

Labour Reporter

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Several important disputes underway in province

Since August 15, some 5,500 employees of CBC radio and television have been locked out across Canada.

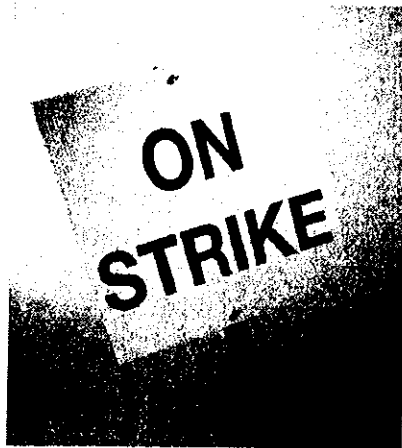
Reporters, news anchors, technicians, camera operators, producers and other corporation employees are off the job because management wants to hire new people primarily on a temporary or contract basis.

The CBC already has 27.7% of its employees working as temporary, contract or casual. That generally means no pension, no benefits and no sick pay or holiday pay.

The Canadian Media Guild represents the workers and has been trying for fifteen months to negotiate something sensible with the CBC bosses. Picketing has been going on in Saskatoon, Prince Albert, La Ronge and Regina.

1,700 employees of the city of Regina have been on the picket line since August 31 attempting to persuade the municipal government to drop its

effort to get a cheap deal with its unionized staff.



The inside and outside city employees - members of CUPE - are out as are drivers mechanics and support staff of the transit system - members of Amalgamated Transit Union. A key outstanding point in the negotiations is the city's refusal to apply any wage increase for 2004. They want the workers to take a zero for last year and accept a \$500 signing bonus instead.

Recent sizable pay increases

for the city police and for the city councilors themselves have made union members angry with what the employer is offering. 5% over three years is what the city has been proposing, despite the fact that Buffalo Pound water treatment staff got 7% over three years and city of Saskatoon employees received 6.5%.

Thirteen employees of the Salvation Army thrift store on Albert Street in Regina are on strike for a decent wage offer, full-time work and job security. So far none of that has not been forthcoming. The workers are members of the United Food and Commercial Workers.

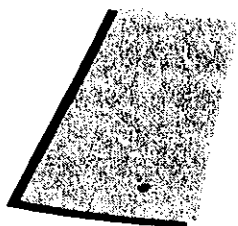
Members of the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union who work at the Sobey's grocery store on south Albert Street in Regina are also on strike, attempting to convince management that its monetary offer is completely inadequate.

Jobs growing, but the trend is weak

"The trend is good, but it is a weak trend," says Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress commenting on Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey for June 2005.

"The good news in these statistics is really dampened by two factors: too many are left behind and the quality of newly-created jobs is questionable," explains Georgetti. Summer job creation was soft and there are 1.2 million Canadians who want to work but are left out by the economy. Moreover, in net terms, new jobs are largely in the self-employed category, which are often insecure.

Statistics Canada's Labour Force Survey reports that in June 2005, the unemployment edged down slightly to 6.7 per cent from a rate of 6.8 per cent in May. In June, contrary to previous months, manufacturing actually gained 6,100 jobs. However that sector has accumulated losses of 156,000 jobs since November 2002. The employment rate for students aged 20 to 24 is down a full three percentage points compared with last year. In June, there were 1,162,100 Canadians who wanted to work but did not have a job.



Darla Leard stamp

She's the face of Saskatchewan's future and the face of Canada's labour movement. Darla Leard is a young Aboriginal woman with a commitment to social justice rooted in the labour movement. Leard is featured on the new fifty-cent stamp unveiled to commemorate Saskatchewan's centennial. Leard works for the Canadian Labour Congress as a representative in the prairie region, with responsibilities in Calgary and Saskatoon.

For her part, Leard is both surprised and proud to be featured on the stamp. "I thought you had to be the Queen, a dead politician or someone extraordinary to get your face on a postage stamp. I guess I was wrong and that in a place like Canada anything is possible for ordinary working people," she said.

Regions abandoned

The federal government is doing a grave disservice to Canadians by closing nine Public Services Commission (PSC) offices, according to the Public Service Alliance of Canada.

The closings will particularly affect those living in Northern Canada, the Atlantic and Saskatchewan.

"The federal government is supposed to provide services to Canadians across the country" said the Madeleine David, national director of the Agriculture Union, a PSAC component. "By closing the PSC district offices, they will deprive millions of Canadians of access to the quality services they have in larger centres."

The district office closures will result in the loss of 94 full-time jobs and an unspecified number of term workers. David indicated that the intent of the Public Service Modernization Act is to delegate staffing functions to lower levels of management. This, in turn, requires a larger monitoring and enforcement function on the part of the PSC which will now have a reduced capacity.

The government announced that it is reducing its current service to seven locations: Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver. The closures will occur in Victoria, Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Iqaluit, Regina, Quebec, Moncton, Charlottetown and St. John's.

Young workers paid 25 per cent less than 30 years ago

"You're a young Canadian with your whole future in front of you..." meant a lot more a generation ago than it does today.

Today, being a Canadian under 25 means even though you're better educated, you'll be paid less and be less likely to find a job compared to your parents in the 1970s and 80s according to a new report released by the Canadian Labour Congress to mark the United Nations' International Youth Day (August 12).

"Better Educated, Badly Paid and Under-employed: A Statistical Picture of Young Workers in Canada" says young working men, aged 15 to 24, earn 25 per cent less than young men of the same age group did a generation ago (in real terms, adjusted for inflation). Young women seem to do a bit better, earning 20 per cent below what was paid to young women in the workforce 30 years ago.

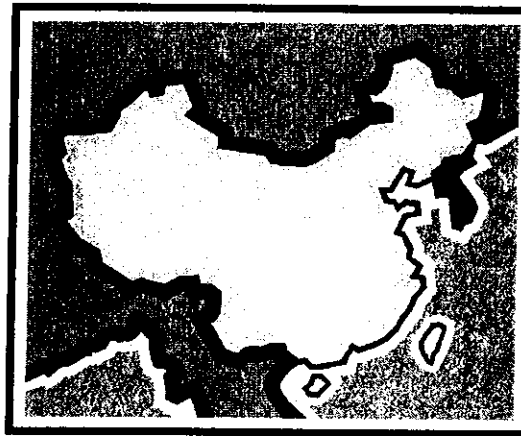
The study also points out how, compared to all other workers of the same age group, young workers of colour experience higher unemployment, longer unemployment, lower salaries and fewer promotions, even when they are Canadian born.



Travel alert

Going to the States? Start planning ahead.

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security says that no one will be allowed to enter the U.S. without a passport by the end of next year.



Union busting in China

On April 17, 2005, 10,000 workers at the Uniden Electronics factory in Shenzhen, China walked off the job to protest management's refusal

to allow them to set up a trade union in the factory. The Japanese-owned factory produces cordless telephones for Wal-Mart.

While Chinese labour law only permits workers to join the state-approved All China Federation of Trade Unions, it does allow for workers to elect factory-level worker representatives and to negotiate with management on wages and working conditions. However, these rights are usually not respected or enforced in foreign-owned export factories.

On April 20, riot police were sent in to prevent workers from marching out of the factory compound to stage a protest, and protest leaders were reportedly clubbed by the police. The workers responded

by staging a sit-in. Apparently, local government officials had feared the march would encourage anti-Japanese protests.

On April 25, Uniden workers were back on the job assembling Wal-Mart telephones. It seems local officials put

considerable pressure on workers to return to work, threatening that foreign investors would shift production elsewhere.

Several strike leaders are reported to have disappeared and are feared to be imprisoned.

Unions get hit

An extensive new study by two of Canada's largest unions, the National Union of Public and General Employees and United Food and Commercial Workers Canada, concludes that the basic human right to freedom of association has been abused and eroded by Canadian governments at all levels over the past two decades.

The study, "*Collective Bargaining in Canada: Human Right or Canadian Illusion?*" cites 170 pieces of legislation since 1982 that deny or undermine freedom of association despite the protections of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

Health minister admits private clinics hurt health care

Federal Health Minister Ujjal Dosanjh told a Vancouver radio station recently that "when you have a lot of private clinics you will have all of the energy and all of the assets and all of the personnel drained from the public system, and the public system would be far worse that it is today."

Dosanjh also stated for-profit, private clinics are "absolutely not a panacea" for long wait times, and he admitted they are "not any more efficient or less expensive" than public health services.

Big brother's helpers

Sixty-three per cent of U.S. corporations responding to a survey by an e-mail security vendor said they either employ or intend to employ staff to read and control outbound e-mail.

Off-shore outsourcing

Despite recent publicity about the hidden costs of off-shoring jobs, IBM plans to add 14,000 employees in India this year.

Meanwhile in Europe and the U.S., IBM is laying off 13,000 workers.

Important Upcoming Events for Trade Unionists

On the Side of the People a new book about the history of labour in Saskatchewan written by Jim Warren will be published by Coteau Books in late October. Watch for it in stores

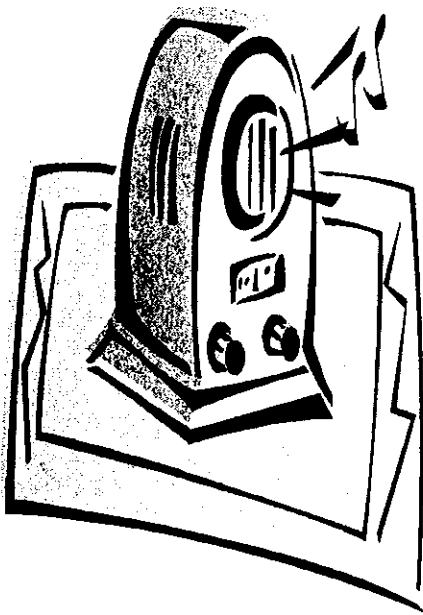
SFL 50th annual convention, Saskatoon Centennial Auditorium, Nov 2-4

Shift Work Conference — Regina, March 28, 29 2006

Pensions Conference - February 8,9,10 2006 Ramada Hotel, Regina

Year in Review Conference (labour law, arbitrations, LRB and court decisions) Bessborough Hotel, Saskatoon, March 2, 3 2006

Copper Leaf Campaign The Canada and Saskatchewan Health Coalition's copper leaf fundraising effort is asking people with signed or unsigned leaves or money to forward those to the SFL office



Tune in to Labourstart

LabourStart, the online news service that serves the international trade union movement, has launched a brand-new radio station on the Internet.

Radio Labourstart broadcasts 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Programming includes a mix of news, views and music.

You'll hear songs that fan the flames of discontent by artists like Woody Guthrie, Bob Dylan, Pete Seeger and Bruce Springsteen. And, there's a daily three-minute labour news report from the Workers Independent News Service.

All you need is an Internet connection, a sound card and speakers. Learn more at <http://radio.laborstart.org/>

Telus-TWU labour dispute pivotal in telecommunications industry

On July 21, 2005, B.C.'s Telecommunications Workers Union members took a stand against Telus. When Telus decided to impose a contract, they set up picket lines across B.C. and Alberta. The offer was never even negotiated with the union.

"This dispute is about workers' right to job security and a decent standard of living versus corporate greed," said Telecommunications Workers Union president Bruce Bell.

"We've tried every imaginable way to work out some kind of accommodation with the company, but the people who are running their show want to break our union."

Telus locked out 13,700 TWU members on April 25, 2005. On May 12, Telus stopped collecting union dues. The company sent its contract offer directly to the members instead of negotiating with the elected bargaining committee.

Then Telus demanded that the TWU vote on the offer. TWU members have gone nearly five years without a revised agreement. In 1999, Telus merged with BC Tel. The members of four unions became a single unit under the TWU, but the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) ruled that the TWU contract would not apply to everyone - a revised agreement would have to be negotiated. Negotiations

began on November 1, 2000. Since then Telus has refused to negotiate in a meaningful way.

The Canada Industrial Relations Board has found that Telus committed unfair labour practices and poisoned the collective bargaining process, interfered in the administration of a trade union and communicated with union members in an "insidious" way to create a loss of face for the union.

In January 2004, the board ordered Telus to offer binding arbitration to the TWU. In February 2005, the board quashed its own order for binding arbitration, but upheld that Telus had committed unfair labour practices.

Telus wants to take job security out of the contract, which will give the company the freedom to move jobs out of Canada.

In July 2005, the federal minister of labour offered to appoint a special mediator. The TWU welcomed the offer, but Telus turned it down and instead announced plans to force its offer on TWU members.

Telus has a history of customer service problems. Two years ago, Telus' decision to cut thousands of jobs led to it being cited by the CRTC for poor customer service.

"Telus complains that our contracting-out language restricts their ability to compete," said Bruce Bell.

Forced labour

At least 12.3 million people are trapped in forced labour around the world, says a new study from the International Labour Organization.

ILO Director-General Juan Somavia calls forced labour "a social evil which has no place in the modern world."

The report, "A Global Alliance Against Forced Labour," says that nearly 10 million people are exploited through forced labour in the private economy, rather than imposed directly by states. Of these, the study estimates a minimum of 2.4 million to be victims of human trafficking.

The report also provides the first global estimate of the profits generated by the exploitation of trafficked women, children and men—\$32 billion each year or an average of \$13,000 from every single trafficked forced labourer.

"Forced labour represents the underside of globalization and denies people their basic rights and dignity," Somavia said. "To achieve a fair globalization and decent work for all, it is imperative to eradicate forced labour."

The report is the most comprehensive analysis undertaken by an intergovernmental organization of the facts and underlying causes of contemporary forced labour.

Some 9.5 million of the forced labourers are in Asia.



Canadians need more vacation

Workers in several European countries enjoy more time off than Canadian workers, according to the first global vacation survey commissioned by Expedia.

France leads the pack with a whopping average of 39 vacation days given per year, followed by Germany with 27, the Netherlands with 25 and Great Britain at 23.

North Americans are at the bottom of the list with an average of 21 vacation days per year in Canada, and a paltry 12 in the U.S.

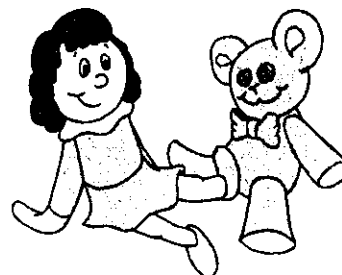
Barbie's clothes made by child labour

Reports from Mexico indicate that children as young as 13 are sewing "Barbie" label costumes for Mattel that are sold to children roughly the same age in North America.

According to union officials from the Mexican Revolutionary Confederation of Workers and Campesinos (CROC), workers between 13 and 15 years of age are labouring at a Mattel supply factory in Tepeji del Rio in Mexico's Hidalgo state.

According to the CROC, underage workers are working nine or more hours a day in violation of Mexican labour law.

In addition to exploiting underage workers, Mattel's Mexican supplier, Rubie's of New York, is also being accused of exposing employees to unhealthy and unsafe working conditions, compulsory pregnancy testing, locking workers in the factory, and failing to provide health care.



A Labour Minute



Inter-racial Solidarity

On November 22, 1919 four union organizers; Lem Williams, Stanley O'Rourke, J.P. Bouchillon and Thomas Gains were in the area of Bogalusa, Louisiana helping the newly formed Colored Timber Workers Union get up and running.

They were opposed by the Great Southern Lumber Company, particularly its vice-president and Bogalusa town mayor William S. Sullivan who had sent thugs to kidnap, beat, torture, burn the homes and generally terrorize union activists and supporters.

Colored Timber Workers Union president Sol Ducas was being sought by the company goons who meant to do him harm.

The four white organizers - members of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners - could have turned their backs and walked away from the violence. Instead they were protecting Brother Ducas and attempting to give him safe passage out of the area when they were all killed by racist company thugs.

The courage and solidarity of the Carpenters Union members made them martyrs and heroes of the working class.

Labour Minutes recount the great stories of working people and their unions and take just a minute to read

Goings On

Ready for Work Program

Ready for Work facilitators will talk to high school students about safety on the job and workers' rights.

A new group of facilitators has been trained and are available now to speak to classes. For information contact the SFL Ready for Work Coordinator at 924-8576.

This is a great program, that saves lives. Your kids' school should make use of it.

Labour College courses

The Labour College of Canada offers great labour education programs in Ottawa.

Regional programs are also held at other locations across Canada. For information visit the website - www.labourcollege.ca

SIAST offers Labour courses

The four campuses of the Saskatchewan Institute of Allied Science and Technology in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, Moose Jaw and Regina offer courses in Labour Relations, Human Resources and other classes - including night classes - that would be of interest to working people, particularly those workers interested in being more involved in their union.

Get a SIAST calendar and check it out.

Need a Union...Call Us

The Federation of Labour welcomes calls from working people who want to bring a union to their place of employment.

If you are working in a non-union workplace, and want to improve job security, wages, employee benefit plans, hours of work, holidays or pensions, call us and we will put you in touch with an organizer.

The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour can be reached at 525-0197 in Regina.

SFL Summer Camp 2005

The 17th annual SFL Summer Camp was held from August 7th to 13th at the Prairie Christian Training Centre in Fort Qu'Appelle. There were 45 campers aged 13-16 and 23 Counsellors, Recreation Staff and Youth Activity Coordinators (YACs).

This was a transition year for the Camp with only 16 returning campers and 29 first year campers, however, camp went extremely well and it was great to meet so many new, young people.

The educational sessions included the traditional "Isms" session, which focused on discrimination in our society. We attempted to identify the "Mr. Bigs" of the world and what these people/companies do to exclude certain minority groups. We bargained our camp Collective Agreement and came to an agreement without a strike or lockout. This year, a new session on Addictions was introduced and hopefully over the next few years we will be able to refine this session to make it even better. We also examined the issues of Walmartization and corporate greed through fun activities and games put on by the counsellors. Cara Banks, the Ready for Work Coordinator for the SFL spoke to the campers about OH&S to get them thinking about their cur-

rent and/or future workplaces. The week finished off with an Organizing for Social Change session with a particular focus on the "Make Poverty History" Campaign. Campers had an opportunity to put their plans into action using the information and tools they learned about all week and this session got everyone thinking about our world and what we can do to make a difference.

On top of all of the educational sessions, the campers also have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities in the afternoons and evenings. The activities included playing games at the beach like ultimate Frisbee, rubber chicken, bocce ball, miniature golf, tubing, Guardsbee, scream, Frisbee golf, trash ball, making hemp bracelets, tie dying, Henna tattooing and much more. A special.

Thanks to Mark Hollyoak and Brian Haughey of RWDSU for the excellent boat and tubing rides! Other memorable events were the initiative tasks for the locals, an amazing performance by *Del Sur Al Norte*, the talent show and Monte Carlo night, and the infamous Friday night dance.

This camp is successful because affiliates and individual union members take time to support our youth. Unions, locals, labour councils, and the SFL all contribute financially. We receive donations of union promotional items from around the province and across the country. Unions cover the wages of counsellors and this assistance is greatly appreciated. This year the following unions helped with providing the following counsellors, recreation staff, and youth activity coordinators

Rahil Ahmad, GSU
Julie Arie
Colin Byas
April Cooper, SFL
Barbara Byers
Sarah Cassidy, SFL
Stacy Durning, SFL
Crystal Goebel, SFL
Jessica Hanna, RWDSU
Larry Hubich, SFL
Ryan Hubich, SFL
Larry Kowalchuk
Darla Leard, CLC
Benjamin Matheson, SFL
Jesse Matheson, SFL
Holly Morris, SFL
Markus Rubrecht, SFL
Mackenzie Sawchyn, SFL
Amber Shuba, SFL
Heather Szponski, SUN
Steve Torgerson, SFL
Terry Zahorski, CUPW