

# The Transmitter



## Standing in Solidarity with Quebec Student Protesters

Cover photo courtesy of Paolo Réhel, Business Agent - Québec

- **Message from the President**
- **2012 TWU Convention**
- **Say No to Bill C-377!**
- **Montreal Student Protests**
- **Ride2Survive**
- **When Disaster Strikes: Is Your Family Prepared?**

## Message from the President



Dear Members,

It was a pleasure to see over 110 Telecommunications Workers Union (TWU) delegates representing 50 locals as well as visitors and invited guests during the TWU 2012 Convention which took place this year in Richmond, B.C., from April 30 to May 4.

The TWU welcomes four newly-elected Business Agents into our Burnaby, Edmonton, Montreal and Scarborough offices. Please read a short biography accompanied by

The law restricts freedom of assembly, protest, or picketing in Quebec without prior police approval and also places restrictions upon education employees' right to strike. This law is a fundamental attack on democratic principles.

The Federal government does not have very much to be proud of either. From the introduction of the private members Bill C-377 to the recent back-to-work legislation against federally legislated workers, unions are clearly under attack. It

**“We must continue to stand together in solidarity in order to send a clear message to the government: We have had enough!”**

a photo of each new Business Agent on page 6 of this Transmitter.

Following a mandate from the previous year's convention and after much research, the Constitution Committee introduced a number of options for constitutional change. Convention delegates passed a recommendation that Business Agents be hired rather than elected, and cease to be on the Executive Council. The proposal for a new Executive Council that would consist of members from the workplace and the TWU Table Officers (President, Vice-Presidents and Secretary-Treasurer) was also passed. I would like to thank the Constitution Committee members and convention delegates for their hard work and dedication throughout this process.

More detailed information on the constitutional changes and the Finance Committee's recommendation for a dues increase will be available in the coming months. We expect meetings for voting to ratify these changes to begin in September. These are significant changes which are important to the future of our union.

Contract negotiations represented an important part of this year's achievements for the Union. Both Shaw and Tiger Tel Communications ratified new collective agreements.

May 22, 2012, marked the 100th day of protests for students in Montreal. The Quebec Liberal government has been unapologetic about its draconian measures after introducing Bill 78, an emergency legislation the provincial Liberal government rushed through the National Assembly to suppress the province-wide student strike.

is not enough that the government is selling out to corporations as good Canadian jobs are increasingly offshored. Now, Canadian union workers have to look on as the government removes their right to strike. This is completely outrageous and can only serve to do irreparable harm to the bargaining process and to future labour relations between federal employers and their workers. At the first hint of job action, announcing that workers will be legislated back to work makes a mockery of the whole process of free collective bargaining. We must continue to stand together in solidarity in order to send a clear message to the government: We have had enough!

Attending local meetings in your area and visiting [www.twu-stt.ca](http://www.twu-stt.ca) is a good way to keep abreast of Union news within the TWU. Please contact your local Shop Steward or Union representative should you have any questions.

In Solidarity,

George Doubt

TWU National President

# 2012 TWU Convention

This year's annual TWU Convention took place in Richmond, B.C., from April 30 to May 4, at the Vancouver Sheraton Airport Hotel. George Doubt, TWU National President, opened convention week with a speech to delegates representing 50 locals, Executive Council members, invited guests and visitors (see Hotline dated May 2, 2012, for a link to his speech).

The guests, among others throughout the week, included representatives from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), Communications, Energy and Paperworkers (CEP), BC Federation of Labour, and the B.C. New Democratic Party (NDP). The TWU is grateful for their attendance and continued support.



Photo submitted by James Orino, local 208

From L to R: George Doubt, TWU National President, with Adrian Dix, B.C. NDP leader, during convention.

Adrian Dix, B.C. NDP leader, addressed members on the fourth day of convention and spoke about key issues affecting Canadians, including the importance of job creation and supporting local businesses. He said, "Businesses in Canada who do the right thing are being hurt by the governments who do not support them." Mr. Dix denounced governments who, instead of investing in education and job creation, import labour only to pay foreign workers lesser wages to the detriment of Canadian workers.

Delegates were also delighted to hear from Jim Sinclair, President, B.C. Federation of Labour, and later in the week from Dave Coles, President, CEP. Brother Sinclair and Brother Coles are long-time TWU convention guests and it is always a pleasure to hear them address members. Brother Sinclair spoke about issues affecting the labour movement, safety in the workplace, and the importance of standing up against the right wing and Harper government that champion telecom foreign ownership and the



Photo submitted by James Orino, local 208

Michael Thompson, TWU National Secretary-Treasurer addressing convention delegates during his opening speech.

cruel exporting of good jobs and profits. Brother Coles discussed the implications of foreign ownership in the telecommunications industry and encouraged union members to "mobilize...hit the streets, and fight together with campaigns that unite the public and private sector unions and the public." He went on to urge members to not despair despite the Harper government's nearsightedness and to continue fighting for fair legislation.

Due to a decline in bargaining unit members over the years, the Union has had to find ways to save money and exercise greater fiscal responsibility. This has meant cutting many programs, restricting Federation of Labour participation, being more selective about which grievances go to arbitration and, unfortunately, putting education courses on hold. During this convention, the Education Committee was pleased to have its budget approved which will enable a number of Shop Steward courses to be offered in the coming year.



Photo submitted by James Orino, local 208

2012 Convention Ballot Committee. From L to R: Betty Carrasco, V-P, Linda Miles, local 1, Robin Arndt, BA, Michael Thompson, Secretary-Treasurer, Tony Zacharias, TWU retiree, Michael Stead, local 51, Pierre-Richard Joseph, local 602.



Photo submitted by James Orfino, local 208

As directed by the 2011 convention, the Constitution Committee brought forward a number of proposals for constitutional change. The convention passed the following recommendation:

- 1) *The union will commence hiring Business Agents, similar to most other unions. Business Agents will no longer be elected at annual conventions.*
- 2) *The governing body of the union, the National Executive Council, will consist of the following elected positions:*
  - a. *President*
  - b. *Vice-President(s) (currently two)*
  - c. *Secretary-Treasurer*
  - d. *Provincial Executive Officers as follows:*

*one per province with a local, plus one for the first 2500 members in the province, plus one additional for each 2500 members or portion thereof. Using the current membership count, that is 4 officers for BC, 3 for Alberta, and two each for Ontario and Quebec. A Provincial Executive Officer will be an member who is not a paid officer as such; and would normally be in the workplace.*

*The TWU-STT Convention will still be the highest governing body of the union.*

*The President, VP(s), and Secretary-Treasurer carry out the day-to-day decisions.*

*They meet with the Provincial Executive Officers at least four times a year to govern the union.*

More detailed information on the constitutional changes will be available in the coming months.

The Finance Committee's recommendation for a dues increase from 1.7% to 2% was approved by convention. Meetings for voting to ratify these changes are expected to begin in September.

Convention also passed a recommendation to only allow TWPP members the right to vote on changes to Constitution Article XIV (Pension Trustees). TWU members will receive more information later this year before voting on the recommendation.

Elections also took place this year (please see page 5 for election results). Not all BAs will be returning for another mandate. It is with gratitude that we recognize outgoing BAs Cindy Orivolo and Maria Zonni as well as Martin Cabral and Alyson Williams (who both left their positions prior to the 2012 Convention), and Dale Warner (who left after the 2012 Convention). The TWU convention Chair, Chris Stephens, announced that he was stepping down. We thank Brother Stephens for his dedication, hard work and for the many laughs throughout the last eight conventions (Vice-Chair in 2007 and Chair from 2008-2012), which includes a special convention, bargaining convention and the annual convention.



Photo submitted by James Orfino, local 208

From L to R: Dave Michie, Vice-Chair, and Chris Stephens, Chair, from 2012 Convention.

A lot of work goes into preparing for the annual TWU convention. The TWU has a wonderful staff and we take this opportunity to thank them and everyone who helped to organize the event.

For more 2012 TWU convention highlights, please go to [www.twu-stt.ca](http://www.twu-stt.ca) and look for the TWU Hotlines dated April 29 to May 4, 2012.

# 2012 TWU Election Results

**VICE PRESIDENT ALBERTA (1) 3-year term**  
John Carpenter - acclaimed

**BUSINESS AGENT – CALGARY (1) 3-year term**  
Ivana Niblett

**BUSINESS AGENT – EDMONTON (1) 3-year term**  
Joe Benn – acclaimed

**BUSINESS AGENT – SCARBOROUGH (2) 3-year term**  
John Hockley  
Tricia Watt

**BUSINESS AGENT – MONTREAL (1) 3-year term**  
Isabelle Miller - acclaimed

**BUSINESS AGENT – MONTREAL (1)**  
1 year remainder of term  
Hans-Woosly Balan

**BUSINESS AGENT – BURNABY (3) 3-year term**  
Dave DiMaria  
Liz Fletcher  
Perry Pasqualetto

**ALTERNATE BUSINESS AGENT – QUEBEC (1)**  
2 years remainder of term  
Yves Legendre - acclaimed

**ALTERNATE BUSINESS AGENT – QUEBEC (1)**  
1 year remainder of term  
Pierre-Richard Joseph – acclaimed

**ALTERNATE BUSINESS AGENT – QUEBEC (1)**  
2 years remainder of term  
Holly Lawson - acclaimed

**ALTERNATE BUSINESS AGENT – ONTARIO (1)**  
2 years remainder of term  
Wendy Haill

**CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE (3) 2-year term**  
Steve Lewis  
Czar Loquia  
Guy Mousseau  
Nathan Beausoleil – 2nd Alt.  
Bryant Boyd – 1st Alt.



*Photos submitted by James Orfino, local 208.*

**CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE (1)**  
1 year remainder of term  
Denise Chisholm

**FINANCE COMMITTEE (3) 2-year term**  
Donna Hokiro  
Wendy Haill  
Brenda Forward  
Steve McWhirter – 1st Alt.  
Grant Beattie – 2nd Alt.

**FINANCE COMMITTEE (2)**  
1 year remainder of term  
Michael Phillips  
Lori Travis

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE (3) 2-year term**  
Roy Driver  
Paul Hutchinson  
Nancy McCurrach  
Brian Fowlow – Alt.  
Kira Kirk – Alt.

**EDUCATION COMMITTEE (1)**  
1 year remainder of term  
Maxime Deveau - acclaimed

**TWPP Trustee (1) 6-year term**  
Carol Nagy

**CONVENTION CHAIR**  
Dave Michie – acclaimed

**CONVENTION VICE-CHAIR**  
Steve McWhirter - acclaimed

# TWU Welcomes Newly-Elected Business Agents



Elizabeth Fletcher, Burnaby

A long-time labour activist, Elizabeth Fletcher was hired by B.C. Tel in 1980 and has been a proud Union member since. Sister Fletcher's history of activism within the TWU is extensive, having served as a Shop Steward, Councillor, Vice President, President, Secretary-Treasurer, and Political Action Coordinator within several locals throughout the years. She has sat on a number of TWU committees, most notably the Finance Committee and local Health and Safety Committees. Sister Fletcher served on the Board of Directors for VanCity and the Canadian Center for Policy Alternatives (both from 2007-2009) as well as the VanTel/Safeway Credit Union (2006-2007). An NDP provincial and federal campaign volunteer since the early 90's, she continues to remain involved in the community and trade union initiatives.

Hans-Woosly Balan, Québec

Hans-Woosly Balan was first hired by Clearnet (later acquired by Telus) in 1999 and has represented the TWU since 2005 as a Shop Steward and local 602 Vice-President since 2010. Brother Balan was voted in as a Business Agent, Quebec, at the 2012 Convention, after working as an Alternate Business Agent since 2011. He has sat as Chair on the TWU Human Rights Committee and also brings with him over six years of labour education experience. In addition, Brother Balan has been a member in good standing of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) since 2009. With loving support from his wife and two children, he hopes to continue to grow in the labour movement.



John Hockley, Ontario

John Hockley brings with him over 21 years of union experience. Following many years as a Shop Steward and union activist with CUPW, Brother Hockley was hired by Clearnet in 1999 before the company was acquired by Telus in 2000. He has been a TWU member since 2004, working hard for the Union through promoting, training, and TWU committee involvement. Brother Hockley has been an executive in local 502 since 2005, a member of the Political Action Committee since 2008 and was on the Finance Committee until he was elected as a Business Agent. He shares that he is honoured to have been elected and looks forward to servicing his assigned locals and helping the TWU move forward.

Joe Benn, Edmonton

Joe Benn has been a proud union member since 1989 when he was hired by Alberta Government Telephones (AGT) which was then represented by the IBEW. Following the merger of the Alberta and BC Telcos, Brother Benn became involved with the first TWU Executive in Edmonton, local 207, in 2000. He has since served as a Shop Steward, Vice President, Councillor/Delegate and President of local 207 and as a seated delegate on the Millennium Bargaining Committee. Brother Benn has worked on several TWU committees, including National Operator Service Steering, National Quality of Service, local 207 Grievance Committee and local 207 Bylaw Committee. He is a certified TWU instructor and has an Adult Education background dating back to his 22 years of service with the telephone company.



# Adopt-a-Worker Campaign

The Adopt-a-Worker campaign was created by the United Steelworkers (USW), local 1005, in support of the 778 workers in Alma, Quebec, who have been locked out since December 31, 2011, by their employer Rio Tinto Alcan. The aim of the campaign is to raise \$77,800 a month on the basis of a \$100 contribution per Alma worker from local unions, individuals and organizations across the country.

Local 1005 USW is appealing to the greater public to help make the campaign a success by contributing whatever amount people can afford and asking others to do the same. This mobilization effort will serve to inform workers from coast to coast about what Rio Tinto Alcan is doing and the courageous struggle of the Alma workers to defend their rights.

All contributions sent by ground mail should be addressed to Marc Maltais, President, Syndicat des Métallos, local 9490, 830 rue des Pins Ouest, Alma, QC, G8B 7R3. Please make cheques payable to: Métallos Local 9490 and do not forget to write “Adopt-a-Worker” on the memo line.

To be added to the list of contributors, please contact local 1005 USW at tel. 605-547-1417, by e-mail to



Thousands of people marched through the streets of Alma in Lac Saint-Jean on March 31, 2012, to demand an end to the lock out and to fight for the preservation of jobs at the Rio Tinto Alcan smelter.

[rolf.gerstenberger@uswa1005.ca](mailto:rolf.gerstenberger@uswa1005.ca) or write to: Local 1005 USW, 350 Kenilworth Ave. N., Hamilton, ON, L8H 4T3.

For more information, please go to [www.justiceforriotintoworkers.ca](http://www.justiceforriotintoworkers.ca).

All Montreal student protest photos in this issue were submitted by Paolo Réhel, BA - Montreal.



English translation: Free education from kindergarten to Ph.D.

It has been over three months since college and university students in Quebec and their supporters took to the streets to express their outrage over the government's intention to

## Montreal Student Protests

hike annual tuition by \$325 a year for five years, representing a 75 per cent increase.

Since the most recent round of negotiations collapsed between the Quebec government and the four associations of post-secondary students on strike, people are left wondering how the students and government are going to approach the next step.

The crisis has gripped the province for months with no apparent end in site. As Quebecers enter festival season, the government has publicly expressed its concerns about protests disrupting scheduled events. Some event organizers have asked to meet directly with student leaders to come up with a plan to avoid disruptions. Others, like the

Formula One Grand Prix organizers, have cancelled segments.

## Bill 78

If the announcement by the Quebec government about tuition increases did not incite enough anger, Bill 78, an emergency law titled "An Act to enable students to receive instruction from the postsecondary institutions they attend" was passed on May 18, 2012, by the National Assembly of Quebec.

The Bill prohibits freedom of assembly, protest, or picketing on or near university grounds, and anywhere in Quebec without prior police approval. Any group of 10 persons or more must give at least eight hours notice to police for any demonstration, including the time, place and itinerary.

"Bill 78 is an egregious attack on democratic rights," expressed George Doubt, TWU National President. He continued, "It is a serious strike against fundamental rights of free and peaceful assembly that people have under the Canadian and Quebec charters of rights."

Fines range from \$7,000 to \$35,000 for a student leader and between \$25,000 and \$125,000 for unions or student federations if someone is prevented from entering an educational institution.

## Accessible post-secondary education

Martine Desjardins, a student leader from the Université de Montreal was quoted in an online article by the CBC as saying, "We [Quebecers] made a choice as a society 40 years ago to preserve accessibility for all students and we want to preserve that." This sentiment is shared by many students and their supporters.

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) called on the Quebec government to fairly negotiate with students. In a statement published May 1, 2012, the CLC said:

*Quebec, which long ago recognized that accessible and*



English translation: Hey, Charest! Leave the students alone.

*affordable education is good for its future economic well-being, should not follow the path of other Canadian provinces that have made post-secondary education substantially unaffordable for most young people unless they are willing to take on massive debt loads.*

*As a society, we can no longer afford to leave a legacy of crushing levels of student debt*

*for our young people before they even begin their working lives. A fair society supports public education and ensures everyone, regardless of income, has a fair chance to reach their full potential. Affordable and accessible post-secondary education is the foundation of a strong economy.*

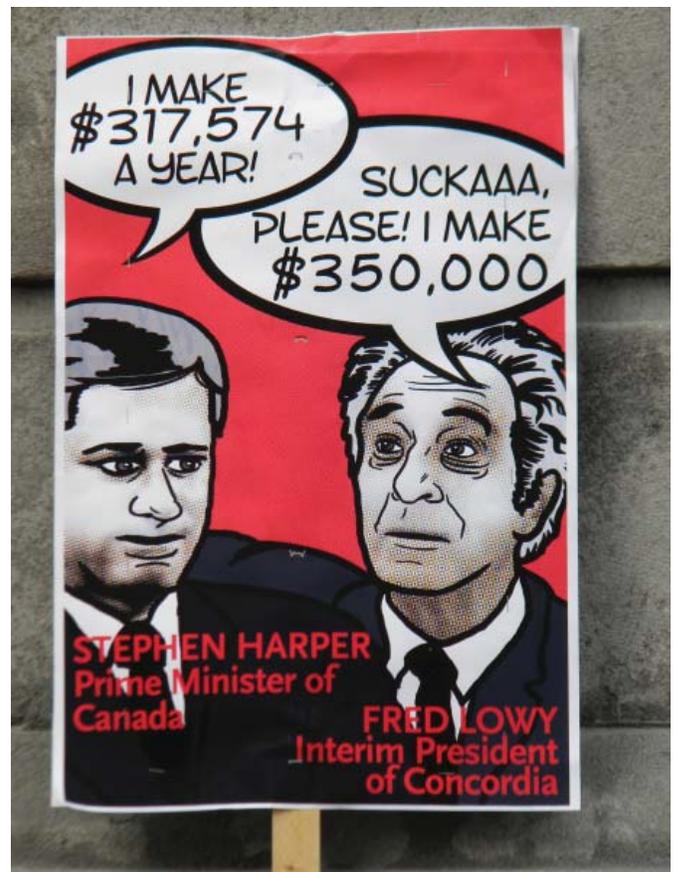




Photo submitted by Brian Berg, local 1

# Ride2Survive Hits Home for TWU Member

From L to R: Kevin Byfield, a fellow R2S rider, and Brian Berg, TWU local 1. The friends have been riding together for over 12 years.

Growing up racing cars and later as a cyclist, Brian Berg, an Access Technician for Telus from local 1, knew that pushing the envelope came with risks, but that never stopped him from doing what he loved. Little did he know that the courage, perseverance, and discipline honed through years of physical and mental training would prove to be his greatest asset, and that the most important challenge waiting for him would not even be on the race track.

It was a spring day in March 2007, only a day after returning from a relaxing vacation in Hawaii, when Brian felt intermittent shooting pain in his right hip following a bicycle ride. He did not think much of it and quickly loaded the bicycle onto the back of his truck and headed home. The pain which had subsided returned with such a vengeance, Brian was not even able to remove his state-of-the-art bicycle from the truck when he arrived home. Later that day, he was brought by ambulance to the hospital. Blood tests did not reveal anything and a heavily sedated Brian was sent home. The incident repeated itself two more times. Each time, the pain was so excruciating he had to be transported by ambulance to the hospital. It was only during his third visit that the surgeon on staff ran more tests. A CAT scan finally revealed an infection on his right hip. By the time the surgeon received the results, Brian was going into septic shock and had to be rushed into surgery. The surgeon could not explain how Brian had caught the mystery infection that was eating away at his hip bone. He suffered through a total of five surgeries, a hip replacement, walked with the aid of crutches for one year, and endured seven months of antibiotics to finally clear the infection.

While Brian was still in treatment and in the process of recovering, his 16 year-old son, Trevor, who had lost a noticeable amount of weight and whose energy level seemed very low, was admitted to the hospital for further testing.

Thinking their son might be suffering from mononucleosis, Brian and his wife were floored when the tests came back positive for large B-cell lymphoma. Trevor immediately began an aggressive treatment of chemotherapy in October 2007 which lasted until April 2008.

“He was so strong,” said Brian describing how his son handled the treatment and news about his condition. He continued, “Trevor stayed positive the whole time despite having every reason to complain.” Five years later, the youngest of his two sons is cancer free and continues to maintain a very positive outlook.

As soon as Brian was strong enough to cycle again, he joined his friend, Kerry Kunzli, founder of the charity Ride2Survive, on the 400 km one-day ride from Kelowna



Photo submitted by Brian Berg, local 1

Brian rides with the names of people who have been touched by cancer written on his legs; some still fighting, some who have won and others who, sadly, have lost their battle.

to Delta, B.C., to raise money for cancer research. The Ride2Survive differentiates itself from other charity

“Ride2Survive Hits Home for TWU member” continued on page 10

rides in many ways. All riders who participate, no matter what their skill level, start, ride and cross the finish line together. In addition, 100 per cent of all money raised goes to the Canadian Cancer Society.

With no overhead costs, Ride2Survive has donated over \$1.5 million from 2005 to 2011. People have also generously donated their time, services, and shared information with others by word-of-mouth. This is Brian's fourth year participating. He shares, "The ride is unlike any other in that it takes place over the course of one day with the riders always staying together as a team, whether it be to share meals or to push each other to finish." Brian continues, "The feeling of riding as a team and having everyone cheering is so motivating."

The Ride 2 Survive is scheduled to take place this year on June 23. If you wish to find out more about Ride 2 Survive or how you can help, please go to [www.ride2survive.ca](http://www.ride2survive.ca). To help Brian reach his goal of raising \$5,000+ for the Ride 2 Survive, please go to [www.ride2survive.ca](http://www.ride2survive.ca), click on the red "Donate Now" button located on the upper left-hand side of the screen, scroll down to the subtitle "Sponsor a Participant" (also on the left hand side of the screen), enter the name Brian Berg (or whomever you choose to help) and follow the instructions.

After everything that Brian and his family have been through, he is extremely grateful for the tremendous outpouring of love and support they have received. Brian shared, "It's great getting better and I realize how absolutely lucky we are. This experience was a real eye opener and it makes you appreciate all the little things you normally take for granted."

## TWU Members Celebrate Pink Shirt Day

Pink Shirt Day, also known as Anti-Bullying Day, was originally started as a protest against a bullying incident which took place at Central Kings Rural High School in Nova Scotia when a new grade nine student wore a pink shirt to school and was bullied for it. Two students, David Shepherd and Travis Price, later distributed 50 pink shirts to fellow classmates in protest.

Today, wearing a pink shirt on the last Wednesday in February has become a symbol that the wearer takes a stand against bullying. Organized events take place in schools, workplaces and homes as more people are taking a stand against bullying each year.



Photo submitted by Nancy McCurrach, local 51.

TWU members and colleagues celebrate Pink Shirt Day at Telus in Burnaby, B.C.

### What's the cost of corporate Fraud?

If it was discovered that people on welfare had ripped \$2 billion off taxpayers, how big would the headlines be? Or if they caught people on UI sneaking \$60 billion out of the country without paying taxes, how loud would the outcry be?

Yet that's exactly what corporations and the banks have done in recent months. And the fraud has gone almost ignored. The federal Science Research Tax Credit was supposed to cost taxpayers \$100 million, but eventually cost \$4.2 billion. Of this, \$2 billion was fraudulently claimed and will probably never be recovered. The reporting?—a quarter-inch headline in the Ottawa Citizen announced, "Revenue Canada ready to close book on \$4.2 billion fiasco—biggest tax loss in history." (Did you miss that one?)

And in May, the Financial Post reported that "Billions of dollars slip offshore undetected." Banks and corporations ship money out of the country without telling the government, thereby avoiding taxes. (Did you miss the media campaign against corporate and bank fraud? So did we.)

ELP/CALM

# Say No to Bill C-377!

*Submitted by: Political Action Committee*

B.C. Conservative MP, Russ Hiebert, has reintroduced a revised version of his earlier Private Members Bill C-317 – An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act – Labour Unions.

The original Bill was ruled out of order because the legislation would have created different groups of tax payers and created revenue for the government which technically requires a ways and means motion prior to introduction.

Bill C-377 is essentially the same as Bill C-317 and would require labour organizations to provide a detailed financial statement to the government which would then be made available to the public. The Bill in its current form would require the following and more:

- a statement of loans receivable, including all loans to officers, employees, members or businesses exceeding \$250
- a statement of disbursements on labour relations activities
- a statement of disbursements on political activities
- a statement of disbursements on general overhead
- a statement of disbursements on organizing activities
- a statement of disbursements on collective bargaining activities
- a statement of disbursements on conference and convention activities
- a statement of disbursements on education and training activities
- a statement of disbursements on legal activities

In addition, the legislation provides for a fine of \$1,000 for each day that a Union fails to comply. Mr. Hiebert argues that his Bill will actually improve public confidence in unions by allowing the public to see how unions spend their funds.

Many opposition MPs have attacked the Bill, asking why the Conservatives are so interested in transparency when it comes to unions, but not when it comes to their own government. Joe Comartin, NDP MP for Windsor - Tecumseh, has pointed out that the Bill is very similar to proposed legislation in the United States, which has been supported by anti-union politicians such as Newt Gingrich. Mr. Comartin quotes Mr. Gingrich as saying that requiring detailed disclosure of union advocacy activities would “weaken our opponents and encourage our allies.” Mr. Comartin also quotes another right-wing politician as stating, “Every dollar that is spent (by labour unions) on



disclosure and reporting is a dollar that can't be spent on other labour union activities,” and Ken Georgetti, President of the Canadian Labour Congress, has accused Mr. Hiebert of “trying to create an issue that doesn't exist.”

Unions are already transparent about how they spend members' dues as illustrated by TWU General Policy #5 which states “The Secretary-Treasurer of the Union shall receive, by appointment, any member of the Union in good standing who wishes to inspect the books and records of the Union.” It has been estimated that most unions, including the TWU, will have to hire additional staff to comply with the reporting requirements.

While private members bills rarely become law, this Bill clearly has the backing of the Harper government. During second reading of the Bill, Prime Minister Harper, Labour Minister Lisa Raitt, Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and all other Conservative members present in the House, voted in favour of this Bill. It is clear the Harper government supports the Bill as a vehicle to weaken unions.

At the time of this writing, the Bill was introduced and passed first reading on Dec. 5, 2011, and passed second reading on March 14, 2012. The Bill has now been referred to the Standing Committee on Finance.

The TWU does not feel that it is a good use of your dues to be forced to hire additional staff simply so the employers and public can have insight into how much money is spent on Shop Steward courses, challenging our employers through the grievance/arbitration process or bargaining. Your Political Action Committee has sent information on this Bill to each local's councillor/convention delegate and information on how to lobby MPs. We encourage each of you to talk to your councillor, to get the information and to set up meetings with your local MP to raise objections about this unfair, unbalanced and provocative piece of legislation.

## When disaster strikes: Is Your Family Prepared?

*Submitted by: Health and Safety Committee*

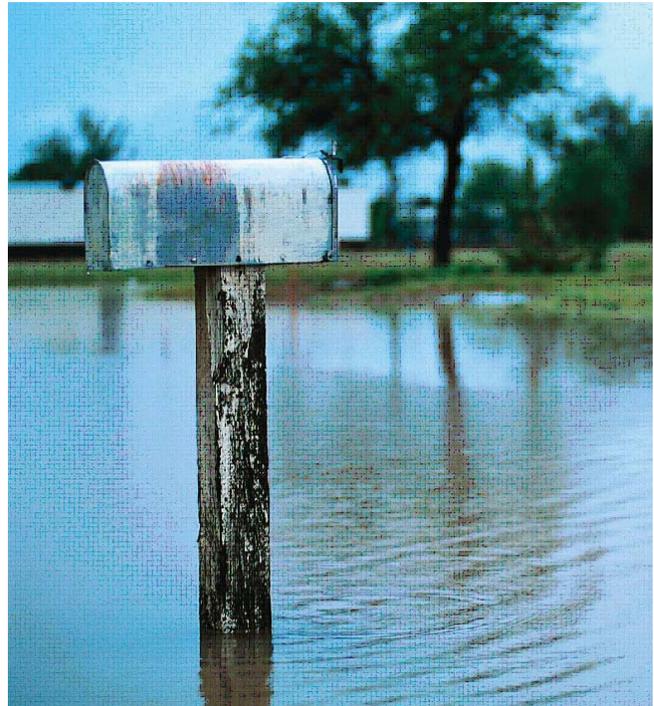
Devastating disasters around the world have been in the news in the recent past. Canada has also had its share of disasters with flooding and fires in Western Canada, earthquakes and tornadoes in Ontario, hurricanes on the East Coast, and power outages from wind and ice, to mention a few.

Emergencies happen when we do not expect them, often when families are not together. Suddenly, you need to think about your kids at school or elderly parents across town. If phones do not work, or some neighbourhoods are not accessible, what will you do?

Planning and preparing ahead can help you cope during and after a major disaster and minimize the impact on families and the community.

There are three main steps that families should take to prepare for emergencies that may arise:

1. **Know the risks in your community.** Understand what natural and technological disasters are most likely to happen in your community to help you understand what to prepare for.
2. **Make a family emergency plan.** Once you know the types of disasters that are most likely to happen, make a plan to evacuate your home and, if needed, your community and keep your family fed, warm and safe for 72 hours or until help can reach you. Determine what special accommodations you must make for anyone with disabilities and/or special needs, as well as your pets.
3. **Get or make an emergency preparedness kit.** You need enough food, water and supplies to meet your family's needs for at least 72 hours. Store the supplies in sturdy,



easy-to-carry containers such as suitcases on wheels or backpacks in case you need to evacuate your home.

A great resource for more information and help with emergency planning and preparedness is [GetPrepared.ca](http://GetPrepared.ca), a government of Canada website. They have advice and detailed instructions related to many types of hazards and emergencies, creating an emergency plan and preparing an emergency kit. This site has all the information you need to help you and your family be prepared in case disaster strikes.

*Information provided by CCOHS and [www.getprepared.ca](http://www.getprepared.ca).*

---

## Fred Redmond Speaks to TWU Executive Council

On February 16, 2012, Fred Redmond, Executive Council Officer Representing Region 6 of the Coalition of Black trade Unionists (CBTU) and International Vice-President of the United Steelworkers, travelled to Canada to give a CBTU presentation to the Executive Council of the Telecommunications Workers Union. Brother Redmond spoke of the history of the CBTU, the challenges that labour activists of colour face in the workplace and in their unions, and the importance of the work the CBTU does, both at the Ontario/Canada Chapter level and as a whole.

TWU President George Doubt said, "It was a great opportunity for our Executive Council to learn about the widespread Canadian, North American and international actions that the CBTU is engaged in on behalf of all workers."

Brother Redmond was invited by the Chapter's Communications Secretary and TWU Business Agent, Isabelle Miller, to speak to her fellow Executives. "I could not think of a better way to celebrate Black History Month than to celebrate the work the CBTU does with my TWU family," said Sister Miller.

# TWU Retirees – BCARTW and Local R55 Update



Retired TWU members from local R55. From L to R: Bev Bowden, Eric Korpan, Bob Ashton, Don Stang, Al Haggstrom, Birgit Haggstrom, Dianne Miller.

## Pension Increase

Despite a strong case advanced by members of local R55 Executive on behalf of the retirees, the Pension Trustees met in December 2011 and determined that there would not be a pension increase in 2012. Although the TWPP has a surplus of funds, the trustees decided that this surplus was not enough to fund an increase to retired members. At the same time, the trustees approved an update for active members to January 1, 2011.

It is the intent of the trustees to do an annual review of the financial position of the plan with the first priority for any surplus funds to be updates for active members and then approval of early retirements at age 55 with 25 years of credited service. The trustees will consider an increase for retirees once the above two benefits for active members are approved and if they are satisfied that there are sufficient surplus funds remaining.

## TWU Local R55

Local R55 gives the retirees a legal vehicle to put forward resolutions that affect the TWPP to the TWU Convention. The delegates are able to run for the position of pension trustee, to vote on issues affecting retirees, to vote in elections for pension trustee, and to vote for the positions of President and Secretary-Treasurer of the TWU, since those positions are ex officio pension trustees.

Since the formation of the B.C. Association of Retired Telephone Workers (BCARTW), it has been successful in promoting changes to the TWU Constitution that will work in the best interests of both active and retired members of the TWPP. Once a resolution is approved at the Convention, the entire TWU membership is entitled to vote on the new Constitution language. An example of a change that

the retirees were responsible in having brought up at the Convention involves the election of Pension Trustees. The President and Secretary-Treasurer positions of the TWU were trustees of the pension plan by virtue of their office. A Constitutional change was made to ensure that should one or both of the successful candidates to these positions not be members of the TWPP, the pension trustee position(s) would be open to nominations from the floor of Convention. The result is that only TWPP members are entitled to be elected as pension trustees.

## Membership in Local R55

At this time there are over 600 members of TWU local R55. This is about half of the BCARTW membership. This entitles local R55 to seat four delegates at the TWU Convention. We need 700 members in order to have five delegates. The maximum number of delegates that the retirees' local is permitted at the convention is six and that would require 900+ members. We are encouraging all members of the BCARTW to also join the TWU retirees' local. This will not cost you any additional money for dues; the BCARTW pays the \$1.00 initiation fee and the \$1.00 per year dues to the TWU on your behalf. You will find an application form on our website [www.bcartw.ca](http://www.bcartw.ca), or you can call toll free 1-888-898-5755.

## TWU Wins Associated Work Group Arbitration

The Telecommunications Workers Union is pleased to announce that an Arbitration regarding an associated work group (AWG) grievance was awarded on March 1, 2012.

Prior to January 2010, there were 85 Inside Build Technicians in the Lower Mainland that were in the same AWG, and therefore the same vacation schedule. Management split the single AWG into five smaller technology-based groups which affected seniority rights and vacation schedule choices. In 2011, the employer made further changes to the five AWG groups by arranging the employees based on geography rather than technology.

Despite splitting up the large AWG, the support and coverage among the groups essentially stayed the same as it was for the single, larger groups. As a result, the arbitrator concluded that the new groups (each of them) did not satisfy the definition "a team of employees who are normally assigned by the company to cover and support each other" as stipulated in Article 2.11 of the Collective Agreement and ordered that the employer reinstate the large AWG which restored their seniority and vacation selection rights.

## Rio Tinto Alcan and Government Have Secret Agreement

Secret Agreements between Rio Tinto Alcan, the government and Hydro-Québec confirm a net imbalance in favour of the multinational.

The company has been able to lock its workers out while continuing to receive subsidies and make money from electricity surpluses.

The agreement, revealed by *Le Devoir*, requires RTA to do whatever necessary as long as it honours its obligations, whether in case of war, an uprising, a riot or an earthquake. The agreement also lets them sell their surplus electricity for a price four times the cost of their production.

When the company locked out 780 workers on December 30—24 hours before the company could do it legally—the union sensed the multinational had been planning it for a long time.

“It’s curious that the lockout occurred when the cost of aluminum is low and a secret agreement is reached, under which a lockout is deemed a force majeure—thus releasing RTA from its obligations—and electricity can be sold to Quebec Hydro for a profit. Add to that the presence of an excessive number of managers—just what’s needed to operate during a lockout. This company wanted a lockout and got away with it, because this government allowed the

balance of power to become so skewed,” says Daniel Roy, Quebec director for the USW/Métallos.

The 2006 agreement, which the government has kept under wraps until recently, also stipulated that Québec will grant a 30-year interest-free loan in the amount of \$400 million in exchange for \$2.1 billion in company investments. However, the government set almost no job creation and job retention requirements. The company has to create or maintain 740 direct jobs related to these investments, but only for a three-year period. RTA was also promised \$112 million in tax assistance.

“We fully agree that electricity should be used as a tool for economic development. But the government should negotiate with companies as equals and protect workers and the local economy. This secret agreement is being used right now to starve a region and keep 780 workers, who have families to feed, on the street,” says Roy.

Rio Tinto Alcan forced nearly 780 workers onto picket lines on New Year’s Day rather than continue attempts to negotiate a new contract. The workers are members of USW/Syndicat des Métallos Local 9490.

*USW/CALM*

---

## Fourth Annual TWU/Toad Rock Motorcycle Rally



The Fourth Annual TWU/Toad Rock Motorcycle Rally will take place this year from June 22 to June 24, and is open to all current and retired TWU members.

Camping and cabins are available for those who would like to take part, including non-riders. Be sure to check out Toad Rock’s website at [www.toadrockcampground.com](http://www.toadrockcampground.com).

For more information or to register, please call Keith Streng at 250-554-0668 or email [kstreng123@hotmail.com](mailto:kstreng123@hotmail.com).



## Letters

### Retirement Thanks

Thank you for the generous \$1,000 retirement gift and my TWU pension after 33 years with B.C. Tel/Telus.

Jerri McLellan  
Formerly from local 26

I would like to thank the TWU for my gift cheque after 36 years (from locals 51 to 26) from B.C. Tel to Telus. We have certainly gone through many changes in the Union. I appreciate the support and education that the TWU has provided myself and many others.

In Solidarity,  
Sister Jean Brien  
Prince George  
Formerly from local 26

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the TWU for my Honorary Lifetime Membership and the much appreciated \$1,000 retirement gift. I have been a proud member for almost 36 years. Thank you for being there throughout my career – ensuring fair wages, good benefits, decent working conditions and supporting equality for all.

Most importantly, a heartfelt thank you to all the dedicated men and women who have

served our Union members so tirelessly with such conviction, passion and purpose. Here's to them...past, present and future! Stay strong and keep up the good work. With Gratitude...

Sincerely,  
L. Diane Lees  
Formerly from local 16

Thank you very much for \$1000 Gift, Certificate of Honorary Life Membership and the Retirement Pin. I am so proud to be a member of the Best Union in the World which has kept my job safe, secure, successful and respected. I became an employee of B.C. Tel in 1977 and have had a chance to ask for help from TWU a few times. I have never been disappointed. My special thanks to Karen Brown Whitfield who has assisted me numerous times in making decisions, to Grace Jones and Jane Olsen for their help in dealing with my Retirement Package, and to employees of LTD and Pension Plans. My warmest and eternal gratitude and appreciation to all who work tirelessly at TWU for the welfare of all employees. All the best for the future at TWU and Telus.

In Solidarity,  
Yasmin Alibhai  
Formerly from local 50

### Letters Regarding March 17, 2012, Vancouver Sun Article

Harvey Enchin, a columnist for the Vancouver Sun, wrote the inaccurate and biased March 17, 2012, article entitled "Conflict, culture and change recreate Telus".

Calling the TWU a "recalcitrant union, which used unseemly tactics, including widespread vandalism and threats against senior executives, to press demands that - had the company complied - would have forced Telus into bankruptcy," is not only deeply insulting but absolutely untrue.

"It is a shame that Mr. Enchin did not live up to the journalistic standards of many in his industry who know better than to publish information without getting both sides of a story," remarked TWU National President, George Doubt.

"I don't think the article reflects the current relationship between the TWU Executive Council and Telus Senior Management." Brother Doubt continued, "If I had been given the opportunity to comment on the article, I would have said that we are working at creating a respectful, professional, and productive relationship."

*Continued on page 16*

## Cindy Orivolo, Business Agent – Burnaby, Retires

Submitted by: Tamara Marshall, TWU Business Agent – Burnaby



Cindy Orivolo (middle) accepting a hug during convention from fellow BAs, Tamara Marshall (left) and Ivana Niblett (right).

Monday April 30, 2012, was a sad day for members but a joyous one for Cindy Orivolo. After five years in office and countless years as an activist, Cindy announced that she was retiring from the TWU.

Cindy and I came into the Union office during the same time like freshman heading to college - new blood in an exhausting role. We have learnt, laughed and cried together

depending on how the day went, but one thing has always been constant: Cindy worked hard for our members. Cindy has always leant an ear to members in distress, whether it was a workplace problem or coming to grips with illness or disability.

It is hard to put into words what Cindy has meant to all of us but, truly, it is that Cindy is a good person; someone who will always go to bat for you often putting people's needs before hers. She is planning to go onto something "less stressful" until she hits the grand age of 55 and pension. I will miss her smiling face in the office but I know we will still enjoy visits with backyards, dogs and wine. Thanks to Adriano, Alex and Vanessa for sharing Cindy with all of us.

# TWU

## BRITISH COLUMBIA

Burnaby Head Office  
5261 Lane Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6  
PHONE: 604-437-8601  
FAX: 604-435-7760

## Kelowna

#403-1630 Pandosy St.  
Kelowna, BC V1Y 1P7  
PHONE: 250-860-5025  
FAX: 250-860-6737

## Prince George

#102-3645 18th Avenue  
Prince George, BC V2N 1A8  
PHONE: 250-960-2220  
FAX: 250-563-2379  
TOLL-FREE FAX: 1-888-700-9318

## ALBERTA

### Calgary

#402 - 5940 MacLeod Trail SW  
Calgary, AB T2H 2G4  
PHONE: 403-237-6990  
FAX: 403-802-2381

### Edmonton

#1280 - 5555 Calgary Trail NW  
Edmonton, AB T6H 5P9  
PHONE: 780-444-6945  
FAX: 780-488-6911

## ONTARIO

### Scarborough

#901-10 Milner Business Court  
Scarborough, ON M1B 3C6  
PHONE: 416-506-9723  
FAX: 416-506-9722

## QUÉBEC

### Westmount

#540-4060 Ste. Catherine St. W.  
Westmount, QC H3Z 2Z3  
PHONE: 514-788-8811  
FAX: 514-788-8813

## TW PENSION/BENEFITS

#303-4603 Kingsway  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4M4  
PENSION: 604-430-1317  
BENEFITS: 604-430-3300  
FAX: 604-430-5395  
WEBSITE: [www.twplans.com](http://www.twplans.com)



For all journalists who spend countless hours getting the story straight and who do their homework by diligently researching all sides of a story, Mr. Enchin, in the Union's opinion, failed. Today, we have chosen to include some of the response letters sent to the Vancouver Sun Editor following the publishing of this article which elicited a huge outcry from TWU members and its supporters.

### Letter to Vancouver Sun Editor

Re: Conflict, culture and change recreate Telus  
March 17

I have worked in the telephone industry for 41 years and have been retired for the last 7 years. I cannot remember an un-researched, slanderous, unbalanced and misleading article as Harvey Enchin's. Mr. Enchin states that Telus was brought into conflict with "a recalcitrant union, which used unseemly tactics, including widespread vandalism and threats against senior executives, to press demands that - had the company complied - would have forced Telus into bankruptcy".

The Union did not promote, conduct, or condone any acts of violence and at no time did they threaten any executives. Falsely accusing the Union of illegal actions and "unseemly tactics" amounts to malicious slander and again, portrays the anti-worker bias of your paper. It is also an insult and totally unfair to label those hard working people at Telus as the most unproductive labour force bar none.

Proper research would have shown that George Petty (who you also denigrate) was a good CEO and that when the share price dropped to \$6.10, industry analysts were concerned, not that Darren Entwistle had bought Clearnet, but that he had paid much more than it was worth. Interestingly enough George Cope, Clearnet's CEO (apparently the superior negotiator who bargained such a high sale price for Clearnet), worked for a short term as a Telus Vice President. He left Telus and is currently CEO of Bell Canada. Mr. Cope is moving Bell Canada ahead in a positive manner, gaining strength without all the conflict and acrimony. Nadir Mohammed, CEO of Rogers Communications, was also a Vice-President who left Telus while Darren Entwistle was President. Mr. Mohammed has also moved Rogers Communications ahead in a positive manner, absent the conflict and acrimony. Both of these corporate managers were good honourable people, good to deal with and not always surrounded by conflict and controversy.

It would be logical, in my opinion, to conclude that major conflicts seem to flow from Mr. Entwistle's aggressive, uncompromising style.

Rod Hiebert  
Retired President of the Telecommunications Workers Union

### Letter to Vancouver Sun Editor

Harvey Enchin's column "Conflict, culture and change recreate Telus" of March 17, 2012, was a

disappointing read with inaccuracies and insults aimed at the members of the Telecommunications Worker's Union.

Accusing employees of damaging company property during the time of a labour dispute is wrong. (It is not unusual for scappers to take advantage of such a time to do cable-cutting and the like.)

The quote "It's no secret that Telus has the most unproductive labour force bar none" is insulting. Perhaps it is a reference to the parts of Telus that are contracted out.

As for Telus granting stock options to its employees, B.C. Telephone started that in the early 1980s. Before retirement, I worked for B.C. telephone, B.C. Telecom and Telus, all the while a proud member of the TWU in each division of the company; traffic, clerical, and plant.

Beverly Melnychuck  
Maple Ridge  
Formerly of local 7

### Letter to George Doubt, TWU President

Dear George,

On March 17, the Vancouver Sun printed a column that spoke negatively to the relationship between the company and the TWU. The column also contained a distasteful and dated quote from telecom analyst Eamon Hoey.

I assure you that Darren and myself did not encourage nor want these sentiments to be captured within the column. Indeed, Eamon Hoey is an analyst who has consistently been critical of our industry and we believe his views are wholly inaccurate as it relates to Telus and our team.

We fully believe we have the best team in the global telecommunications industry. Furthermore, through a lot of hard work by the TWU Executive Council and Telus Senior Management, we believe the company and the TWU have fostered a relationship that has been respectful, professional and productive for several years now.

Regards,

Josh Blair  
Executive V.-P., Human Resources, Telus

## THE TRANSMITTER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TWU

TWU President: GEORGE DOUBT  
Vice-Presidents: BETTY CARRASCO, JOHN CARPENTER  
Secretary-Treasurer: MICHAEL THOMPSON  
Communications Specialist: DIANE PÉPIN

[www.twu-stt.ca](http://www.twu-stt.ca)  
[editor@twu-stt.ca](mailto:editor@twu-stt.ca)

PN: 40022297

Return undeliverables to:  
TWU Circulation, 5261 Lane Street  
Burnaby, BC V5H 4A6

