



**Vice-President NEIL MORRISON**  
Acclaimed to another 3-year term



Four Burnaby Business Agents line up to thank delegates on their re-election to two year terms, Peter Massy, Hope Cumming, Fran Guillet and Betty Carrasco

## Incumbent officers returned, three by acclamation

It was a clean sweep for officers seeking re-election at the TWU convention.

Vice-President Neil Morrison was re-elected by acclamation to another three-year term.

Also re-elected by acclamation, both for two-year terms, were Prince George Business Agent Ron Williams and Kelowna Business Agent George Doubt.

The four Burnaby Business Agents up for re-election were all returned for two-year terms in a five-person race. Out of a possible 90 votes, Hope Cumming and Peter Massy were both re-elected with 90 votes, Betty Carrasco with 78 votes, and Fran Guillet with 62 votes. The unsuccessful chal-

lenger was Local 23 delegate Cathie Young with 40 votes.

Delegates also elected a new trustee for a six year term to the Telecommunication Workers Pension Plan. Nancy Curley of Local 27 won the nod over Lee Riggs of Local 16 by a vote of 49-37. Incumbent Dave McElheran had completed his six-year term and did not seek re-election.

A new bargaining committee to negotiate with Telus was also elected. Three officers elected by acclamation were Vice-President Bruce Bell and Business Agents Hope Cumming and Peter Massy. The six delegates selected to the bargaining committee, in an eight-person race, were Darlene Foley, Local 15;

Marcel LaFond, Local 7; Ron Driscoll, Local 32; Kelly Gray, Local 35; Lila Hackett, Local 50; and Greg Lorne, Local 50. President Rod Hiebert is an ex-officio member of the committee.

Delegates also elected members to three committees, as follows:

**FINANCE:** Wes Nakano, Leslie Hammond and Lee Riggs.

**CONSTITUTION:** Nancy Curley, Rick Fleming and Sam Perry for two-year terms and Ed Gerhardt for a one-year term.

**EDUCATION:** Lori Ruggles, Fran Miller and Dave Mitchell.

Rick Fleming was re-elected convention chairperson by a vote of 48-42 and Janet Reid was re-elected vice-chair by acclamation.



**GEORGE DOUBT**  
Kelowna B.A.  
Acclamation



**RON WILLIAMS**  
Prince George B.A.  
Acclamation

## Rogers cable workers settle

Rogers cable workers in Vancouver and Surrey, members of TWU Local 60, have overwhelmingly accepted a six-year contract which provides a total wage increase of \$4.50 an hour, plus a signing bonus, substantial improvements to the Health & Welfare plan, and other benefits. Wage rate at end of contract will be \$29.17 per hour.

At a ratification meeting March 15, the Rogers Vancouver workers voted 69-14, or 83%, and the Rogers Surrey workers voted 42-10, or 81%, in favour of the new collective agreement.

Vice-President Neil Morrison, who headed the Union bargaining team, said a tentative agreement was reached with Rogers on March 1 after months of negotiations. This is the first collective agreement for the Rogers workers since joining the TWU. They were formerly members of the IBEW.

Complete report, page three.

**Merger vote coming**  
TWU or IBEW: Mail-in ballot  
Your vote is crucial!  
Story, page 3; President's report, page 12;  
Letter to Members, page 8



**NANCY CURLEY**  
Elected Trustee to  
TW Pension Plan  
for six-year term

**MAIL POSTE**  
Canada Post Corporation / Société canadienne des postes  
Postage paid Port payé  
Blk Nbre  
6736  
VANCOUVER, B.C.

## Strike story 'offensive'

Dear TWU:

I am writing in response to the front page article in the February 2000 "Transmitter" on the OTEU strike ("Strike cancels December issues").

As a union member I find the article offensive due to the impression of OTEU 15 members that is left in the reader's mind. The fact that OTEU 15 members do not contribute to their pension fund is mentioned twice, as if to emphasize some perk that they are lucky to have. If those members do not choose to invest in a pension that is their choice; it is their money, and is irrelevant to how much the employer contributes toward a retirement fund. Furthermore, this aspect of their collective agreement was not altered by the new contract, so why mention it at all?

More offensive is the comparison between the OTEU Clerical Group 5 wage and Clerical Group 5 wages at BC Tel. It should be remembered that OTEU 15 members are employed by several unions in the Lower Mainland, and that these unions combine in an employers council when bargaining with OTEU 15. If several unions have agreed that \$24 per hour is the going rate for Group 5 clerical work, then it would be more productive for the TWU to set its sights on achieving these rates for its own members, rather than presenting an article the tone of which implies that a group of workers is getting more than it deserves (one can hardly assume that the

comparison was made because we are proud that our own members make \$2 per hour less).

Causing division amongst workers is a tactic of the employers. As unionists we should be proud when any group of workers achieves significant gains, and it should inspire us to achieve similar gains for all workers. This requires solidarity among workers, not divisions caused by misplaced envy of our sisters and brothers.

**In solidarity,  
Paul Frost  
Local 38**

## Good luck to TWU

Dear TWU:

I would like to comment on the article in the February Transmitter and to state that I pray the TWU does become the Telus representatives for the workers in BC and Alberta. I would like to ask why would any union want to go into competition against another existing union when it involves the merging of 2 large corporations, which seems to be becoming the fad lately?

I would think that in the case where one existing union has a much better contract to offer the members from another existing union in these kind of situations, that the betterment of the labour members as a whole, would be top priority.

As in this case where the TWU has not only a no-contracting out clause which would hardly become achievable again if lost, as well as a far better wage package than the IBEW has for its members.

Maybe it's time that all unions look at the possibility of a form of merging as is the case with Banks and

other large corporations lately. That way existing unions would all become part of a Canadian Labour Union Corporation, which would protect all union labourers in the event of such mergers.

Otherwise it would seem that union organizations for what they basically stand for, will be caught up into the big business concept, splitting themselves apart, fighting each other and thereby losing all perspective of the workers they represent.

"United we stand but Divided we fall."

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to voice my opinion on this issue. Good luck to the TWU in all your future endeavours for the workers of Telus, and or the betterment of all other labour workers as well.

**Sincerely,  
Eileen Montgomery  
Retired TWU member**

## CLC course inspiring

Dear TWU:

I would like to extend my thanks to the TWU membership for sponsoring and enabling me to attend the CLC Winter School "Women In Leadership" course.

The whole experience was inspirational and definitely has made a positive impression on how we can all improve in our Union Activism.

I have sent a letter of thanks to the CLC and I have restored faith that together we can do almost anything.

**In solidarity,  
Deborah Champion  
TWU Local 16**

## Retirement thanks

Dear TWU:

I wish to thank the TWU for the much appreciated \$1000 cheque presented by Ildi Gauer at our retirement celebration.

Hopefully, in the TELUS world, the TWU will continue to be the union representing both provinces. Good luck!

**Sincerely,  
Vicki Haskins  
Local 20**

Dear TWU:

Thank you to the TWU for the cheque and life membership.

Many thanks to past and present workers for their hard work, many times under difficult circumstances, in obtaining benefits which we now enjoy.

I would like to remind future retirees, and there will be many of you in the coming years, that benefits for retirees are completely separate from the ones you receive now; you have to wait 4 weeks to get your money back for drug receipts, everything does not automatically roll-over the day you retire, so get out to meetings and get things changed before it is too late!

**In solidarity,  
Grahame Alderson  
Surrey**

Dear TWU:

Thank you for your gift of \$1000 on my retirement.

I wish you every success with the Union in Alberta.

**Yours sincerely,  
Hazel Marcl  
New Hazelton**

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank the TWU very much for the \$1000 cheque and honorary life membership. I really appreciate all the hard work and ben-

efits you have gotten me over the years. You have made my working years much more enjoyable. I hope to be able to donate some of my time to you in the future. Thanks again.

**Jerry Parks,  
Surrey**

## Sports thanks

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank the TWU for the support they extended to our soccer team. With your financial help we were able to enter the Abbotsford Indoor Tournament. I'm happy to say the team had a great time and we finished in second place.

**Thanks again,  
Tim Taylor  
Coach Aldergrove  
Hurricane U-13 Silver**

Dear TWU:

I would like to thank you on behalf of the Surrey Storm Squirt B Team for your generous donation. Thanks to you we were able to upgrade some of our equipment. With the high price of baseball equipment these days, it adds up in a hurry. We had a very good season, the kids really enjoyed themselves. So, from all the kids, coaching staff and parents, thanks again.

**Sincerely,  
Dennis Kray**

## Retirement party May 5

**A double retirement party is planned for:  
PAT COLGAN and  
DAVE GRANGE  
who work at Sullivan Station**

**Time and Place:  
Friday, May 5,  
Cloverdale Curling Club,  
Cocktails 6 p.m., dinner 7 p.m.  
Tickets \$22 each  
Contact:  
Lorraine Reglin - 436-8421 or  
Ron Semancik - 436-8428**

## Farewell party at 6969-10 Ave. March 31

Over the years the buildings and facilities at the 6969 10th Avenue location in Burnaby have been the "home" to thousands of different employees. Since opening in July 1960, the 10th Avenue site has supported numerous operations such as, Automatic Electric, CT&S, Purchasing, Fleet, Provincial Warehouse, Telset Repair, PABX and Card Repair, Fabricating & Paint Shops, Pay phones, I&R, Construction, Tool Crib... the list goes on.

Towards the end of 1999 a deal was struck by TELUS to sell this 14 acre property to the Burnaby School Board. The site is going to be the home of a much-needed new high school for the South Burnaby area.

On March 31, 2000, from 4:30 - 8:30 p.m., Supply Administrative Services will be hosting a farewell party for present and past 6969 10th Avenue employees. Both current and retired employees are welcome to join in the festivities. The event will include many pieces of history and an opportunity to meet old friends and colleagues.

Pre registration is mandatory and availability limited, so call one of the following numbers to reserve your tickets now:

Toll Free: 877-494-8989  
Sue: 432-4680  
Carol: 432-4990  
Florence: 520-2446  
Cheryl: 432-4999  
Sandy: 432-4478  
David: 432-4806

*Do you remember when...  
...we had the "starting and ending bell"!*

**TWU phone ...(604) 437-8601**

**TWU fax .....(604) 435-7760**

**Pension Plan  
office .....(604) 430-1317**

**TWU hotline ..(604) 435-2224**

### TWU Website addresses:

**TWU Home Page:** <http://www.twu-canada.ca>  
**TW Pension Plan:** <http://www.twu-canada.ca/twpp/pptoc/htm>  
**TW Benefit Plan:** <http://www.twu-canada.ca/twpp/bphome/htm>  
**TWU Email Address (Union Office):** [twu@twu-canada.ca](mailto:twu@twu-canada.ca)  
**TW Pension and Benefit Plans:** [twplans@twubc.com](mailto:twplans@twubc.com)

# The Transmitter

Member of

The Transmitter is the official publication of the Telecommunications Workers Union.

**CALM  
ACPS**  
Canadian Association of Labour Media  
Association canadienne de la presse syndicale

Editor: Myron Johnson  
President: Rod Hiebert  
Vice-Presidents: Neil Morrison & Bruce Bell  
Sect.-Treasurer: Kathy Pearn  
5261 Lane Street, Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4A6

## TWU SCHOLARSHIPS

Any daughter or son of an active, retired or deceased TWU member (with at least 12 months continuous service) intending to attend any university, accredited regional college, or BCIT in British Columbia in 2000 is encouraged to apply for these scholarships:

<b>TWU THOMAS WARD STANLEY MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>TWU J. DOUGLAS BOOTH MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>
<b>TELECOMMUNICATIONS WORKERS UNION SCHOLARSHIPS (3)</b>	<b>each: \$750</b>

The TWU Thomas Ward Stanley Scholarship is an award made by the TWU in memory of business agent and first secretary-treasurer of the TWU, Tom Stanley, who died in office in 1977.

The TWU J. Douglas Booth Scholarship is in memory of business agent Doug Booth, who died in office in 1988.

Application forms for these awards will be sent to all B.C. high schools in March, or may be requested anytime after March 1, 2000, by writing to:

**University of British Columbia  
Awards and Financial Aid Dept.  
Room 1036 - 1874 East Mall  
Vancouver, B.C. V6T 1Z1  
Phone 822-5111**

Applications must be returned to UBC no later than May 15, 2000.

# Telus Union merger vote set for late May, ballots to be mailed in



*Business Agent Ron Williams and Local 27 delegate Nancy Curley at Telus Customer Service Centre in Edmonton, in mid-February, working on Alberta merger campaign*

The Union campaign to represent all bargaining unit workers at Telus in B.C. and Alberta is set to enter its final phase, and we should all know the results before the end of May.

In response to the Telus application to consolidate bargaining units, the federal labour board (CIRB) ruled in late February that there will be one bargaining unit and that there will be a vote of all eligible members to determine which union will represent them.

The TWU has strongly advocated the position that there be one bargaining unit, and maintained that position throughout weeks of mediation which preceded the CIRB decision.

The vote will be conducted by mail-in ballot conducted and supervised by the CIRB. There will be a six-week period during which time ballots and information kits will be mailed out to all bargaining unit members in both provinces so bargaining unit employees can vote.

The mailout is tentatively set for April 12, 2000, with the final date for return of all ballots tentatively set for May 24, 2000 at 5 p.m. If those dates are confirmed by the CIRB, we anticipate a vote count to be announced two days later, May 26. **Members should keep in mind that if they do not receive a ballot, the latest date to request one is May 17.**

Telus has applied to the CIRB for two exclusions from the bargaining unit, Telesales and Field Sales personnel, from both provinces. There are approximately 500 telesales people and 140 field sales people in B.C. who are unionized, and

about the same total number, roughly 600, in Alberta, who are currently non-union. A hearing has been held on this issue before the Board, where the TWU strongly opposed the Telus application, arguing in favour of inclusion of both groups. A decision is expected soon.

Meanwhile, the campaign is effectively underway by both the TWU and IBEW. The IBEW has mailed leaflets to TWU members in B.C. and has hired a non-union polling firm to extensively poll our members. The reception and response of B.C. members to the IBEW overtures has been overwhelmingly negative, even hostile. TWU President Rod Hiebert has sent a letter to all TWU members outlining this Union's response to the IBEW campaign. The text of that letter appears on page 8 of this Transmitter.

The TWU will be doing an extensive telephone campaign of the membership between now and the date of the ballot mail-in. A big concern of the TWU is ensuring that members mail in their ballots. Even though the vast majority of our members indicate a strong preference for remaining in the TWU, that sentiment will count for nothing unless the ballot is correctly marked and mailed in on time, and the Union will be concentrating efforts in that direction.

The number of voting members currently on the Union's respective lists is 6,031 IBEW and 10,308 TWU, with several hundred CEP and CSU members between them also eligible to vote. The CEP and CSU have voluntarily withdrawn from the ballot, and are supporting the TWU.

Planning for the TWU campaign in Alberta is already well underway. The TWU opened offices in Alberta early in the new year, with the Edmonton office staffed by B.A. Ron Williams and the Calgary office staffed by B.A. Bill Silvester, with the assistance from time to time of other TWU activists.

The TWU held focus group sessions in Calgary and Edmonton and a number of other Alberta centres in early March to help us determine the issues and concerns of the workers in Alberta. The sessions were organized by consultant Michael Morgan.

A leader's tour of Alberta, similar to the tour of B.C. centres held this fall, is scheduled for the last 10 days of March. The tour will give the TWU an opportunity to discuss the Unions' respective contracts, to hear the concerns of the Alberta workers, and simply to better get to know the rank-and-file members in that province.

TWU President Rod Hiebert reminds members that this is your battle to win or lose.

"Your collective agreement, your Union, and everything you have fought for, is on the line. We need your help and your vote."

# Rogers cable workers ratify 6-year agreement with \$4.50 wage hike

Rogers cable workers in Vancouver and Surrey, members of TWU Local 60, have overwhelmingly accepted a six-year contract which provides a total wage increase of \$4.50 an hour, plus a signing bonus, substantial improvements to the Health and Welfare plan, and other benefits. Wage rate at expiry of contract will be \$29.17 per hour.

At a ratification meeting March 15, the Rogers Vancouver workers voted 69-14, or 83%, and the Rogers Surrey workers voted 42-10, or 81%, in favour of the new collective agreement.

Vice-President Neil Morrison, who headed the Union bargaining team, said a tentative agreement was reached with Rogers on March 1 after months of negotiations. This is the first collective agreement for the Rogers workers since joining the TWU. They were formerly members of the IBEW.

Morrison said the terms of the agreement are as follows:

This is a six-year agreement expiring in March of 2004. For the first year, there will be a lump sum signing bonus of \$2,500 per member, of which \$2,380 goes to the member and \$120 goes to the Health and Welfare Plan.

There will be percentage wage increases for each of the last five years of the contract. For the first of those five years, there will be a retroactive 5.07% increase covering the period March 24, 1999 to March 23, 2000, with an additional \$10 per month going into the Health and Welfare plan.

There will be wage increases of 3% per year plus an additional \$10 per year into the Health and Welfare plan for each of the next three years, taking effect in March, 2000, March, 2001 and March 2002. The final year of the contract, March 2003 to March 2004 will see a further 3% wage increase effective March 24, 2003. The wage increases will take a journey person from the current \$24.67 at expiry of contract in 1998 to \$29.17 as of March of 2003.

Morrison said the Union also made significant gains in areas of jurisdiction, contracting out and job security.

On jurisdiction, the 1987 date is out of the collective agreement and jurisdiction is updated to the day of the contract. On work jurisdiction, the union has captured jurisdiction over telephony and internet modems.

On contracting out, 40% of installation work presently contracted out will come back into the bargaining unit, at a rate of 10% per year for four years.

The company agrees that all employees who leave will be replaced, and an additional 10 workers will be hired in Vancouver, five of whom shall be indentured apprentices, and in Surrey, 10 will be hired, two of whom will be indentured apprentices.

In addition, no contractors will be called out for emergency service or maintenance work until all employees on the Vancouver and Surrey callout lists have been called. On Service work, a letter of agreement states technical employees will be the primary providers of service work. There is guaranteed employment during the life of the contract provided the company retains 95% of its customer base.

# Constitution can accommodate merger with only minor changes, convention delegates agree

Convention has endorsed a report by the Union's Constitution Committee which states that the addition of new members from Telus in Alberta can be accommodated by the TWU with only minor changes to the constitution.

In conjunction with that decision, delegates also adopted a resolution proposed by Local 50 that no major changes to the TWU constitution affecting the structure of the TWU be made until after the CIRB vote for Union representation has been completed.

The Constitution Committee report states:

**The major question facing our Committee was whether or not we need to change our Constitution to accommo-**

**date the joining of Alberta and the rest of the Telus employees across Canada. This can be accomplished without changing our existing Constitution. However to enable us to quickly add elected representatives from Alberta to our committees we have proposed some minor changes to the Constitution. These have been included with our recommendations.**

Among the changes proposed by the committee and endorsed by a majority of delegates was wording to make possible the addition of members to the Finance, Constitution and Education Committees. Before taking effect, these changes will have to be ratified by a vote of the membership.

# 6 delegates, 3 officers, elected to bargaining committee



**MARCEL LAFOND**  
Local 7



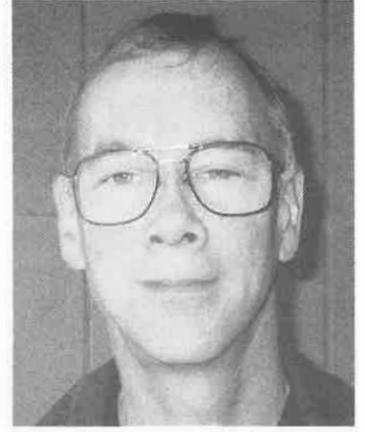
**LILA HACKETT**  
Local 50



**KELLY GRAY**  
Local 35



**DARLENE FOLEY**  
Local 15



**RON DRISCOLL**  
Local 32



**BRUCE BELL**  
Vice-President



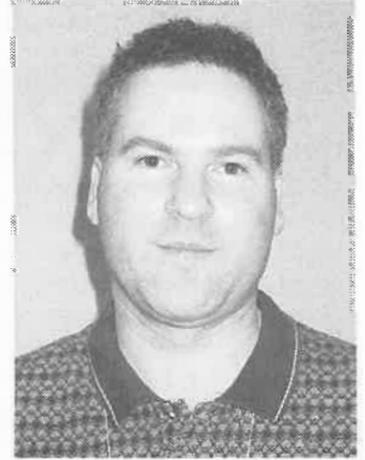
**HOPE CUMMING**  
Business Agent



**PETER MASSY**  
Business Agent



**ROD HIEBERT**  
President  
(Ex-officio member)



**GREG LORNE**  
Local 50

## COTC Committee report to convention 2000

Following is the report of the Contracting Out and Technological Change (COTC) Committee to the TWU February-March 2000 convention.

### INTRODUCTION

1999 was a very busy year for the COTC Committee. We have had several difficult issues to work through, and we would like to thank all of you for your assistance in dealing with these matters. We will still require you to file grievances and collect information and documentation through the grievance procedure. This is critical, as the issues facing us are increasing in number and in complexity.

### ADSL DECISION

The Union charged the Company was contracting out bargaining unit work by allowing London Drugs to promote and sell Asymmetrical Digital Subscriber Line (ADSL) Multi-Media Gateway software kits, which provide access to a high-speed Internet Access Line. The Union said the work was regularly performed by bargaining unit members, the Company disagreed, and the issue went to a formal hearing before COTC Chairperson Stephen Kelleher. In August, Kelleher ruled against the Union, finding the Company could have the kits distributed because there are "unusual circumstances", and the "efficiency of the operations" dictates a decision in the Company's favour. Kelleher said that to rule in the Union's favour "would severely limit the ability of the Company to compete effectively."

### TELUS RE-BRANDING

The Company approached the Union in August seeking to contract

out a great deal of signage to facilitate the name change from BCTEL to TELUS. They initially wanted to contract out the making of the signs for the telephone booths as well as the signage associated with the lobbies of public buildings and the directional signage to different departments. They also wanted to contract out name signs for offices and cubicles.

The Union and Company had many meetings to try to resolve the issues, including meetings in front of Mr. Kelleher. The result of these meetings was that we retained all of the signage we regularly make. The Company was restricted to contracting out the neon signs and the large building signs.

### KELLY LAKE PROJECT

Since the corporate merger was announced, the Union has had to deal not only with the longer term merger issues, but as well has been faced with a number of more practical day-to-day issues for the interim period. A prime example is the "Kelly Lake Project." In late July, the TWU and BCTEL signed a Letter of Agreement involving provision of telephone service to the small remote BC community of Kelly Lake, right next to the Alberta border. The Company wanted all of the work done by IBEW members in Alberta on the grounds that the cost of the project would decrease dramatically as dial tone would be coming from Alberta. Officials of the two Unions met with the Company to negotiate terms of the Letter. The Agreement provides that most of the work in getting the service up and running will be done by TWU members or with a TWU member working with or accompanying the TELUS employee, that Stores material will be

delivered by TWU members and that ongoing maintenance and administration of the Kelly Lake network will be performed by one or the other bargaining unit as assigned by the Company. The Union believes that we achieved a good result for our members through our negotiations on this issue, while we await resolution of the representation question for the long term.

### CLOSURE OF 6969 - 10TH AVE. FACILITY, BURNABY

In November 1999, the Company announced the sale and subsequent closure of the property and buildings at 6969 - 10th Avenue, Burnaby. As a result of this sale several departments and functions will be required to relocate to various locations in the Lower Mainland.

There are different scenarios the Company wants to proceed with. They intend to relocate some departments. These include: Supply (including Customer Service, Freight and Customs, Buyers etc.), Fleet and Coin Collectors. Meetings are ongoing as this is written. With other departments, the Company wants to sell the equipment and cease doing the work. They also offered to have employees buy certain parts of the business (for example, the Sign Shop or the Body Shop) from them, which the Union declined.

The work that the Company wants to remove itself from is mainly in the Shops. There are a number of Shops; Metal Shop, Iron Shop, Carpenter Shop, Paint Shop and the Sign Shop. They also want to exit from the Body Shop and van equipping (aka Fleet Equipping).

Another area impacted by the Company's wish to stop doing the work is in the coin collection area. The Company would like to sell the

equipment and cease performing the function associated with counting the coins from the coin phones.

The Company would also like to cease repairing the Heritage phone, a single line telephone set that is offered for rental purposes. They are telling the Union that they will move the repair of the Vista 250's and the Smarttalk 308's to Alberta. We were advised that there is a production line for telephone repair in Alberta and they would need to hire additional people to take on this work. Another portion of the work the Company would like to move to Alberta is the Cointel Repair.

In conjunction with the closure of the 10th Avenue facility, the Company is also looking to downsize and re-organize in the Fleet Department. Some mechanic positions and a partsperson position may be moved to Kamloops and Victoria. We have to also deal with the concerns of downsizing the mechanics classification in Prince George and Fort St. John.

Many meetings have been held to try and resolve the issues between the parties. The Company has indicated to the Chair of the Committee that the work in question is work regularly performed. If the Company decides to press forward in trying to contract this work out Mr. Kelleher will have to decide what is or is not allowed under the terms of the Collective Agreement.

### RENOVATIONS AT 768 SEYMOUR

The Committee was involved in a Letter of Agreement that secured the inside electrical wiring for the renovations at 768 Seymour. This work associated with the electrical portion of the renovations will go on for over a year with 12 mem-

bers assigned to work on the project.

### TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

The Company continued to introduce new technologies over the year. They are of the view that many things are not technological change but we continue to have presentations at the Committee in front of the Chairperson. On a positive note, we were also given an update on the 1-800 Dial Around System which had been dealt with previously by the Committee. The Company announced that calls to 1-800-555-1111 from Manitoba west in Canada and west of the Missouri in the US would be answered in BC. This is additional work for our Operator Services members. Also the Company advised the Union they were going to be answering calls for North American Directory Assistance instead of having the calls answered in other provinces or the United States.

We are continuing to study the impacts of SAP on the membership. Several interviews have been done with members whose work has been directly or indirectly affected by this new system. We now have the issue of the merging of the two systems from BC and Alberta, we are trying to determine the impact this will have on the work force as well. The Committee would like to thank all who have sent information on SAP and encourage you to continue as this is potentially a big technological impact.

Respectfully submitted,  
COTC COMMITTEE  
Rod Giddens  
Bruce Bell, Vice-President  
Betty Carrasco, Business Agent  
Hope Cumming, Business Agent



Dave Wilson, long-time activist with TWU, the B.C. labour movement and the NDP, was honoured at convention on his upcoming retirement. Seen here with other Local 5 delegates, from left, Rod Giddens, Don Fehr, Wilson, Fran Müller and Tony Candido.

## Telus offers early retirement incentive

In February, Telus unveiled details of an Early Retirement Incentive for 2000 for bargaining unit employees in Alberta and B.C.

Similar to the ERIP offered last year, this year's Incentive will be open to those who have reached the age of 55 by the end of 2000, with a minimum 25 years service, or age 60 with two years service. The maximum payout will be \$60,000 based on \$500 for each month between the member's current age and age 65, with a minimum payout of \$30,000.

Telus says 366 employees — 118 in Alberta and 248 in B.C. — will achieve eligibility for early retirement in 2000. In addition, employ-

ees who were eligible for the 1999 ERIP but who chose not to participate at that time will be eligible for this year's incentive.

Telus said the retirement date for all participants, except for those who turn 55 in 2000 after March 31, will be March 31. However, the Union notes that that time frame is very short, and in the past, the company has had to extend the retirement date deadline. Members planning to participate are advised to keep in touch with their supervisors with respect to the retirement date question.

The ERIP requires the approval of the Telecommunication Workers Pension Plan trustees.

## Telus backs off plans to contract out major portion of Burnaby Shops work

Facing staunch opposition from the TWU members working at 6969-10 Avenue in Burnaby, and the Union's Contracting Out and Technological Change Committee, Telus has backed off its announced intention to contract out a substantial amount of Shops work with the March 31 closure of the Shops facility Burnaby.

Late in 1999, the company announced plans to sell-off the facility, and to contract out a

major portion of the work done there, including work of the Sign Shop, Metal Shop, Iron Shop, Carpentry Shop, Set Repair and Booth Repair, and others, as well as fleet equipment, body shop, and construction of portable buildings. The company also planned to contract out coin counting, sorting and wrapping.

On hearing of the company's plans, the workers at the facility mobilized. The TWU held meetings there, which were very

well attended, and at which members expressed their views and concerns in no uncertain terms. The Union pursued the issue with the company through the COTC committee.

In late February, Telus informed the COTC committee it would not proceed with plans to contract out the Shops work, except for fleet equipping, body shop and construction of portable buildings.

While pleased the company backed off its major contracting out plans, the Union did not agree that any work should be contracted out. The exceptions noted above went before COTC Chair Stephen Kelleher for hearing. COTC member Hope Cumming presented the Union's case, with the other COTC members assisting in the preparation. As this is written, a decision has not been handed down by Mr. Kelleher, but is expected soon.

Telus also went to hearing on the coin counting, sorting and wrapping work they would like to contract out. The Union also opposed those plans, and a decision on that issue is also pending.

The Union's argument is that all of the above is work regularly performed by TWU members and contracting out should not be allowed.

Members are advised that any work regularly performed by the shops will continue to be done by the shops unless Mr. Kelleher rules in the company's favour.

Vice-President Bruce Bell, a COTC committee member, said this is a big issue for the Union, and the fact the company backed off its plans for major contracting out of work is very important. He said the purpose of the COTC clause is to protect work regularly performed, and the decision pending is a one to be watched closely.

## Excerpts from E.C. report

Following are a few of the topics covered in Executive Council Report to Convention.

### CLERICAL TEMP COMMITTEE

As of December 8, 1999, there were 650 Clerical Temporaries working for BC Tel and associated companies.

Since the Telus merger, the Clerical Temp Committee has found management increasingly difficult to deal with. Over the past year, BC TEL has forced the Committee time after time to take them to the limit with the grievance and arbitration procedure before responding to our concerns.

One arbitration that was scheduled to proceed this past fall related to temporary usage at Interactive. It was resolved prior to the scheduled hearing. In total, 85 permanent jobs resulted from this dispute. First, the Union got 20 jobs through a COTC issue relating to the situation at Interactive. Then we signed a Letter of Agreement resolving the dispute which resulted in an additional 65 job postings. The Letter includes a provision for a set date for filling the jobs.

The Clerical Temp Committee has also been doing a lot of compiling on regular and continuous usage. The Committee has sent letters to arbitrate in other areas, and hopes to resolve a number of other issues soon. For example, the Committee is attempting to resolve a pending arbitration relating to Residential ACD province-wide, and as this is written we are awaiting a response from the company.

The Committee is also reviewing all outstanding job postings, many of which have not been filled in the past two years. This has resulted in a number of individual grievances, which the Union intends to arbitrate if they are not resolved.

### MEMBER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

This has been a very busy year for the Union's Member Assistance officers, June Lewis and Jim Christensen. The approximate figures of the work load are as follows: Alcohol and drugs, 30; Stress, 50; Mental disability, 60; Referrals, 75.

There are a number of different factors in the workplace and in our personal lives that are causing stress, but the Union believes a major factor is the Telus merger.

There have been no further meetings with BC TEL/Telus regarding the EAP, although the company has hired two more EAP counsellors. The company obviously wants to continue on the EAP route, but the Union is concerned that there may not be complete confidentiality, and we are also concerned that the company is motivated more by cost considerations than the well-being of our members.

The MAP officers are working diligently with members to ensure they are treated with dignity and respect when they are ready to come back to work. We must recognize there is not one model which works for everyone. The service provided should be sensitive and flexible enough to meet the differing needs of different people.

### WORK JURISDICTION COMMITTEE

The Work Jurisdiction Committee continues to work on a number of issues where managers are doing, or are seeking to do, Bargaining Unit work. One such issue this year revolves around work being done by Telus to expand into the Toronto market. On this matter, the Umpire has stated that the Union has a right to expect that the work in question will be bargaining unit work once the CIRB rules on which Union represents all of the Telus workers. He has sent notice to Telus that if the TWU becomes the successor union, the work will be TWU work. He has also indicated that the passage of time will not diminish the union's claim in this respect.

Another issue of concern for the Committee this year involved LAN/WAN techs. The Committee was able to force the company to post for 10 positions in this area on work previously done by managers, without giving up anything on job postings or seniority. The Committee is looking forward to achieving more postings in this area. The Committee believes it is very important to have bargaining unit people doing this LAN/WAN tech work to ensure the Union continues to retain jurisdiction in this area.

The Committee is also working to ensure the Article 5 List of managers for Telus includes managers from Alberta as well as B.C., as tech's work is tending to gravitate to Alberta. A complicating factor is that under the two collective agreements currently operative (the IBEW's and the TWU's), much more work is allowed to be done by managers in Alberta than in B.C.

The Work Jurisdiction Committee is also working on a number of other issues, including the Master Domain Server issue, and getting techs assigned to do work as Customer Systems Engineering Specialists.

## Langley to retain major warehouse facility

Telus announced in early March that it plans to consolidate its B.C. warehouse operations at the existing Langley facility, says Business Agent Jim Christensen.

This decision will result in the closure of the Burnaby facility (Boundary Road), but Christensen says there are at least as many jobs in Langley as there are people at Boundary Road to fill them. Details surrounding the movement of personnel and other staffing issues will be the subject of negotiations with the company, Christensen said.

For Alberta, the company also plans to create regional distribution centres in Edmonton and Calgary.

The company is looking at expanding hours of operation of the Langley facility. The Union's position is that that too will be the subject of negotiations.

The closure of the Boundary Road facility will not take place until the third quarter of 2000, after the SAP upgrade is complete. The changes planned for Alberta are also not anticipated to take place until the third quarter of 2000.

## Union to hire office manager

Convention has approved an Executive Council recommendation that the TWU hire an office manager, who will report to the Secretary-Treasurer.

The executive resolution indicates that the anticipated addition of 6,000 or more new members from Alberta, with the likely opening of offices in Alberta, will increase the office

work load to the point that an office manager will be necessary.

With the same rationale, convention approved an executive resolution that the TWU complete the Union's conversion to database, at an approximate cost of \$350,000 to include hardware, software and possible temporary employees and training.



Education Committee members, Bruce Bell, Rod Hiebert, Lori Ruggles, Fran Miller, Al Friesen, Theresa DeVos and Dave Mitchell, report to convention. Missing from photo, Tamara Marshall.

## Education Cttee. report to convention

Following are major excerpts from the Education Committee Report to Convention.

As we enter the new millennium we, in the labour movement, are at a precipice of both challenge and opportunity. Our values of social and economic justice for all seem threatened at every turn. Apathy, the business agenda and its corresponding media influence can ebb away at our reasoning and will. The challenge to bolster our grass-roots, educate and liberate the minds of our younger members, and build the foundations for their future awaits us. Over the next year, the Committee seeks to increase Union participation and begin anew the shop-floor solidarity strategies that have worked so well for us in the past. We look forward to the opportunity to work with our Brothers and Sisters in Alberta.

1999 was the second year of the newly-adopted Education Policy and survey results indicate that it is paying off in a big way. Members are thrilled with having more opportunities than ever before to participate in labour education. And while there have been some complaints levelled that the policy has been too stringently applied we must remain committed to the drive to organize the organized - a goal long advocated by the delegates of this Convention. We must encourage our young people to get (and stay) involved - we must do it now and we must get as much saturation of that message to the members as humanly possible. It is vital, not only to the TWU, but to the labour movement as a whole. The Education Committee and the Executive Council want to take this opportunity to say we appreciate the sacrifices local executives have made in order for the drive to continue and want to extend our thanks to those who have acted selflessly in order to encourage and attract new activists. The time and commitment given to this cause creates a legacy that we can all take pride in.

While the main focus must remain on basic training to achieve our goal of education for every member, the Education Committee is indeed cognizant of the need for more advanced training. We have included some advanced training courses in our schedule for 2000. We have ambitious plans for our members - in BC and Alberta and we are anxious to get on with the task at hand.

### PLANS FOR 2000 EDUCATION WITHOUT BORDERS

Although we have big plans for British Columbia we know that a lot of time and effort will be required in Alberta. We are enthusiastic and

prepared to extend our education program there. As this report is being written the TWU is working with local leadership in Alberta to determine their requirements.

#### TWU BASIC SHOP STEWARD

The Leadership course has been re-written to give greater focus to the grievance procedure and skills required to advance unionism in the workplace. Due to the fact that our fall schedule was cancelled we have approximately 50 members waiting for basic training. We have re-scheduled these classes for early 2000.

#### TWU FACING MANAGEMENT

This popular course is being updated so that it will be relevant in today's technological world. It will better reflect the new business terms and hidden corporate agendas. We are searching for new videos and classroom aides with respect to this course and would appreciate any suggestions you may have.

#### CLC WINTER SCHOOL AT HARRISON - 2000

This year the Education Committee expanded the definition of basic training to include Building Local Unions, WCB Advocacy and Union Counselling I in order to better serve your Local's requirements. Seventy-eight students have been registered and confirmed for courses - almost all receiving their first choice selections. In addition, the TWU was able to commit five Instructors to the Winter School. The CLC informed us that this contribution was very much appreciated.

#### TWU ADVANCED GRIEVANCE HANDLING

As the last Shop Steward Training II class occurred in 1995 and the 1997 courses were cancelled the Committee looks forward to putting on another TWU Advanced Grievance Handling course. Course composition is still being updated but the main focus would be on the grievance handling and investigation skills needed from 2nd level to Arbitration and will include leading case histories for the TWU and other unions. While the plan is to utilize our regular Instructors to teach the course, both Brother Morrison and Sister Cumming will have input and guest speakers may be invited to cover specific areas of interest. The first course is tentatively planned for Sept. 28th - 30th, 2000 with more to follow on an as needed basis.

#### TWU ORIENTATION

The concept behind the development of this course is to have a one day seminar for new members in order to educate those unfamiliar with

unions and the democratic process. Subject matter would include the basic function of unions, the importance of representation, labour activism and solidarity, how a local operates and who to contact in your local for help and guidance. New members would receive orientation hand-books which would include most of the information given at the seminar. The set-up and development of this course would be a joint effort between the TWU Education Committee and TWU Organizing Committee.

#### CPP DISABILITY ADVOCACY

Last year, the Education Committee was directed to develop a course on CPP appeals for the membership. The Committee has examined the cost and feasibility of developing such a course and has made the decision to seek outside assistance as the subject matter is complex and the demand for education in this area has yet to be fully determined. Consequently, we have developed a plan to have each region represented by volunteers who would be willing to serve as disability advocates in their areas for a term of no less than three years (wherever possible). A letter will be sent out to the locals shortly to receive expressions of interest. Advocates in each geographical region will be appointed through the TWU President. Once selection have been made we will arrange for those members to attend the three day Advanced Advocacy Course in Burnaby which will be facilitated by John Steeves through the Capilano College Labour Studies Program. The course will be tailored to specifically meet our needs and training will include CPP and internal appeal mechanisms and integration of LTD's with other benefits such as WCB.

#### OUR THANKS

The Education Committee would like to extend its appreciation for the many helpful suggestions and ideas received. We look forward to the challenges this year is sure to bring and thank everyone for their continued support and encouragement. We invite all members to continue to phone us, Email us or write us with your requests in order that we may serve you better. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,  
TWU EDUCATION  
COMMITTEE  
Al Friesen (Chairperson)  
Theresa DeVos  
Tamara Marshall  
Fran Miller  
David Mitchell  
Lori Ruggles  
Rod Hiebert, President  
Bruce Bell, Vice-President

# Human Rights Committee report

Following are excerpts from the TWU Human Rights Committee report to Convention 2000.

This year of 1999 has been a very busy one. The Human Rights Committee has been involved in two conferences this year. One was at the Leaf Conference where we workshopped under various issues (i.e. Employment Equity, Duty to Accommodate).

We had the opportunity to speak to the lawyers who won the human rights case of the woman firefighter, Ms. Meiorin. The claimant, a female firefighter who had in the past performed her job satisfactorily, failed to meet the aerobic standard after four attempts and was dismissed. The claimants brought a grievance on her behalf. The arbitrator held that, because of their generally lower aerobic capacity, most women are adversely affected by the high aerobic standard.

This case had to go to the Courts for appeal. The Union involved the British Columbia Government and Service Employees Union. This case looked at Civil Rights-Sex-Employment-Adverse effect discrimination - women having more difficulty passing fitness test due to physiological differences - whether fitness test a bona fide occupational requirement - test was to be applied.

#### CONCLUSION

Ms. Meiorin has established that the aerobic standard is prima facie discriminatory and the Government has not shown that it is reasonably necessary to the accomplishment of the Government's general purpose, which is to identify those firefighters who are able to work safely and efficiently. The Code accordingly prevents the Government from relying on the aerobic standard as the basis for Ms. Meiorin's dismissal.

The arbitrator allowed the appeal and restored the arbitrator's order reinstating Ms. Meiorin's Union, the appellant on this appeal shall have its costs in the Court and in the Court below.

Our Human Rights Committee gives a lot of thanks to the B.C. Government and Service Employee's Union and all the intervenors through LEAF for this very important breakthrough in the Human Rights Law.

The other conference where we were able to send 10 of our Human Rights Liaisons was the B.C. Federation Conference on Solidarity. They had a panel of speakers on various human rights issues, i.e. disability, racism, etc.

Alan Dutton was one of the speakers on racism. He follows the racists groups across the country. He was able to show how serious racism is in our country and how they target young children.

Here is a breakdown of Workplace Harassment Complaints we are currently working with:

- Disability (10)
- Sexual Harassment (19)
- Poison Work Environment (12)
- Personal Harassment (2)
- Workplace Violence (14)
- Duty to Accommodate (8)

The TWU Human Rights Committee met January 13th and 14th to review resolutions and to prepare our report. At that time, we reviewed our goals of last year and set a new set of goals for the upcoming year.

#### GOALS FOR THE UPCOMING YEAR

1. Continue our goal of one article per quarter in the Transmitter highlighting Human Rights Issues to the members.

In 1999 we made each issue save one, but due to the postponement of Convention, we hope to catch one more issue before Convention sits at the end of February.

2. Local Human Rights Liaisons' Reference Books have been completed and sent to our local liaisons. We plan to update this information on a continuing basis and invite members to provide helpful information they think should be included.

3. Continue with our review of the Company's Absenteeism Programs. We would like to hear any instance of the Company abusing these plans or strategies for dealing with absenteeism abuse by the Employer.

4. Support the TWU Pay and Employment Equity aims. The successful conclusion of the long standing PSAC complaint must stand as encouragement to us all and should also indicate that changes to the law are needed so Union members denied equitable wages do not have to wait years, in some cases long past retirement to see justice done.

5. Continue the work on Anti-Racism utilizing the CLC Task Force recommendations. This March 21, A Day to Eliminate Racism, the B.C. Fed will be doing work to highlight this important issue for Union members and workers everywhere. The Committee encourages members to make this day visible in your workplace.

6. Outreach to Schools. Through our local Human Rights Liaisons, we hope this year to reach out to school children and ask them to participate in a poster drawing competition for a Human Rights Poster. More details to follow as the year goes on.

7. Initiate a survey of the Non-Craft letter. We hope through this survey to find out what is working and what is not.



*Delegates to TWU annual convention*

## Health & Safety Committee report

*Following are some excerpts from the Health and Safety Committee report to convention.*

### Criminal Court Proceedings

As we reported to you last year, there were several very serious incidents in 1997. The two most tragic accidents involved the fatalities of two of our members. Brother Tom Davis died from injuries received when the pole he was on fell to the ground. Brother Brian McDougall was electrocuted when he came into contact with a high voltage hydro primary conductor.

During 1999, in two separate Criminal Court actions, BCTEL faced charges related to the deaths of these workers. They pled not guilty to all charges and were convicted on only one count in each case. Sentencing was scheduled for mid-November for the Davis trial and mid-December for the McDougall trial. The Company, now Telus, could have received a maximum sentence of \$100,000.00 fine for each conviction.

In reaction to stiff prodding from this Committee and as a result of the death of Tom Davis, the Company has made many changes and reinforcements to their policies and practices involving wrecking - and the climbing of unsupported poles in general. No employee of Telus should ever again be on a pole that is not safely supported, as long as they follow the official procedures put out by the Company.

Business Agent George Doubt attended the trial in Kelowna, stemming from the death of Tom Davis. The following is his report:

*The trial in this case has been completed. The Crown charged BCTEL with six charges relating to Brother Davis' death. The Company was convicted on one charge of failing to properly train Brother Davis in the removal of push braced poles. Three other charges were dismissed on a no evidence motion by the defense council. The Company was found not guilty on the other two charges.*

*The Crown appealed the not guilty verdicts while the Company appealed their conviction. The Company was successful in their appeal, although the Crown has been given the option of retrying one of the charges. At the time of writing, the intention of the Crown has not been made clear.*

Business Agent Tim Williams went to Prince George to attend the trial related to the death of Brian McDougall. The following is his report:

*The trial of BCTEL on charges of safety violations under the Canada Labour Code started September 20, 1999. It continued for eight days. There were many delays in the trial*

*resulting from witnesses being questioned within a voir dire, or a trial within a trial, to determine the admissibility of evidence. The Judge concluded that the employee was not at fault and that his record of employment was excellent. BCTEL was found guilty of failing to ensure that its employee was made aware of every known or foreseeable safety or health hazard in the area where the employee worked, in this case working on employer's equipment which was so close to live electrical power lines, [14,400 volts] as to constitute a dangerous workplace, resulting in the death of the employee. Sections .125[s] and .148[4] of the Canada Labour Code.*

*On a charge of failing to train the employee the court found BCTEL not guilty, saying the Company's failure to train was not proven and commenting on the difficulty of proving a negative. The court also found that another charge, failing to provide a safety watcher, was not proven beyond a reasonable doubt, although the judge commented that the employee would probably still be alive if a safety watcher had been provided.*

*The Company was convicted October 19, 1999 on a charge of failure to make the employee, Brian McDougall, aware of a foreseeable safety or health hazard in his work area, the direct result of which was his death, and was fined \$40,000. The Company was found not guilty on two other charges.*

### Hydro Limits of Approach

The issue of qualified or not qualified, relating to our members, is still hotly contested. Since the fatality, the controversy has resulted in Right to Refuse actions and has involved complaints to HRDC (formerly Labour Canada). As we reported last year, a committee of Wally Popoff, Larry Webster and Roy Wilson was appointed to attend meetings, facilitated by Labour Canada. The purpose of the meetings was to identify and fix hazards related to hydro limits of approach. Wally Popoff reports on behalf of this Committee:

### Limits of Approach

The Job Hazard Analysis Committee comprised of TWU representatives Wally Popoff, Larry Webster, Roy Wilson, and three Company representatives have attended meetings facilitated by Labour Canada to develop a job safety analysis in accessing aerial work locations (in proximity to Hydro). A draft report has been developed which was reviewed by TWU Executive Council and is presently being reviewed by the Company.

Recommendations in the Report

1. Minimum limit of approach to

secondary lines to be 300 mm (1 foot) instead of the current rule of "do not touch".

2. Use both metric and imperial measurements in documents.

3. Change Hydro flat construction separation to 3 meters (10 ft. - 1.2 m limit of approach plus 1.8 meter working space) from primary power.

4. Develop outside course, such as Electrical Industry Training Institute to enhance training. Annual refresher safety lessons to be developed.

The TWU members of the Committee do not agree with the 1.2 meter limit of approach when working in proximity to hydro primary power until the Company agrees to increase the safe working space from .9 meters to 1.8 meters. This issue was left unresolved, pending the outcome of the trial relating to the death of brother Brian McDougall, since eight of the charges in that case specified either that this worker was qualified or that he was not. Due to legal technicalities, all eight charges were either stayed by the Crown or quashed by the judge. We will have to find another way to resolve the controversy over whether our Outside Plant Members are qualified or not qualified.

### Repetitive Strain Injuries

Since 1992 we have been tracking the incidence of upper extremity RSIs. The statistics are gathered from sources that include S6051 (Supervisor's Hazardous Occurrence Report), WCB7s (Employer's Report of Occupational Injury or Illness), and SP32 (Physician's Report).

In 1992 there were 238 reported RSIs in BCTEL (2.1% of Bargaining Unit employees). That number has steadily declined until in 1998 there were 98 reported cases of RSI (1.1% of Bargaining Unit employees). That represents an approximate 50% reduction in the incidence of RSI throughout the Company.

The numbers are even more impressive for Operator Service. In 1992, 6.8% of Operators reported RSIs and by 1998, only 1.6% of Operators reported RSIs. That represents about a 75% reduction in the incidence of RSI in Operator Service.

*Respectfully submitted,*

*TWU PROVINCIAL*

*HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE*

*Wayne Bennetts, Chairperson*

*Don Stang, Vice-Chairperson*

*Lori Hannis, Secretary*

*Norm Eady*

*Al Haggstrom*

*Ernie Iwaskow*

*Don Jones*

*Robin Lyman*

*Wally Popoff*

*Tim Taylor*

*Tim Williams, Business Agent*

*George Doubt, Business Agent*

## Operator Services Steering Committee

*Following is an excerpt from Executive Council Report to Convention.*

Operators like other members of our Union, have seen significant changes to their jobs and their place in the telecommunications industry this year. At the same time, they witnessed a direct attack on their base wages by Bell Canada - an attack fuelled by the IBEW's agreement to create a wholesale operator wages rate set at about \$45 per day lower than that of TWU operators.

While unfortunately the CEP in Ontario was not able to roll back Bell's planned contracting out and wage cut for operators, they did stop Manitoba Tel from doing the same thing.

The deregulation's of Operator Services is the key driver in the industry's push for longer hours of work and lower wages. Companies entering the long distance and local markets can shop around for the lowest provider of operator services. The CRTC and industry representatives have laid down the terms for the sale of the directory database information to other telcos and interexchange carriers. This has resulted in the introduction of alternate operator services providers into Canadian Telecommunications.



**RICK FLEMING,**  
*Re-elected convention  
chairperson for 2-year term*

### BOYCOTTS

All readers are asked to support the following trade union sponsored consumer boycotts. Please do not patronize or purchase any of these goods, services and/or retail outlets:

**All Non-Union Postal Outlets.**

Dispute with CUPW  
**Hyundai Products.**

Dispute with Building Trades Council

**California Table Grapes.**

United Farmworkers of America

**All Indonesian Products**

CLC re: East Timor

**Philips Electronic Products, Quebec**

CLC/USWA 7812

**Sony Products**

B.C. Projectionists dispute

**National Post and Calgary Herald**

CEP and GCIU strike against Herald

The IBEW authored sell-out of Operator Services that occurred when Alberta wholesale was agreed to, has resulted in a direct loss of work for our Operators. TWU Operators formerly handled all re-seller's directory inquiries and this contract was lost to the TELUS Wholesale Division prior to the merger of BCTEL and TELUS.

The issue of the administration of prepaid long distance cards which are replacing the "Hello Pass" cards has been turned over to the COTC Committee. Operators have also been hit with a number of tech changes including automation of directory, new coin phones with limited Operator handling and increased automation in toll.

Major changes expected this year will be the change out of the TOPS MP positions to IWS positions that will be used to handle new services that have been or will be introduced. While the Company states that these new services will make up for the loss of work due to tech change and attempts to contact out, we have yet to see a reversal in the downward staffing levels in operator services.

One of these new services is answering OGT Assist "0" which was previously done by management. In December of 1999, after six months of discussions among Delegates and negotiations with the Company, a letter was signed to have TWU members answer OGT Assist "0" which is assist line for operators as well as escalation line for customers.

Overall, the biggest challenge facing operator services will come after the vote, when the Union will have to deal with a total of 18 offices operating under much different rules, procedures and collective agreements.

## REUNION

**Ex-Employees of  
CN Telecommunications  
for Alberta, Yukon and  
NWT  
are holding a reunion  
at Dawson Creek, B.C.  
July 14-16, 2000**

**Employees or retired  
employees  
of BC TEL or Telus  
who worked for CNT in  
the past  
are invited to attend**

**For information,  
contact:  
Ernie Popyk  
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Toll-free voice mail:  
1-877-780-7996**



*Van-Tel Credit Union Vice-President Karen Whitfield, left, and President John Johnston, with Van-Tel Financial Planner Faiza Wilson, at official opening of credit union facility at the Burnaby "Boot". Readers of Faiza's Financial column in the Transmitter will be disappointed Faiza has made a career change and is leaving Van-Tel, so she will no longer be writing a column for the Transmitter. We wish Faiza well in her new job, and thank her for her contributions over the past months.*

## Political Action Committee report

*Following is the Political Action Committee report to convention*

### THE VOTE

Over the past year, the Union's focus has been very much on the One Union Vote Campaign, with correspondingly less attention paid to provincial and federal political issues. However, sometime this year we will likely be into a provincial election in BC and we can likely expect a federal election in 2001. We must also keep in mind that we will soon likely have to broaden our perspective beyond BC. If we are successful in winning the votes of the TELUS workers, a sizeable portion of our membership will come from Alberta. An election was held in that province in 1997, so an Alberta provincial election can be expected in 2001. The Union should begin to think of how we will participate in that election, and looks forward to welcoming Alberta members onto the Committee. Given the fact that we come under federal jurisdiction, and that job protection will become a Union priority after the vote, we urge the Union to step up lobbying of federal political leaders to do everything possible to preserve the work and the jobs of our members, both in BC and Alberta.

### WORLD TRADE

World trade concerns were again high on the agenda in 1999, with the WTO's highly-publicized new round of global trade negotiations in Seattle in November. Labour's concerns with the process stem from the fact that the WTO promotes a very narrow definition of "free trade" that views government policies and programs to protect the environment, to promote Canadian jobs, and to provide a decent social safety net, as "barriers" to business that must be eliminated. We fear too that Canada's public education and health care systems are at risk in such negotiations. The WTO also undermines democracy by allowing secretive international trade tribunals to strike down policies and programs that Canadians have voted for.

Of particular concern to labour, of course, is the issue of workers' rights. It is our view that without labour standards like the right to free collective bargaining and the prohibition of child labour, globalization will encourage exploitation and injustice in the workplace. Unfortunately there are no binding and enforceable rules at the WTO to protect core labour standards. Our federal government says they want to "promote" core labour standards, and "encourage" closer co-operation between the WTO and ILO but we think it is unfair to provide ironclad protections for corporations, while only "promoting" and "encouraging" core labour standards for workers.

Among other things, the Canada labour movement believes that before Canada negotiates any new trade and investment rules at the WTO, we must secure binding and enforceable rules to protect human rights, core labour standards, and the environment. Moreover, health care and education must be completely taken out of WTO agreements. Furthermore, we believe the WTO must be more open and democratic and inclusive, and we insist Canada must not accept any new trade rules at the WTO that include an investor-state dispute mechanism that allows global corporations to sue and intimidate democratically elected governments.

### BC PROVINCIAL POLITICS

It can be said without fear of contradiction that 1999 was not a good year for the NDP government in BC. The government has gone from crisis to crisis, and for the second time in four years we have seen the premier forced to resign. We hope the election of a new leader will begin to get the government back on track. The TWU has not endorsed any candidate, and the Union will begin immediately to establish a good working relationship with whoever is chosen. However, we should be under no illusion that prospects are bright at this point. With an election likely this year, we will be prepared to do what we can to assist in the campaign.

In anticipation of that campaign, we propose to provide members factual and balanced political information on a regular basis, through regular reports in the Transmitter, bulletins and other channels available to us. With the vote and election expected this year, we also propose organizing a Political Action seminar later this year, possibly in early fall, and with Convention's approval, we will begin taking steps to organize such an event shortly after Convention.

### MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

In the 1999 municipal elections, as in past elections, the TWU provided financial assistance to candidates from the TWU or endorsed by their labour council who requested assistance. There were some successes for labour-backed candidates, for example, labour won a few seats in Vancouver, retained control in Burnaby, and made some advances in Nanaimo and Prince George, as well as other centres in the province. We are hopeful this signals a trend and that labour can build on these successes in the next municipal election.

*Respectfully submitted,*  
TWU POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

*Vicki Schoonbeek*

*Brian Wolfe*

*Fran Guillet, Business Agent*  
*Neil Morrison, Vice-President*

## Dear TWU members...

*Text of a Letter*

*From: TWU President Rod Hiebert*

*To: All Members of the TWU*

### Re: Important Merger Information

*I am pleased to write you all personally to thank you for your patience and support as we work through stages of the BC TELUS merger. We are aware that the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers has been inundating many of you with unwanted, invasive and misleading propaganda and phone calls and know how upsetting that can be in this time of uncertainty. The International is making its move on you and your Union. They know that they will not win a straight up vote because the TWU has a much stronger, better Collective Agreement, is much more democratic and is a proud successful grass roots Canadian Union. TWU members do not want to lose what we have fought for and won over the last fifty years. It must be noted that since the 1930's the TWU was joined by many other groups across Canada like telephone workers in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia who left the International Brotherhood to join democratic Canadian grass roots Unions. It would be a travesty if telephone workers in BC were forced to take a large step backward and downward.*

*I know that the uncertainty and frustration are very stressful for everyone but we are moving ahead on a number of fronts. I am happy to report that we have been successful in attaining "One Contract, One Union". This was an extremely important victory as it ensures that the Company will not be able to whipsaw us one group against another or pick us off one group at a time. Now it is up to the membership to vote to ensure that it will be "The TWU" that will represent you. We owe thanks to the Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP) and Civic Services Union 52 (CSU 52) for supporting us for one all-inclusive bargaining unit for Alberta and BC with scope and jurisdiction as per our TWU Collective Agreement. They both took a principled unselfish position for the good of all TELUS workers and must be commended for that. I am happy to report also that CEP and CSU 52 are strongly supporting the TWU in the upcoming vote. They have given us this strong level of support because we are a strong democratic principled Canadian Union and because we have negotiated one of the best Collective Agreements in North America, far superior to any agreements that the IBEW has anywhere in telecommunications.*

*The only outstanding issue concerning the scope of the bargaining unit at this time is whether Field Sales and Telesales for both provinces will be included. Although these classifications are included in our bargaining unit they are outside the IBEW scope and agreement in Alberta. We presented our case two weeks ago for not only keeping the Field Sales and Telemarketing classifications in scope, but to also sweep in all of those people doing the same or similar work in Alberta. We, as you, feel strongly that these workers need the benefits and protections of the TWU Collective Agreement and must be included.*

*The TWU Annual Convention was held February 28 to March 3. I am happy to report that all delegates were unanimous in their support and enthusiasm to fight on your behalf for the TWU. One of the delegates from the Rogers CATV group, that successfully reached a no concessions Collective Agreement with good wage, job security and benefits gains for the first time in recent memory, asked us to tell everyone who asked, that the Rogers workers love the TWU and are "smiling from ear to ear." (It must be noted that this group left the IBEW two years ago to join the TWU. Their last bargaining session with the IBEW saw their agreement eroded with many concessions after a 10-month strike.) The Convention ended with a resolution to make all business of the Convention unanimous. The TWU remains strong and committed to serving all members. We are extending an open invitation to all TELUS workers in Alberta to join the TWU working together without borders for the common good.*

*You will be receiving a ballot from the Canada Industrial Relations Board on April 12 or shortly thereafter and you will be asked to vote for the TWU or the IBEW. The Executive Council and Merger Committee will be releasing to you all of the details of how the mail-in ballot will be conducted by the Canada Industrial Relations Board. The ballot will be mailed directly to your home address and it is important that you follow the procedure correctly and have your ballot counted. How you vote will most likely be the most important decision of your working career. The outcome of this vote could greatly impact your job security, income, benefits, working schedules, and nearly every aspect of your working life. We are facing a huge International that is fighting to collect your dues money and will do or say nearly anything to attain your vote. You have told us that you want to remain TWU and keep our Collective Agreement and that you are not interested in an International Union. It is imperative that you vote early and that you cast your ballot in favour of the TWU.*

*In solidarity,*  
**Rod Hiebert**  
*President*

# CWA President warns of growing 'digital gap'



**MORTON BAHR**  
CWA President

Morton Bahr, President of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), is warning of a growing "digital gap" between the industrial nations and the less developed world.

Speaking to the TWU convention, Bahr illustrated his concern with the following observation:

"In the United States, 100 million people have access to the Internet. At the same time, half the world's population has never made a telephone call."

Bahr said Communications Unions

have a special responsibility to work to end this anomaly, to "elevate the digital gap issue to the highest levels of government."

Bahr said there has long been a divide between the industrial and non-industrial world in terms of telephone service, but the gap no longer applies just to Plain Old Telephone Service. Universal service now means access to all technology, and for that reason, the digital gap is even more serious, Bahr told convention delegates.

"If we don't close the digital gap, we will see social and political unrest at a level we haven't seen in a long while."

Bahr said the gap is particularly acute in rural areas, and he said that when telcos privatize, "they should be required to bring service to rural areas".

Bahr also spoke of the need for Union co-operation in the wake of the tremendous pace of globalization of the telecommunications industry through mergers and consolidations.

He also addressed the need to organize the unorganized, because the breakup and consolidation of corporations has tended to increase the size of the non-union sector. "Last year we (the

CWA) organized 18,000 new members," he said. He said his Union has also been able to convince members to resist any move toward non-unionization, as they realized that jobs and the quality of contracts would suffer if non-union members outnumber union members.

Bahr said his union does not deliberately seek confrontation, preferring to cooperate with the companies, but it is our position that "when we use our power on behalf of the employer, management must ensure that the Union grows with them."

He said that the merging of communications technologies, the merging of data, voice and Internet services, makes it essential for telephone unions to look at the prospects of merging with unions in other communications sectors. For example, he said, the CWA is near a merger with the International Union of Electrical Workers (IUEW), which has over 100,000 members. He noted General Electric is largely unorganized, and he said the merger with the IUEW could open the door to G.E. for the CWA.

Bahr also looked at the rapid growth of Internet service, noting that Internet penetration in the U.S. is occurring three

times as fast as television penetration of U.S. homes some 40 or 50 years ago.

Returning to the theme of the digital gap, Bahr told delegates that whereas 100 million Americans now have access to the Internet, fewer than one million people in all of Africa do, and he said it is imperative that companies expand Internet service to rural areas.

Pointing to the shrinking world and the need for cooperation between communications unions, Bahr congratulated the TWU for its involvement in the new international union organization, UNI. He also suggested that with so many corporate mergers occurring in North America, an alliance of North American Unions may be needed, and that bilateral discussions between the CWA and TWU on expanded co-operation might be a productive course for both Unions.

He said Unions should co-operate to help ensure workers have access to good union jobs, to ensure that more and more people have access to the new technologies, to "lift the quality of life" for people, and to "elevate the issue of the digital gap to the highest levels of government."

"Together, we can make a difference," Bahr concluded.

## Pomeroy calls for closer Union co-operation



**FRED POMEROY**  
CEP President

The head of the Union that represents the majority of workers at Bell Canada says that, in the wake of corporate mergers throughout the industry, Communications Unions must develop a relationship based on co-operation and co-ordination of activity.

CEP President Fred Pomeroy, guest speaker at the recent TWU convention, said Communications Unions must develop structures that maintain local autonomy while at the same time promoting co-ordinated action, even to the point of co-ordinating the timing of collective bargaining.

Pomeroy said that the ongoing mergers of telecommunications companies give the corporate sector expanded power and leverage in dealing with individual unions, and that Unions will soon be faced with what is in effect "a common employer throughout North America."

He said that where Unions are divided while companies are merged or co-ordinated in their actions, it is much more difficult for Unions to fight employer

attempts to contract out by transferring work from one province to another, to keep new work out of the bargaining unit, and to move work from a Union to a non-Union environment. These attempts must be resisted by Unions, and that can be achieved only by cooperative action.

A few years ago, Pomeroy noted, Unions' biggest concerns were such things as decentralization and office closures and transfer of work. "That looks like small potatoes today," he said, "as we now face unprecedented changes in the industry, with mergers and buyouts, and new changes seemingly every day."

Pomeroy pointed to organizations such as the National Alliance of Communications Unions (NACU) in Canada and UNI (the new world organization of Communications Unions) at the international level which can provide an avenue for co-ordinated Union activity. He praised the TWU and President Rod Hiebert for the leading role they have played in both NACU and UNI, and he noted that when he steps down as the Canadian vice-president on UNI, Rod Hiebert will be taking his place. He also expressed pleasure at the convention decision to send delegates to the NACU conference in Ottawa in late April.

Announcing his intention to retire as CEP President in June, Pomeroy concluded his remarks by noting the long and productive relationship that has existed between the CEP and TWU over several decades. "It has been an incredible pleasure for me to work with your union over the years. Our relationship with the TWU has been extremely important. I don't know a Union with better top officers than yours."

## Convention chooses members to attend NACU conference

Convention delegates overwhelmingly endorsed an Executive Council resolution for the Union to participate in a conference of the National Alliance of Communications Unions (NACU) to be held in Ottawa April 28-29, 2000.

The conference is seen as an important step on the road toward greater co-operation and co-ordination of strategies between the various communications unions in Canada. It will focus on new strategies for dealing with issues such as bargaining, contracting out and jurisdiction.

TWU representatives at the conference will include some officers, members of the new bargaining committee, and eight delegates elected at convention: Sherryl Anderson, Local 51; Rod Giddens, Local 5; Rick Fleming, Local 8; Leslie Hammond, Local 30; Julie Labine, Local 50; Lee Riggs, Local 16; Brian Wolfe, Local 28; and Larry Smallwood, Local 7.

Two guest speakers at convention, CEP head Fred Pomeroy and CWA head Morton Bahr, also dealt with the need for closer union co-operation in an era of global telecommunications.

## World March of Women to culminate with mass rally

B.C. women labour activists, including TWU members, will be participating in "World March of Women 2000" events over the next seven months.

In Canada, World March of Women began with a celebration of International Women's Day on March 8 and will culminate in mid-October with a mass rally in Ottawa.

The objectives of the March are to end poverty and violence in women's lives.

The March has been endorsed by over 135 countries and 2200 organizations. Hundreds of Canadian women's organizations, social justice, church, student and labour groups are among them.

Among the events over the more than seven months of the World March are:

- March 8, the recent International Women's Day activities, including local marches and rallies.

- June 11-14, CLC National Women's Conference in Ottawa, where working women will discuss the impact of poverty and violence in their lives.

- October, 2000, a conference on Violence Against Women in Ottawa, organized by the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres.

- October 15, a Mass rally in Ottawa, where women from across Canada will gather to present their demands to the federal government.

- October 17, Ottawa lobby of political parties and MP's on the Canadian demands of the March.

- October 15-17, a delegation of women from Canada will participate in international events at the World Bank and the IMF head offices in Washington October 15 and at the UN in New York October 17.

# TW Pension Plan Report to Convention

FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION WORKERS PENSION PLAN TRUSTEES TO THE FEBRUARY-MARCH 2000 CONVENTION

At the 1999 Convention it was reported that Watson Wyatt had entered into negotiations to transfer their customized systems clients and staff to J. Evans and Associates. In March 2000 it was reported that the two parties could not reach an agreement.

Consequently the Board of Trustees entered into negotiations with J. Evans and Associates to develop a new pension system. J. Evans and Associates has developed and installed many pension systems over the years including the current pension system used by the Company pension plan for management employees.

The J. Evans and Associates along with Educational Services Technology Inc. proposal to develop a new computer system was approved and work is already underway. The project is projected to take approximately 21 months, the 1st phase expected by the end of September 2000. The first phase will include a new database and pension calculator.

The new database will facilitate the ongoing data clean-up project by providing the administration staff the ability to enter and correct data when required.

Watson Wyatt are no longer providing customized systems however they remain committed to working with the administration office through this transition.

In 1999 the Trustees reviewed the Pre-Retirement Death Benefit provisions and approved in principal that the offset of the Company Death Benefit be removed and certain other changes to the Pre-Retirement Death provision of the Plan. The amendment will take effect upon the installation of the new computer system and notices will be sent to members.

The Trustees also approved a change to the Level Income Payment options offered to members at retirement. The integration of CPP/OAS will now be calculated on the members' benefit only which will improve the amount payable to a spouse or beneficiary. The new method will take effect upon the installation of the new computer system.

The majority of the membership have receive their annual statements to the end of 1998. There are however, still a significant number of files being reviewed and having payroll

data corrected. The administration staff continue to work toward resolving these data

issues and will continue to send out statements as each individual file is reviewed and confirmed correct.

Approximately 769 members were eligible to purchase service in 1999 and were sent letters notifying them of the possibility of being short Days of Pay by the end of the year and were permitted to purchase service. A total of 29 members responded to the opportunity to make additional contributions to maximize their membership service.

In 1995 the purchase of service plan was implemented at which time the Plan was to allow members to buy service as long as it was cost neutral to the Plan. Due to the lack of members buying service, the cost of administration of this program does not offset the amount of contributions received by the members. In order to keep costs down the administration office will not be providing members with letters notifying them of the possibility that they may have a shortfall of days of pay for that year. Instead a form letter will be sent to the membership annually reminding them of this program and for members who are interested in purchasing days of pay may contact the administration office for the forms and the cost per day purchased.

For the 2000 Plan Year the Trustees deemed a Day of Pay without receipt of Purchased Service Contributions for each Day of Pay in respect of which a participant was in receipt of WCB benefits, sick benefits or was on a leave of absence as a result of sickness, ill-health, strike or lockout.

The Trustees have decided not to grant an increase to retired members in 1999.

An update of accrued pension benefits was approved by the Trustees for active members' effective January 1, 2000. The update will result in the earnings for 1997, 1998 and 1999 (limited by the member's average daily rate times 260.89 at December 31 in the same three year period) being used to calculate accrued pension benefits at December 31, 1999.

The issue of governance has been under discussion and a sub-committee of the Trustees was appointed to address the issue.

The following figures are approximate amounts (\$millions). The values are based on interim information provided by the Custodian and may change should the Custodian revise their December 31, 1999 statement.

	Amount	Percentage of Total
Real Estate	\$ 77.6	4.8%
Mortgages	\$ 113.5	7.1%
Bonds	\$1388.1	86.2%
Cash	\$ 30.6	1.9%
Other	\$ 0.1	0.0%
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$1,609.9</b>	<b>100%</b>

At the Trustee meeting held on January 20, 2000 the Plan Actuary presented the results of the Actuarial valuation made as of January 1, 1999. A copy of these results will be provided to delegates at the convention. Aspects of these results which the Trustees noted included the following:

1. The Plan continues to be in good financial condition even when the actuarial liabilities have been calculated using a very conservative assumption as to future investment earnings (5.25%).

2. The excess of assets over actuarial liabilities for accrued benefits is more than \$150 million and is sufficient to permit the Trustees to approve an "update" in accrued benefits for active members as of January 1, 2000 so that these are based on the year coverage earnings to the end of 1999. The Trustees were also able to improve the Plan's pre-retirement death benefits for members who die before retirement.

3. Because of the increase in interest rates which has occurred during 1999 the financial position of the Plan will be better at the end of 1999 than it was at the beginning. This is because, with higher interest rates, the Plan's actuarial liabilities have reduced more than the related Plan assets. This can be observed from the January 1, 1999 actuarial valuation results which the Plan Actuary will review and explain at the Convention.

4. Even though the Plan's financial condition was good at January 1, 1999 and likely better at January 1, 2000 it may be necessary to have slightly higher contributions from the employer and members in the future to finance the Plan's objectives of "final coverage earnings" and post returns indexing for all active and retired members. Alternatively the Plan must achieve very favorable investment experience or demographic experience.

5. The biggest risk to the Plan continues to be lower interest rates. This risk exists even though the Trustees investment policy has been developed to provide maximum protection to the Plan if this situation should occur. The Trustees continue to meet regularly with their professional advisors to discuss when and how they should alter the current investment policy. The last such meeting was held on November 24, 1999 and included input from an independent economist. All of these involved confirmed that the current investment policy is appropriate and that existing conditions, particularly the high level of stock markets, indicated the Trustees should retain their current policy. This process will actively continue in the future.

There will be further financial and actuarial information distributed at the Convention

## REAL ESTATE PROJECTS

### Pacific Point Development

The Plan continues to receive its share of the monthly rental income from this project. The total received for 1999 was \$880,000.

### Bamberton Investments Ltd

David Podmore will be attending the Convention to report on the status of the Bamberton project.

### Concert Properties Ltd.

David Podmore will be attending the Convention to give an up to date report on Concert Properties Ltd.

### Mortgage Fund One

During 1998 the Trustees approved a further investment in MFO in the amount of \$25,000,000 to be drawn by June 30, 1999. MFO drew \$10,000,000 in 1998 and the balance was drawn in 1999. The Plan's current holdings December 31, 1999 are \$126.7 million which represents approximately 63.5 % of the total assets of MFO.

The one year return is approximately 3.02% and the 3 year compounded annual return at the end of December 1999 was approximately 6.39% p.a. Audrey Howe and Al Collings will be attending the Convention to give an up to date report on MFO.

The contributions received for 1999 were approximately \$56 million from the employer and \$25.9 million from the employees.

As at the December 31, 1999 the number of retired members was 3726 and the approximate retirement benefits paid for the year was \$65.5(million).

The approximate return (market value basis) on the fund for the year was -9.23%. This figure is based on interim information provided by the Custodian. This value may change should the Custodian revise the final year end statements.

For the information of the delegates the following are the current Trustees of the Plan. They are available to meet with members to answer any questions or concerns.

### Company Trustees

**Al Prentice**

**John Wolff**

**Garnet Andrews**

**Robert Dardi**

### Union Trustees

**Rod Hiebert**

**Linda Tait**

**Dave McElheran**

**Kathy Pearn**

*Debbie Ellis, Administrator*



Presenting TW Pension Plan report to convention, from left, Administrator Debbie Ellis, Actuary Bruce Rollick, and Trustees Linda Tait and Dave McElheran. Not shown in picture, Trustees Rod Hiebert and Kathy Pearn

## LTD Plan report to convention

FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION WORKERS LTD PLAN TO THE 2000 CONVENTION

During the year there were 19 new disability claims, 4 deaths, 29 who retired and 0 who returned to work.

The total number of disabled members at December 31, 1999 was 159 and the total benefits paid for the year was \$3,315,058.30.

At the January 20, 2000 meeting the Trustees decided not to grant an increase to the disabled members for 1999. Disabled members receive increased CPP Disability benefits that reflect the increase to CPI (Consumer Price Index). The Trustees will continue to review benefits indexing on an annual basis.

As at December 31, 1999 the estimated market value of the assets according to the Custodian is approximately \$39.5 million and the Plan had a rate of return for 1999 of approximately -5.56 %.

The actuary prepared an actuarial report in 1999 and determined that the assets of the Plan together with future employer contributions are more than sufficient to finance the LTD benefits. The actuary recommended that for 2000 only the rate of employer contribution remain at 0.25% of gross bargaining payroll. This results in an additional 0.5% of gross bargaining payroll going to the Pension Plan for 2000. The long term expected contribution rate for the LTD Plan will continue at 0.75%.

There will be financial and actuarial material distributed at the convention. For the information of delegates the following are the current Trustees of the Plan.

Company Trustees  
**Al Prentice**  
**John Wolff**  
**Garnet Andrews**  
**Robert Dardi**

Union Trustees  
**Rod Hiebert**  
**Linda Tait**  
**Dave McElheran**  
**Kathy Pearn**

*Debbie Ellis, Administrator*

## Sec.-Treasurer's report to convention

Following is the report of Secretary-Treasurer Kathy Pearn to convention 2000.

This past year has been a very busy time for me, as it has been for the entire Union executive. With the work associated with the 50th anniversary celebrations, the extensive Leaders tour and all of the other details associated with the legal and political aspects of the Union merger campaign, in addition to all of our normal duties, I found 1999 to be particularly hectic. Since we expect to face a merger vote later this spring, likely followed by the mountain of work that will be involved in integrating two workforces into one union, I anticipate the coming year will be just as hectic.

On the financial front, I am pleased to report that we continue to operate the union on the principle of fiscal prudence. I am still keeping a tight rein on the budget, and it looks as though the union will end the fiscal year with a good surplus. I expect this year we will reach our goal of a six-month operating reserve.

Despite this good news, we really cannot let ourselves become complacent about the state of our finances. In this coming year, we will have a much tighter budget than last year, even without additional costs of bringing in thousands of new members in Alberta. Some people may argue that if we win the vote and boost our membership accordingly, it will result in a huge increase in revenue and allow us to loosen the purse strings. I think it would be a serious mistake to make any such assumption.

In the short term at least, there will be additional costs of the campaigns, and substantial start-up costs of representing the new members — some of which will have to be paid before

we ever collect a penny of new dues. Even when we have the dues-paying members on our list, we will have the costs of servicing the new members, the costs of new offices, and the costs of new personnel.

Also we have to keep in mind that we cannot simply add together our current numbers and the current number of Alberta members and expect they will all be dues-paying members in future. There can be no doubt there will be some drop in the overall membership numbers and a corresponding decrease in total membership dues, when we factor in the Early Retirement Incentives of 1999 and 2000, the real possibility of a Voluntary Separation package, and other attrition which will flow out of the merger. Even without layoffs, it is quite clear Telus intends to downsize to some extent.

The Union Executive is also proposing that we hire an office manager in the very near future. While this too will increase costs, we believe this is an essential move if we are to deal with a substantial number of new members from Alberta. The merger, the two new offices, the extra work load — it will all increase the demands on the secretary-treasurer's time — and I feel it is essential that we bring in an experienced and qualified office manager to deal with the office staff and office organization — tasks which currently take up a lot of my time.

As you have heard, 1999 was a very busy year. 2000 is gearing up to be even busier with the potential of doubling our membership and with Telus' decision to go national. We are facing very challenging times and I know the TWU is a Union that is up to that challenge.

# Benefit Plan Report

FOLLOWING IS THE REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES OF THE TELECOMMUNICATION WORKERS BENEFIT PLAN TO THE 2000 TWU CONVENTION

The Administration office is pleased to report that the operation of the Benefit Plan has gone very well over the past year. The staff have received numerous calls and notes from members on the handling of their claims including the timely manner on which their claims were processed. The staff wish to thank the membership for all their support.

### PART(s) A, B & C – Telus (BC) Employees

The Trustees reviewed and recommended a plan redesign option to the TWU Executive Council. The recommendation was that if an Employer contribution is not bargained into the Plan that would permit the desired plan redesign that a vote be taken by the entire membership as to whether PART A should be continued. The vote would be to transfer all PART A members to PART(s) B & C and all non-participating members be enrolled in PART(s) B & C. This recommendation is currently tabled until the certification issue is resolved.

The booklet has been revised and will be mailed to members.

### PART D – Rogers Cablesystems Employees

A booklet was completed and sent to participating members in 1999. Members who are retired or disabled or on leave of absence have the option to self-pay for Extended Health, Dental, Medical, Vision Care and Emergency Travel Assistance. There was an increase to the self-pay contribution for Extended Health of 10% and Dental 5% effective November 1, 1999.

The Plan Document has been determined and prepared.

### PART E – Campbell Goodell Traynor

A booklet was completed and sent to participating members in 1999. There was an increase to the employee monthly contribution rate from \$15.90 to \$19.30 effective January 1, 2000. This rate increase was due to not as many members covered as originally expected. The employee contribution funds both the Long Term Disability and Group Life coverage.

The Plan Document has been determined and prepared.

The administration office has requested the TWU website be updated to include all booklets.

The Trustees and the Administrator are available to do presentations for Locals. The Local union representative can arrange this by contacting or submitting a request to the Administrator.

The Trustees of the Telecommunication Workers Pension Plan approved the development of a new computer system. The Trustees of the Benefit Plan have approved being included in the new system. The Administration office is currently calculating benefits manually. The new system will alleviate workload and the risk of errors. The Benefit Plan portion of the new system is scheduled to be implemented by the end of Phase 2 of the project; approximately mid 2001.

As at December 31, 1999 the approximate market value of the assets as reported by the Custodian was \$17,643,523 and the Plan had a rate of return for 1999 of approximately -6.13%.

The Trustees have had, since the Plan's inception, an investment policy under which the Plan assets are invested so as to match the Plan's liabilities. As a result, the financial position of the Plan is not significantly affected by changes in interest rates. This means that the Plan's financial position does not improve when interest rates drop (even though this produces good rates of return for the bond market) nor become worse when interest rates increase (even though this produces poor rates of return for the bond market).

The Plan actuary will provide further information at the Convention to assist the delegates with this asset/liability matching concept and the impact of changing interest rates.

There will be financial and actuarial material distributed at the Convention.

Income tax is payable on taxable investment income less operating expenses (not taxable income). For 1999 the net taxable income will be approximately \$748,138 and the Plan will be required to pay approximately \$374,069 in income tax. The income taxes paid for the last five years have been as follows:

1995 -	\$ 227,528
1996 -	\$ 476,478
1997 -	\$ 178,107
1998 -	\$ 216,240
1999	\$ 300,000+ (projected)

The total Plan membership as at December 31, 1999 was 2489 in PART A (down by 58), 6101 in PARTS B & C (down by 40). PART D was 141 (up by 6). PART E was 36 (up by 3).

Jennifer Meloche was elected chairperson for 1999.

For the information of the delegates the following are the current Trustees of the Plan.

**Denise Buchan**  
**Peter Massy**  
**Ron Ritchey**

**Mike DeForrest**  
**Jennifer Meloche**

*Debbie Ellis, Administrator*



Rod Hiebert

## President's Report

# Winning the vote our biggest challenge

*Following is the text of President Rod Hiebert's address to the opening day of TWU convention February 28.*

Good morning!

I would like to welcome each and every delegate and guest to our First Convention of the Millennium and thank you for your hard work on behalf of the membership and TWU. This Convention and the year ahead will undoubtedly be the most historic and notable in the history of our Union.

Within a few short months we will find out whether we have earned the right to represent over 17,000 workers from B.C. to Ontario or whether we lose significant portions of the workforce that we now represent. It is our fight to win or lose!

Brothers and sisters you and your members have given us a clear message that you are prepared to fight for your Union, the TWU.

Winning this battle is clearly the most significant challenge that we have faced as a Union. We must win this battle for our retired members who fought so bravely to build and to extend to us first rate contracting out clauses, layoff and recall rights, jurisdiction clauses, pensions and all of those other rights that work every day for our members at the job site. We must win for our current members so that they will not see the agreement they fought for eroded needlessly with concessions. We must win for our future members so that they will not have to refight battles of the past and suffer from the loss of security and benefits. We must also fight for our brothers and sisters in Telecommunications in the rest of Canada to put an end to the corporate drive for concessions.

We are not alone in our challenge and the direction we have chosen to take. It is significant that the TWU, CEP and CSU52 shared a common position that all of the members in Alberta and B.C. will be better served by one Bargaining Unit and that the TWU Collective Agreement is the preferred agreement. During our last National Alliance of Communications Unions meeting in Harrison, leaders from CEP, AC and TWU and CAW representing workers from Quebec, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and British Columbia stood up to endorse the TWU and our recent leadership campaign. The TWU has a proud history of activism, working with

and supporting other Unions, building good Collective Agreements and exercising sound Trade Union principles and it is because of this history and reputation that we attain support from other Unions.

I must acknowledge and thank CEP and CSU-52 for their support and assistance. They have at all times unselfishly exercised strong Trade Union principles to work for a position that is most beneficial for all communications workers. They must be commended.

All of this has been critical in our struggle through two sets of mediation and many days of CIRB hearings, to extend our single Bargaining Unit Structure and Scope in Alberta, One Union Without Borders. With this victory, we have seriously set back the drive by TELUS to divided and conquer, whipsawing group against group and province against province. We are very hopeful that we will hear soon that the CIRB has included Field Sales and Telesales in the single Unit.

We have been faced with many new challenges now that Stentor has fallen apart and the Telecom giants are headlong into cut-throat competition. Bell has opened shop in Vancouver, TELUS is moving into the East and each Company is forging alliances, mergers, or takeovers to strengthen their position in the market. It is evident that they are wanting workers to compete against each other in terms of wages and working conditions. CEP has been forced into long devastating strikes because Bell Canada and the Manitoba Telephone System demanded the type of concessions the IBEW recently agreed to at their negotiations. I commend CEP for their struggles and successes. They indeed took the fight on for all of us.

There is a corporate attack on telephone operators right across this Country to drive operators' wages down. We are all angry as Trade Unionists that the IBEW secretly agreed to undercut every operator and Telecom Union in Canada by accepting wholesale operators at \$12 per hour after they had specifically agreed not to at the NACU meeting. When the IBEW broke and agreed to the wholesale operators we knew we were in for it. Now calls that were handled by TWU operators at \$22 per hour are going to IBEW operators at \$12 per hour.

The IBEW in Alberta also agreed that construction workers

working out of the Country have to quit TELUS temporarily, may have to share rooms, are not covered by the protections of the Canada Labour Code and other significant concessions. Now TELUS wants the TWU to join the spiral to the bottom or we will not get any work out of the Country. Again IBEW undercuts all of the other Unions and gets all the dues.

TELUS wants a cheaper rate for inside wiring and in some fields is talking about getting entirely out of it. Could that be because the IBEW has just agreed to unlimited temporary wiremen at 60% of craft rate who are exempt from many provisions of the Agreement?

Trade Unionism is not about lowering the wages and benefits of workers in order to collect more dues! Unionism is about workers collectively building a better life for the members they represent. All of the Telecommunications Unions in Canada, with the exception of the IBEW agree that workers should not be competing against other workers by dropping wages and working conditions to increase their Union dues base.

We have to focus on what we believe in and winning the upcoming vote. We can take nothing for granted. We must win decisively or the struggle will continue and we will lose strength at the bargaining table. We will lose if we are overconfident or do not do everything within reason to ensure that we are decisively the representative Union for Alberta and B.C. As I have said many times before, the Executive cannot win this alone, we need the participation of every member and local of the Union.

Throughout the Year 2000 and beyond, we must look strategically into how we will deal with the issues of corporate mergers and consolidation of the Telecommunications Industry, the proposed elimination of foreign ownership rules, run-away technology and continuance of the Free Trade, MAI Agenda. To meet these and other challenges, clearly we must continue to strengthen our ties with all of the rest of the Communications Unions in Canada through the National Alliance of Communications Unions. When NACU leaders representing 70,000 workers in four different Unions with a common position meet with Government Representatives or Corporate Leaders we have great impact upon their ultimate decisions. When we meet with the corporate sector we have much more respect and impact if

we act in solidarity. We must also strengthen our ties with UNI and other Unions such as the CWA.

It is my strong belief that workers should not compete against workers by lowering Collective Agreement standards. When workers are under attack an injury to one is an injury to all. We must act in concert across Canada as if we were one Union and we must have a common pattern bargaining strategy taking a firm stand against concessions regardless of which Union is under attack. We can no longer allow these massive telecom giants the ability to whipsaw us one against the other. We must consider National and International protests and actions if we are to stop the drive for concessions. NACU, UNI, with our allies in the CWA and other Unions and organizations are key to the future of communications workers. I sincerely believe that we can reverse the trend and be in a position to whipsaw the telcos one against the other because in the Labour movement we can build the trust and solidarity.

To that end, NACU is planning a conference to deal with the new competition, bargaining for the future, and strategies for the Millennium. Each NACU Union will be sending a delegation of officers and member activists to hear leaders from around the world, experts on Industrial Relations, and hopefully begin drafting a blueprint for the future. There is one thing that we all agree on and that is we have to work together and plan for the future if we are going to make it work for communications workers. Along with the table officers and elected bargaining team we believe it is imperative that we allow elections for eight additional positions to be elected from the floor.

In closing, I believe it is important to reflect on what gives the TWU our strength as a Union.

- We are democratic grass roots Union.
- We are innovative and plan for the future.
- We believe in the strength of our membership.
- We believe strongly in the founding principles of the trade union.

*An injury to one is an injury to all.*

*United we stand divided we fall.*

These principles, our history, and the character and nature of the TWU give us the strength and tools to be the Union for the Millennium. Thank you.

*In Solidarity,  
Rod Hiebert, President*