along with most other BC Carpenter Union School District Local Unions, are pushing the BC Provincial Council for a full-time Business Agent dedicated to mobilizing our school board members.

Backer says the BC Carpenter Union's over 600 school district members could support a full-time representative.

"The only way to get our members to fight back more is to spend the time talking to them about the issues. We need to organize our own members and for that we need a full-time dedicated representative."

And she believes the BC Carpenters Union is the right union to resist the government because it has shown it can fight.

"The fight for Canadian Autonomy has been one of the best things about this union. It shows we can take on giants and win. Now we need to beat back the government."

International's gyrations difficult to explain**US gang trumps up charges against Local 1995****Proposals and attitude leaves me less than optimistic**

In the midst of all the continuing harassment from the International, we are once again into construction sector bargaining. Preliminary meetings have left me feeling less than optimistic. Considering Construction Labour Relation's proposals and attitude leaves me less than optimistic. Their proposals include, amongst other things, a six-year agreement, maintaining frameworks, and all the sunset nonsense – not very realistic, considering the employment forecasts. However, I have always taken the position in any negotiations that, regardless of the hurdles, an agreement eventually will have to be concluded.

This, of course, does not apply to our dealings with the International. They recently paid us \$60,000 in court costs for the Section 10B lawsuit. This, even though their position was that we had lost? Now, we have – get ready for it – the sequel to 10B: 10H!

An attempt to explain all the gyrations these characters are going through in their attack is almost impossible to

**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**
by
Len Embree

put into print. What I can say is that the end result is that McCarron has informed Local Union 1995 Vancouver-New Westminster that he is calling a trusteeship hearing to address – get ready for it, again – their not swearing in the duly elected officers of 1995 to allegiance to

tional Constitution when he asked for one.

All of the foregoing, of course, instigated and put into play by no other than David Wright himself. Did I forget to mention, by the way, that David Wright is an International Representative, hired by and reporting

eighty-some members of Local 1907 in the Fraser Valley.

Quite humorous, but also quite sobering when it is realized that this gang from the US is prepared to place the largest Local Union in our province under trusteeship and remove officers who were duly elected in a democratic process (despite the International's well-financed campaign against them), on some phoney, trumped-up issues that McCarron's agents manufactured, and then appoint some cronies to run the Local Union on their behalf. This, all to take place in a country foreign to them. I'm not surprised, but I

We look forward to the next round in this struggle.

In an ongoing parallel plot, we have their other flunky, Wayne Cox from Victoria, trying to decide whether he is in or out of the Provincial Council.

One time, he is attempting to raid members out of the Provincial Council and into his Local Union. The next, he's got McCarron writing letters demanding he be appointed to the Provincial Council Executive Board, along with his crony, Shan O'Hara.

Now, let me see – same game, different players. Not really – same game, same players: McCarron, Smith, Cox, Autzen. So, now we have Autzen suing the Provincial Council for conspiring to not be nice to him, Cox trying to raid the Provincial Council, Wright laying out some plot in the hopes of compromising his own Local Union, and McCarron as the grand master wielding the club.

All of this is in the name of some kind of trade unionism.

The membership in B.C. remain unimpressed and uninterested in playing their game or in being connected to this concept of trade unionism.

Stay tuned!

International Reps appoint themselves in Valley

An intriguing development has occurred in the Fraser Valley. Chilliwack-Mission Local 1907 long-time Business Agent Steve Mohr has been replaced by two full-time paid International Representatives. In a letter from the Local 1907 Executive, Doug Urquhart and Dave Wright announced their appointment for the eighty-some member carpenter local. No local union nominations or elections were held. Urquhart and Wright are both Representatives on the International UBCJA payroll.

"The fact that the new BAs are International staff speaks volumes about how the UBCJA feels about democracy" said Len Embree. "The BC Carpenters Union will do everything it can to reach out to the Local 1907 members who we know are upset about not having a right to vote for their Representative."

himself (McCarron), remitting per capita tax payments late, and the "killer": changing the membership number of David Wright! Oh, and I almost forgot, not giving a member (David Wright) a copy of the Interna-

to Douglas McCarron? He most likely has a bundle of International Constitutions under his pillow. This is the same Wright who recently was appointed, along with Doug Urquhart, to act as Business Agents for the

need to say very clearly that this is not Iraq; it's not Ontario, nor is it even Alberta. It's British Columbia – Canada! They cannot win this fight, regardless of their arrogance and presumption of power.

Ferries should be built in BC by Local 506 Shipbuilders**Campbell prepares to ship our jobs offshore says Eaton**

By Bob Eaton, Local 506

BC Ferries Services appears to be planning to award contracts for the construction of two Super "C" Class ferries (with an option for a third) to a foreign shipyard either in South Korea, Germany or Finland. This is an outrageous insult to all BC shipyard workers, the industry and the province as a whole.

For the past thirty years, all new ferry construction has been done right here in BC with the economic benefits flowing back into the provincial economy. This \$220 million project represents at least 1,000 direct jobs and 500 indirect jobs over three years—4500 person-years of work. The loss of this work threatens the viability of a shipbuilding and ship repair industry on the West Coast. What makes matters worse is the fact that BC Ferries has disqualified the Washington Marine Group, a local shipyard company, from even participating in the bidding process.

David Hahn, the American CEO of BC Ferries, justifies this move by saying BC shipyards are not qualified to bid on this work, claiming they don't have the resources or manpower to complete such a large project. This is utter nonsense.

BC shipyard workers have built the entire fleet of vessels, including the larger "Spirit Class" ferries. By all estimates, the quality of construction has been second to none and the direct and indirect economic benefit to the province has been substantial. The spin-offs flowing to everything from naval architecture to machinery manufacturers to flooring companies, sheet metal, refrigeration and furniture manufacturers, help create a nucleus of local skills to sustain BC industry.

The real issue behind Hahn's move can be found by following the almighty dollar. You see, these foreign governments subsidize their shipyards. Canadian ship-

yards have not received any government subsidies since the mid 1970s. The result is that BC and Canadian workers and their companies are forced to compete on an uneven playing field.

In an effort to somewhat level the playing field without offering subsidies, the federal government developed a National Shipbuilding Policy that offers ship owners structured financing incentives that can provide up to a 15 per cent benefit in the cost of overall construction. As far as we know, BC Ferries has not even bothered to apply for this potential benefit.

If BC Ferries awards this work offshore, they could face a 25 per cent tariff to bring the ships back to BC. On \$220 million that equals a whopping \$54 million penalty to have the work done overseas. Considering BC Ferries needs to spend over \$2 billion over the next 15 years on vessel replacement, the effect is staggering.

When Vancouver Shipyards, a Washington Marine Group company, beat out five foreign shipyards to build a new ferry for the Bowen Island run, guess what? BC Ferries killed the bid, offering the foreign yards another chance to out-do a local company. This behaviour illustrates just how low David Hahn and BC Ferries will go to ruin shipbuilding here in BC. Vancouver Shipyard was also low bid on the mid-life refits of the five "C Class" ferries in direct competition with yards from five other countries including China, Korea, Taiwan and the United States. this contract is potentially worth \$175 million. Our members have now completed the refits on the Queen of Coquitlam and the Queen of Cowichan.

With such a demonstrated track record of competitiveness internationally and the positive investment in BC, why would BC Ferries exclude local bidders? One possibility is that American CEO David Hahn intends to apply

to the federal government to waive the 25 per cent tariff, falsely claiming that British Columbians cannot handle the job.

If David Hahn were to try such a stunt in his own country he would quickly find out that the Jones Act legislation fully protects US shipyards and their workers by prohibiting American ship construction outside the US. Why can't Canadians have the same protection?

Personal Information Protection Act

This January, the Personal Information Protection Act came into effect. Its purpose is to govern the collection, use and disclosure of personal information by organizations in a manner that recognizes both the right of individuals to protect their personal information and the need of organizations to collect, use or disclose personal information for purposes that a reasonable person would consider appropriate in the circumstances,

Organizations are required to develop and follow policies to meet their obligations under this Act.

The Provincial Council of Carpenters has adopted a set of rules and appointed David Flynn as privacy officer to process and deal with requests and complaints under the Act.

Turn to page six for information about the Carpentry Workers Benefit and Pension Plan privacy policy