



G S U N e w s

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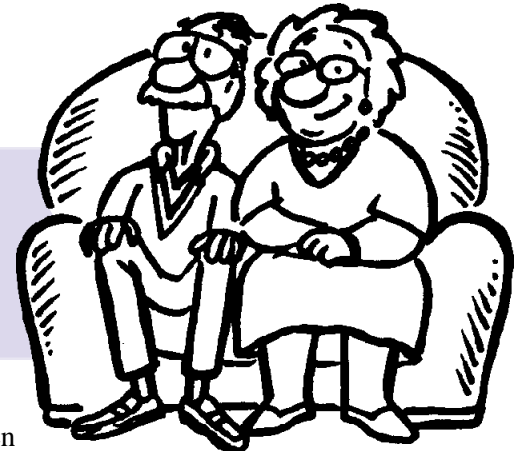
Draft available hours
regulations released 4

Special insert - ILWU battles
member profiling

2005 / Issue 1

Unit 1.2 (WPP) members approve new pension plan

GSU members working for the Western Producer gave overwhelming approval in principle to the adoption of a defined contribution pension plan in place of a defined benefit plan. The migration to the defined pension plan concept began with the sale of the Western Producer in January 2002.



The 2002 purchase of the Western Producer by GVIC Communications Inc. required the new employer to establish a new defined benefit pension plan to replicate the SWP/GSU Pension Plan which covered employees when the farm weekly newspaper was owned by Sask. Wheat Pool. Before and after the sale, GSU argued that the former and new employer were not taking steps to adequately address affected employee's pension interests.

Initiation of GSU grievance action against the new employer eventually resulted in a settlement offer basis a proposal to establish a defined contribution pension plan to cover GSU members. As compensation to employees for switching from a defined benefit to a defined contribution pension plan, GVIC

offered \$400,000 to be divided amongst employees who had been members of the SWP/GSU Pension Plan. GVIC also wanted to extend the life of the current collective agreement by one year in return for a signing bonus equal to 1 percent of pay.

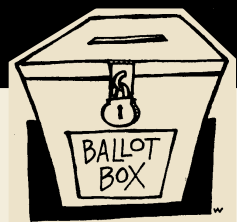
During the ensuing negotiations GSU hired an independent actuary to advise the union Pension Committee and affected employees

on various pension scenarios. While costly, this service proved to be of enormous benefit to GSU and members in reaching an agreement with GVIC.

A December 16 meeting between the GSU Committee and GVIC management resulted in the removal of the proposed one year *(Continued on page 4.)*

Members vote on additional membership dues, absentee ballots

With the exception of one rescheduled meeting in Alberta, GSU's Annual Local meetings were completed by December 6.



Each meeting dealt with a number of common union business issues ranging from finances to services to union administration and organizing. Members also received updates on issues of particular concern to their bargaining units.

Three recorded votes were conducted at each annual meeting. On the question of the additional

membership dues being paid into the GSU Defense Fund, a 77.6 percent majority of those voting approved continuation to the end of 2005.

A majority of 79.6 per cent of those voting approved an amendment to GSU's constitution which will enable votes on union dues issues and constitutional amendments at *(Continued on page 3.)*

www.gsu.ca

We'll get your mouse moving in 2005!



Clip & keep! 2005 GSU Local Presidents directory - page 4

Calendar of events

Write this down!


- ✓ **GSU's quarterly membership meetings begin in February.** Meeting notices will be sent to members soon!
- ✓ **Annual Meeting - GSU Executive Board of Sub-Locals 1A (Operations/Maintenance) and 1B (Head Office) - Regina, Jan. 31.**
- ✓ **Unit 8.8 (AgPro Grain - Alberta/Manitoba) bargaining - Feb. 24 & 25, Calgary.**



Happy New Year!

GSU News

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Sent to press Jan. 21, 2005

Labour's world

Modernizing the Canada Labour Code

Ken Georgetti and Hassan Yussuff, the president and the secretary-treasurer of the Canadian Labour Congress, have been appointed advisors to the Arthurs Commission—a federal commission created to modernize Part III of the Canada Labour Code. GSU General Secretary Hugh Wagner is a committee member.

The commission will undertake the first substantial review of federal laws dealing with work hours, vacations, severance, leaves and harassment since they were introduced in 1965. Georgetti and Yussuff are eager to help make recommendations that reflect the workforce diversity and recognize the challenges workers face today—precarious jobs, balancing work and family, and the need to acquire and renew skills. *CLC/CALM*

Let them eat soup

The Montreal Children's Hospital Employees Union donated 72 ceramic soup bowls to the privately run kitchen at the hospital, so sick and injured children can eat soup again.

Sodexo Marriott, the private contractor that manages the kitchen at the hospital, stopped replacing bowls at the facility last year. Instead of soup,

Sodexo Marriott has been giving children a serving of potato chips.

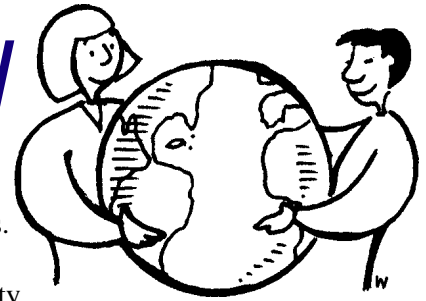
Unionized employees at the facility reached into their own pockets to buy new ceramic bowls so the children can once again eat soup. *SUNSpots/SUN/CALM*

Wear jeans to work and be healthier?

Every day should be casual day.

A study commissioned by the American Council on Exercise, a non-profit fitness advocate, shows that physical activity during the workday increased by 8 percent when casual clothing was worn instead of formal business attire.

The study examined 53 healthy men and women with an average age of 42. For two days a week over a two-week period, the study participants wore a pedometer to work. On one of those days each week they dressed in formal business attire, and on the other day they dressed in blue jeans.



Quite simply, the level of workday physical activity increased when casual clothing was worn. Specifically, the participants took an average of 491 more steps—that's an 8 percent increase—on the days they wore jeans, compared with the days they wore suits and dresses. Add it up and they walked 2.85 miles in the office hallways on jeans day, compared with 2.64 miles on business attire days.

"Advances in technology combined with our hectic lifestyles have helped to virtually eliminate physical activity from our daily routines," said Cedric X. Bryant, Ph.D., chief exercise physiologist for ACE. "Wearing casual, comfortable clothes to work may be an easy way to encourage us to put physical activity back into our daily lives."

www.netscape.com



A moment of Mindless Trivia

In what year were Pong and the Pet Rock the biggest Christmas sellers?

If you think you know the answer to this question, get your answer, name and contact information to GSU by February 28, 2005.

A winner will be drawn randomly from all correct responses and announced in the next issue of the GSU News.



Public-Private Partnerships. What's wrong with P3s?

P3 means "Public-Private Partnership."

Like other forms of privatization, P3s got their start in Margaret Thatcher's Britain. P3s are the 'alternative financing' Premier Ralph Klein plans to use to refurbish Alberta's infrastructure after 10 years of provincial government cutbacks.

The basic P3 model is called a "DBFO" (for Design, Build, Finance, Operate). In this arrangement, a company or group of companies makes an arrangement with the government to build and operate a public facility. The private supplier designs the facility, obtains financing, oversees the construction and (sometimes) manages the facility. For its part, the government agrees to lease the facility on a long-term basis (usually 25 to 30 years).

Complications arise

When a company or group successfully bids on a P3 facility, they try to maximize revenues and minimize costs, like businesses do.

When the project in question is a public service, complications arise. Here's one example.

When the Halifax Regional School Board allowed Scotia Learning Centres (SLC) to own and operate 11 Halifax-area schools, SCL sought increased revenue flows. They raised the rental fees for off-hour use of school facilities, such as gymnasiums. Rental rates were raised by more than 100 per cent in some cases, making it difficult for community groups - like minor basketball associations or

boy scout troops to continue to use school facilities.

The Pros and Cons

The greatest perceived strength of the P3 - cost efficiency - is actually their greatest weakness.

Those in favour of P3s say they allow us to build new infrastructure that we couldn't afford without access to private financing. Those same people say public debt is always a bad thing. But debt is debt, whether it comes in the form of bank debts or lease payments.

Critics of P3s argue that these projects eventually cost the public more than if the same facility would if it had been built and operated by government. Researchers say the private finance initiative does not provide new money for public services as the government claims.

Critics also argue long-term lease commitments are worse than debt created by borrowing - like

paying the mortgage, but having no house in the end. They also argue a 30-year obligation to pay a P3 contractor is no different from an obligation to pay bondholders for 30 years to fund infrastructure construction - except paying the bondholders is cheaper than paying off the P3 lease.

So what's your point?

P3s don't work.

P3 operators aren't necessarily greedy or unethical. The point is schools and hospitals are supposed to be community facilities, not revenue generators. Attempting to operate them like businesses doesn't work very well and it doesn't serve the public interest. That's why public services have traditionally been provided by government - because accountability for the quality of those services is best provided through democratic government.

GSU members vote on dues, balloting

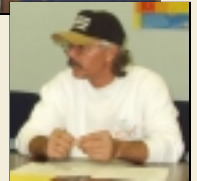
(Continued from page 1.) the bargaining unit level. And a second constitutional amendment enabling absentee ballots for members on shift work was approved by a majority of 97.6 per cent.

Elections of Local officers resulted in a number of changes, but for the most part incumbents were re-elected. A list of the Local presidents for 2004/05 is printed on the page 4 of this newsletter.

Attendance at the annual meetings was down somewhat compared to 2003. The lower turnout was attributed to the two



Above: (L-r) Newly elected GSU officers Trent Christman, Norm Warriner, and Wes Pearce in Raymore.



Below: Local 9 President Dave Kwochka at the Weyburn meeting.

rounds of very well attended GSU pension information meetings in September.

The next round of Local meetings will take place in late February and early March.

Sask. government releases draft available-hours regulations

On January 7, Saskatchewan's NDP government released draft rules to force large companies to hand out extra hours of work on a seniority basis. The rules would require employers with more than 50 workers to give any extra hours to the part-timer who has been on staff the longest.

The draft regulations define additional hours as any hours created by extension of operating hours by opening a new department, resignation, retirement, temporary absence, termination, or death.

In order to be eligible for the extra hours of work, the worker must want the hours and have "the knowledge and ability to perform the work after a reasonable period of familiarization in the position."

"What we are looking at is giving an opportunity so these people can build on what they have established in their workplace," said Labour Minister Deb Higgins. "What we are looking at are the larger employers that have a bulk of the part-time."

The initial 'most available hours' regulations were passed in 1994, but never proclaimed as law because of businesses' concerns. In 2004, Higgins asked her staff to modernize the rules.

The government is send the draft regulations to various stakeholders for feedback, and Higgins hopes to have the process completed by spring.

Here's what labour says

"The business crowd should stop and recognize the improved quality of life this legislation would provide to the mainly young, mainly female, often lowly paid part-time workers," said Saskatchewan Federation of Labour President Larry Hubich.

"It simply allows part-time employees to work towards full-time jobs at one location, instead of piecing together two or three part-time jobs with different employers."



Do your part to help improve the quality of worklife for part-time workers in Saskatchewan!

Two postcards have been included with your GSU Newsletter. These postcards are for signature by Saskatchewan residents, urging Premier Calvert and Opposition Leader Brad Wall to implement additional hours regulations.

Please sign, stamp, and mail the card at your earliest opportunity.

WPP members approve new pension plan

(Continued from page 1.)

extension of the collective agreement from the bargaining. The union Committee decided that enough had been learned through the process and enough had changed to warrant consultation with union members.

On December 21 and 22 GSU members working for The Western Producer voted on whether or not to accept GVIC's offer of \$400,000 in return for agreeing to establish a defined contribution pension plan. A majority of 93.48 per cent of those who cast ballots agreed to accept GVIC's offer in principle, subject to finalization of all of the necessary details, including the method for distributing the \$400,000.

Management was advised of the union members' decision. And, early in 2005 GSU and GVIC representatives will meet to solidify the pension agreement and work out the details of establishing a new pension plan.

"While the details remain to be worked out, I think the bargaining unit did an excellent job for themselves overall," said GSU General Secretary

Hugh Wagner. "In the larger scheme of things the pension issues raised by Sask. Pool's sale of the Western Producer point to the need for a major overhaul of pension laws and regulations at the federal and provincial levels."

Wagner added GSU will be working with others in the labour movement to change pension laws in Canada.

2005 GSU Local Presidents

- Local 1 (Regina) Mandy Windecker
- Local 2 (Saskatoon) Mike Raine
- Local 3 (Moose Jaw) Glenn Outram
- Local 4 (Yorkton) Trevor Gyoerick
- Local 5 (Humboldt) Brian Suer
- Local 6 (North Battleford) Brian Wilson
- Local 7 (Assiniboia) Rick Eisnor
- Local 8 (AgPro AB/MB) Frank Schlageter
- Local 9 (Weyburn) Dave Kwochka
- Local 10 (Raymore) Norman Warriner
- Local 11 (Davidson) Vacant
- Local 12 (Carlyle) Craig Ast
- Local 13 (Tisdale) Rod Peterson
- Local 14 (Wadena) Dwayne Nakrayko
- Local 15 (Rosetown) Vacant
- Local 16 (Swift Current) Carolyn Illerbrun

GSU President Mike Raine
 GSU Vice-President Mandy Windecker
 GSU Vice-President Brendon Sayers

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In the post-9/11 world, state authorities around the globe, particularly in western liberal democracies, have rushed to introduce draconian security measures which infringe on the civil rights of law abiding citizens.

For all of the trampling on our rights in the name of fighting terrorism, can we honestly say we are more secure?

Those who would use terror tactics to accomplish their ends must take comfort in the fact that the official responses to their murky threats has a price tag of billions of dollars for so called security measures. This is money that would be better spent at home and abroad to eliminate poverty and inequality.

But even more sinister is the reaction of state agencies and the politically powerful. These folks would have us believe that by holding honest citizens up to suspicion and by attacking the job security of working people we will become more secure as a society. It is hard to imagine how we could be more secure in an environment where the state and its agencies are a source of profound insecurity.

GSU News is reprinting an article written by Tom Price for the *The Dispatcher* (the union newspaper of the ILWU in Canada and the USA). In the article Brother Price reports on the struggle of ILWU Canada, the CLC, and other allies to defend the rights of people working in Canada's ports as they face an unprecedented bureaucratic/political attack on their civil and employment rights.

Please read the article and decide whether you are willing to lend a hand by contacting your Member of Parliament and the federal Minister of Transport to protest Transport Canada's actions.

Repressive new screening rules invade privacy, take jobs

Imagine having to tell the government about your in-laws' political activities, or having to give them your credit history and medical records, just to keep your job.

This, and much more, is what ILWU Canada longshore members will have to do early next year if the Ministry of Transport imposes the most invasive screening program yet. And Canada's Transport Security Clearance Process (TSC) could become a model for the maritime world.



by Tom Price

Transport Canada wants to require dockers to provide information on parents, spouses, associates and relatives.

They would have to report on their education and residential, travel and employment histories. They would have to give their "hair colour, eye colour and complexion" information — that's code for "race." They would have to give permission for background searches into immigration, criminal and Royal Canadian Mounted Police records. The RCMP is Canada's FBI.

"Simply put, they're trying to make a database to racially profile our members," ILWU Canada President Tom Dufresne told *The Dispatcher*. "They also want to politically and financially profile our members."

According to the ministry, dockers would also have to supply "any and all information that will facilitate an assessment by the CSIS." The Canadian Security Intelligence Service, founded in 1984, is Canada's CIA. Information against dockers could also be provided by employers, stool pigeons or just plain bloody minded people with a score to settle.

At the October 26 press conference: (l-r) Steve Buckle, Vice President, ILWU 502; Bob Ashton, President, Local 500; Tom Dufresne, President, ILWU Canada; Frank Morena, Secretary-Treasurer, ILWU 514; and Peter Lahay, ITF Coordinator, Canada.

"You don't have to be a conspiracy theorist to worry that governments can go too far when they're given too much power, we have seen it time and again," Dufresne said.

A worker's failure to provide the information would mean no clearance, and then no job on the docks. Once the government has the information, a worker could be subject to more investigation by the RCMP, CSIS and other unnamed agencies. In a reversal of the basic "innocent until proven guilty" principle, if clearance is denied, the worker would have to prove the charge false in order to get the clearance. And the government wouldn't necessarily have to tell the worker what all the charges were, or where they came from. Workers would have to go through TSC every five years.

The passage of the Anti-Terrorism Act of 2001, Canada's *(Continued on reverse)*

Patriot Act, and the Marine Transportation Security Act of 1994 enabled Transport Canada to set up TSC without going back to parliament for approval. Transport Minister Jean-C. Lapierre announced the new directives in a Sept. 17 news release. The ministry began public hearings Sept. 20. Since then, ILWU Canada, the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and other transport unions have bird-dogged ministerial representatives at public discussions in ports around the country. Bill Chedore, the CLC's National Coordinator of Health, Safety and Environment, was on the tour:

"Most of them [from the ministry] have never had more than a cursory glance at the docks," Chedore said. "So we took them on tours. We demonstrated how lax the security was toward empty containers. We used to check them, but because of economics the employers took all that inspection away. The logic was they didn't want to spend money checking empty containers because when they're empty, they're empty."

"In Montreal they once had checkers who directed truckers where to pick up containers," Chedore said. "The checkers would say container number so and so goes onto this truck. They got rid of those guys, and the truckers now come in and make hand signals to the gantry crane operator saying they want this or that can put on their truck. The truckers direct the container moves, and they are exempt from screening. In Montreal the ministry people actually saw this happening! They scratched their heads."

"In our opinion Transport Canada is attempting to make up for failed past government policies, things like eliminating the port police and taking customs off the docks," Dufresne said. "To make up for those failures they're trying to scapegoat longshore workers in Canada, trying to hang the hook on our members."

Dufresne outlined what ILWU Canada found most offensive to the rights, freedoms and privacy of its members in an Oct. 21 Submission to the Transport Ministry. These include the unlimited scope of information collected, the fact that a lifelong career could be ended without due process, and the reversal of the burden of proof, where the worker would be assumed guilty and have to prove innocence. The employers would have a "tremendous potential...to abuse the security clearance system so as to circumvent the collective bargaining rights of union members," Dufresne wrote.

It gets worse when it comes to processing the workers' info. The clearance would be approved, or not, based on highly subjective criteria. Did the docker associate with those who, in the ministry's words, might have "a *propensity* to aid and abet those *likely* to be involved in terrorism"? [emphasis added] Is the worker "at risk to be *prone* or *induced* to commit an act or assist to commit an act" of terrorism? Does the person have "a *propensity* to be bribed or blackmailed"? Just knowing certain politicians could put a person's job in danger.

The ministry could deny security clearances for any of the above reasons, or any other reasons the Minister might decide upon, with or without notice.

"The ministry said if they came across something interesting then they would share it with whoever they wanted to," Dufresne said. "They could share it with Syria, Israel, the U.S. That puts our members in jeopardy, because when you're traveling in other countries and the security service sees your name pop up as a 'person of interest' in your own country—they're going to pay special

attention to you even though it's something like the minor things in this regulation."

So much of the information collection relies on "guilt by association" that profiling would almost naturally occur. Union political activity, or just old fashioned militancy, could be grounds for suspicion, and suspicion is all the ministry needs to pull someone's book.

TSC rules would be imposed by the Minister and not brought before elected Members of Parliament for

So much of the information collection relies on "guilt by association" that profiling would almost naturally occur.

public debate, a move so anti-democratic even the Bush administration didn't try it.

"In this regard, it must be noted that in 2002, the government of the United States (the main target of international terrorism) considered measures of a similar nature to be sufficiently serious to be placed before Congress for approval," Dufresne's Oct. 21 Submission stated.

The ILWU and the CLC continue to pressure the ministry. Meetings with members of parliament and ministers have been planned, and the government promises no regulations will be posted without further consultation. But the union is far from satisfied.

"There's no proper appeal to the Federal courts procedure built into this thing, it's patently unfair, unreasonable and discriminatory," Dufresne said. "You're only allowed to appeal whether or not they followed the process, you're not allowed to appeal whether the decision they made was wrong. That is left to their discretion. They would be entitled to be wrong as long as they followed the process. That's very scary."

The Dispatcher, October 2004