



## BARGAINING

Brothers and Sisters,

On behalf of the members of the negotiating team, I wish to thank all the Local Executives and all of you UTE members, who have shown your support by sending your flags, tablecloths, signs, letters etc. to decorate our Bargaining room. We also thank you for your participation in the distribution of the Bargaining Info or stickers. You have shown us your solidarity and determination, it makes us - more than ever - determined to continue our battle to save our jobs, our rights and our collective agreement.

On October 31, 2013, your bargaining team marked one year of ineffective bargaining. The employer's response remained negative despite the enormous creative efforts to make improvements to our collective agreement, even if these improvements had no cost. Our demands, coming from our members, are based on needs or on existing Collective Agreement articles, but despite this, the 'no' persists. This is what has blocked negotiations and brought us to mediation. (For more information on the negotiations, please visit our Bargaining Info Bulletins \*).



We must however, be realistic: this will not be enough to dispel all the effects of these anti-worker laws adopted by the Conservatives. In this Bargaining Process, we have suffered the loss of more than our demands; we have suffered many legislative attacks, adopted by the Conservatives to undermine our rights and benefits as unionized members. The fierceness of the conservatives is beyond belief, since they are imposing laws (C-10, C-45, C-4 etc.) which will set us back to the 1950s. Even the right to speak or inform is currently in danger (CBC) and this is not acceptable. We need this anti-democratic and anti-social rise to stop. This fight is no longer exclusive to UTE members; its magnitude is such that the entire working class, unionized and non-unionized, are impacted by the conservative laws. It is now more than ever a matter for all of society.

Union leaders are united and are working together to safeguard the rights at risk, but just as your bargaining team, they cannot – alone - change the trend. All workers should act to protect our rights and democracy. What do we have to do?

Be informed, denounce, inform your family, friends and acquaintances, face to face or share it on Facebook, Twitter and other social media. Contact your MPs or senators; send letters to the newspapers and any other means that can stir and inform citizens.

*(Continued on page 2)*

**SI VOUS PRÉFÉREZ RECEVOIR CETTE PUBLICATION EN FRANÇAIS,  
VEUILLEZ VOUS ADRESSER À VOTRE PRÉSIDENT- E DE SECTION LOCALE**

(Continued from page 1)

We must act now before it is too late. To not act is to accept everything they have imposed on us.

During our past year of Bargaining, your message has been clear and your solidarity has been demonstrated. Continuity is necessary in order to safeguard our acquired democratic rights which are now in danger. We must unite to ensure our future and our families.

Despite everything, on behalf of your Bargaining Team, I wish you Happy Holidays, peace and rejuvenation that we have now, and for the future.

**Together we can make great achievements  
My collective agreement, my job, our families**

**Denis Lalancette  
2nd National Vice-President**

(\*)<http://www.ute-sei.org/English/bargaining.cfm>

## **UTE IN CALGARY—CRASHING THE FEDERAL CONSERVATIVE CONVENTION**

Since they took power in 2006, Stephen Harper and his government have cut corporate income taxes from 21% to 15%, depriving the federal government of 12 billion dollars in annual revenue! This government has greatly contributed to the creation of the huge deficits we are facing today.

As you all know by now, the Federal Conservative Government is trying to clean up this mess by balancing its books on the back of federal public servants. Tony Clement, the *Treasury Board* President, is constantly taking shots at his own employees, the federal public servants, by calling them fat cats, overpaid under achievers. He is talking about **US** here. He wants to have more people fired because he thinks we are not being properly evaluated by our employer.

I would say that Tony Clement deserves the dubious title of the worst employer in the country. This is not enough for this right-wing government. They want to make sure that not only the federal public servants will see their benefits and working conditions go down the drain, they want to make that happen to all middle class workers in the country. That way their friends, the corporations, will make more money! How are they planning to achieve that? By eradicating the only organizations left standing in their way, namely the unions!

To achieve their objective, the Conservatives have brought forward nine (9) resolutions at their 2013 National Convention held in Calgary from November 1<sup>st</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2013, aimed at attacking the finances of the unions and three (3) which target specifically the federal public servants.

The resolutions aimed at the labour movement focus on forcing the unions to report their annual financial statements to the CRA and allowing unionized workers to opt out of paying mandatory union dues. The latter attacks the Rand Formula which has been in place in Canada since 1946 and is similar to Right-to-Work (or Right-to-Work-for-less) legislation passed in some US States. Imagine! It is as if the government gave you the choice to stop paying your taxes but would allow you to continue to receive the same services. It is absolutely inconceivable, crazy and unacceptable. The resolutions attacking the federal public servants are aimed at bringing the benefits and pensions in-line with "Canadian norms" including switching our pension regime from a defined benefit model to a defined contribution model. Let's be clear, they want to slash our pensions! Another resolution is asking to freeze the federal budget spending (yes, again) for a period of five (5) years as soon as the government reaches its objective of having a balanced budget.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we come to the end of 2013, I reflect on the past year, and realize it is time to say thank you. Thank you to the:

- **UTE National Office staff** for all of the behind-the-scenes work that they do for the membership.
- **National Executive**, who work numerous long hours for no additional pay and very little acknowledgement.
- **Local Executives and Stewards**, the unsung heroes who have been asked time and time again to distribute information, plan and organize meet and greets, information sessions and information distribution as well as the local duties they complete.



**I would be remiss if I did not thank you, the members;** for your support over the year, as evidenced by your attendance and contributions to the numerous activities and events in support of our Bargaining Team, as well as your feedback through email and telephone contact regarding union activities. We want and need your feedback on your wants, needs and beliefs.

This has been a very difficult year. The government has been attacking us at every turn, with **Bill C-377**, and **Bill C-45**. Tony Clement (*Treasury Board* President) has publically stated that we are overpaid, and that more of us should be dismissed as we are poor performers. The government is now putting unprecedented labour changes in their latest Omnibus Bill (**Bill C-4**) that will make bargaining even more difficult for us and more advantageous to them so that, in the next round, they can take away your sick leave.

Saying all this does not mean it is over. We need to stand up as we did with their proposed changes to the pay system that included pay in arrears. The union and its members' lobbying pressured the government sufficiently to have them to back off from that plan.



We all need you to stand up. We all need to write to the CRA Commissioner and to our respective local Directors wanting their support and advocacy in a return on their part to true negotiations at the bargaining table. We need you to talk to us, but we also need you to tell management that you are not happy and that we should be treated with respect.

Thank you again for all your support and efforts.

I wish you all a safe and happy holiday season, and in the New Year, let's show this government and the CRA that we are ready to stand up in support for the new contract we deserve and the respect we have already earned.

**Robert Campbell**  
**National President**

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## Enough is enough!

We, as public servants and union members, need to defend ourselves more vigorously than ever before. This is why Jamie vanSydenborgh, Co-chair of the Political Action Committee, Lorne Roslinski, RVP for the Rocky Mountains Region, local presidents and some of our members from the Rocky Mountains Region and I traveled to Calgary to participate in a rally organized by the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) on Saturday November 2nd. The rally, called “Crash their Party”, was attended by representatives of all of the PSAC Components and various progressive organizations from across Canada including the Alberta Federation of Labour and Idle No More.

Despite the fact that a snow storm had befallen the city that day, approximately three hundred (300) people attended the event which was covered by media such as CTV, CBC, Global, Radio-Canada and the National Post. We had the opportunity to give interviews to CTV, Radio-Canada and the National Post. We also were visited and supported by two (2) NDP MPs, Nathan Cullen and Peter Julian. Both of them gave interviews in which they attacked the government and defended the public servants and the unions.



All in all, it was a successful event. We passed our message to the Conservative government and its right-wing allies. It also gave us the opportunity to improve our networking with other progressive organizations and to better our contacts with journalists. Unfortunately, many of the resolutions attacking the federal public servants and the unions were adopted during the Conservative convention.

As a bonus, Jamie, Lorne and I participated in a “walk for fitness” along with the Honourable Rona Ambrose, Minister of Health, the Conservative Senator Nancy Greene Raine, and other Conservative delegates. We took the opportunity to tell them that our members are tired and fed up of being bullied by this government and that the unions are still standing strong in front of them to protect the members and the middle-class workers of Canada.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continuous support of our union. Together, let's keep fighting for our rights and for the future generations of workers!

**Marc Brière**  
**First National Vice-President**

## CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Please note that all address changes should be done via e-mail to Sylvie Bastien (basties@ute-sei.org) or via the national web site. If you do not have access to an e-mail, please pass it on (with your PSAC ID) to a local representative or mail it directly to the National Office at 233 Gilmour Street, Suite 800, Ottawa ON K2P 0P2.



# WHY UTE IS PROTECTING SEVERANCE PAY

The employer (CRA), handcuffed by the *Treasury Board*, is offering nothing in exchange for us to accept major changes to severance pay. It is unbelievable that the members we represent are treated differently than most of the other federal employees who received something in exchange for the modifications to severance pay.

Severance guarantees a sum of money available during a transition period, such as at the time of termination, retirement or death. It can ease financial needs during waiting periods or periods of uncertainty.

The union and the bargaining team are even more committed to our position to not engage in concession bargaining, because severance has existed since 1967. Under the current circumstances, the union and the members cannot accept the employer's position.

It should be noted that severance, formerly known as "retiring leave"<sup>[1]</sup> was included in "the first collective agreements negotiated under the *Public Service Staff Relations Act (PSSRA)*. [These agreements] converted the "retiring leave", to one week severance pay per year of employment on retirement, and converted the half-week per year of employment "gratuity" to severance pay on resignation."<sup>[2]</sup>

Despite the trend in the public service of signing collective agreements with changes to severance, the UTE believes that entertaining concessions, given the CRA's position and constant attacks from the Conservative government, would be injurious for all members, not just in this round of bargaining, but also for future bargaining.

<sup>[1]</sup> *Public Service Terms and Conditions of Employment Regulations*, amended September 13, 1967.

<sup>[2]</sup> Questions and answers on severance, August 14, 2013, Public Service Alliance of Canada.

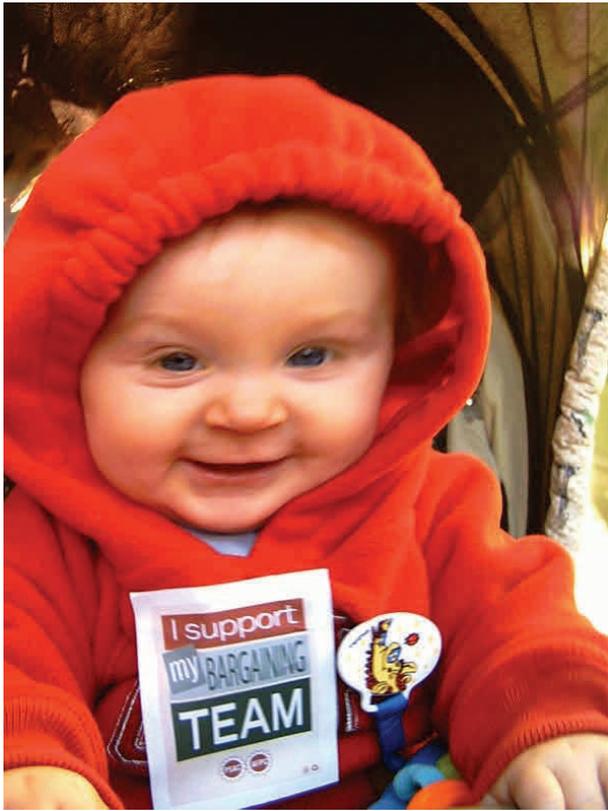


**Your Team**

(from left to right, starting with the first row)

***Denis Lalancette, Lyson Paquette, Julie Chiasson, Dawn Hardy***

***Morgan Gay, Pietro Masdea, Jean-Pierre Fraser, Robin Johnson, Sabri Khayat and Doug Gaetz***



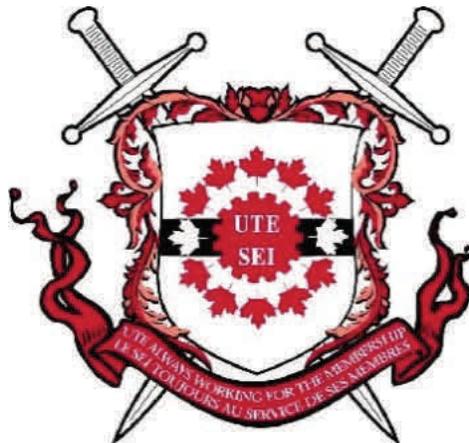
**2007**



**2013**

MY MOM AND HER UNION FAMILY CONTINUE THE FIGHT FOR MY FUTURE. PLEASE SUPPORT YOUR BARGAINING TEAM WHO ARE DEFENDING OUR PAST, PROTECTING OUR PRESENT, AND FIGHTING FOR OUR FUTURE

**STAND UP!**





# ADVANTAGES FOR TERM EMPLOYEES BEING UNION MEMBERS

From time to time, our National Office and our Local and Regional representatives receive enquiries from term members about the benefits of them belonging to the Union and having to pay union dues. Relatedly, one of the concerns that some term members raise is that they feel that the needs of permanent employees are put ahead of the needs of term employees.

At the outset, I must state emphatically that the Union of Taxation Employees (UTE) is committed to working on behalf of and advancing the interests of all members. To this end, amongst other strategies and avenues for improving the terms and conditions of employment for all members, UTE encourages and solicits bargaining proposals for term and permanent members alike. Additionally, through the collective bargaining process and in other fora, UTE has significantly improved the terms and conditions of employment and working conditions for term employees.

Some of the improvements that have been garnered for our term members include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries and benefits based on the classification of the position rather than the tenure of the position;
- Coverage under the pension plan and other benefit plans;
- Reductions in the probationary period;
- Access to the leave provisions of the collective agreement;
- Right to a pay increment after 52 weeks of **cumulative** service with the CRA at the same group and level;
- Pay equity adjustments where applicable;
- Improvements in the Term rehire process.

In fact, for the most part and unless otherwise expressly stipulated, the collective agreement negotiated with the employer addresses the needs of all members consistently.

Unfortunately, the provisions of the *Work Force Adjustment Appendix* to the Collective Agreement apply to permanent employees only. The employer is not willing to expand these provisions to term employees as they have consistently taken the position that term employees have been offered determinate employment only and have not in any way, implied or otherwise, been guaranteed indeterminate employment.

Notwithstanding this, UTE consistently and constantly endeavours to ensure that term employees are treated fairly and equitably by the employer during their employment with the CRA and while they are members of UTE and to this end, we constantly advance the interests of our term members whenever possible. In fact, some of you may recall that during one specific bargaining process, we were able to convince the employer to create a joint Union-Management study of term employment within the CRA and we were successful in improving and enhancing the terms and conditions of employment and working conditions for term employees.

The aforementioned items are not intended to be an all-inclusive list of achievements on behalf of our term members, but rather an attempt to illustrate that the needs of our term members are in the forefront of our thoughts and amongst the priorities of UTE. Unlike the current government, UTE values our term members and is committed to continuing to work diligently on your behalf.

**Shane O'Brien**  
**Senior Labour Relations Officer**

# HOW DID WE GET HERE?

We have to take a small step back TO GET A CLEAR PICTURE.

The last two rounds of Bargaining (where we achieved Collective Agreements before the one in place expired) were the result of both parties working together to achieve a common goal ... success at the Bargaining Table.

Unfortunately, this time around our employer, the Canada Revenue Agency was sent to the table with **specific directions** from *Treasury Board* :

*“You cannot say yes to anything.”*

This makes Bargaining, pretty much impossible. Since they couldn't authorize a burnt out light bulb to be changed, I wasn't surprised when I found out (Bargaining Info - July 29, 2013) that:

**At the bargaining table, the employer rejected changes he had agreed to previously !!**

This is what happened to every other bargaining demand at the bargaining table.

Therefore, we have to use the tools available ...and this brings the mediation process to our table.

Winston Churchill said,

*“Tact is the ability to tell someone to go to hell in such a way that they look forward to the trip.”*

SO I WILL TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH *TREASURY BOARD* PRESIDENT TONY CLEMENT A HAPPY AND RELAXING CHRISTMAS VACATION.

**Barry Melanson**  
**Communications Committee**





# A MEMBER'S LETTER TO HER MP

Mr. Poilievre,

I am a constituent in your riding. I have lived in this area - Edwards - for 34 years. As long as you've been alive.

My husband was a letter carrier for 30 years. On his 60th birthday he retired from Canada Post because his poor feet were worn out. He passed away 9 months later. He wasn't ready to retire mentally - physically he couldn't do the job anymore. But he was a proud public servant for 30 years. I too am a public servant, I work for Canada Revenue Agency. I'm coming up to my 15th anniversary. I was a stay at home mother for many years and then was fortunate enough to get a job in the Government. I work hard for my living. I am a call centre agent and my time is monitored every day by the second - literally - they base our day on how many seconds we work.

For some reason the Conservative government seems to think that Public Servants are over-paid and under worked. It seems that you have made bashing public servants your mandate for this term in Parliament.

I remember when you ran for election the first time. You were the "kid" just out of school - never worked a day in his life and low and behold you actually won the election. People in this riding supported you - clearly it was a message that they were unsatisfied with the representation that we had before you - why else would anyone vote for someone as young and inexperienced as yourself. It was a protest vote and boy did it work out good for you. You have benefited from that for a long time now.

I do hope that you realize that that may end if the Conservative government continues on it's Public Service bashing vendetta. Your future is not a sure thing in politics Mr. Poilievre.

I am a Proud Union Worker of the Union of Taxation Employees. Right now we are fighting to hold on to what we have worked hard to get. Our members are trusting us - their Union - to save their jobs, their benefits and now, as outrageous as it may seem, their actual health and safety. Sir I ask you, "What is your Government doing? How dare you try to take away what we have fought so hard to earn. How dare you put people's lives at risk?"

You are still a young man and could have a long career in politics ahead of you if you are smart about what you are doing. The road you are travelling now is not smart.

We are prepared to fight and fight we will - we will be loud and bold and we will work as hard as we can to let the people of Canada know what this Government has cost them.

Be smart Mr. Poilievre. Take care of the Public Service responsibly and respectfully. The people of Canada deserve to have the services that we provide for them.

I have never been a big political activist but after hearing the recent announcement about the Government's plans to take the health and safety of the Public Servants away from them, well Sir I hope you are ready for a rough ride. Public Servants will not sit back and allow this to happen without a fight.

Sir please consider choices carefully now. You too will be glad to have a good Public Service some day. You too will grow old and need the kind of services that your Party are trying to get rid of now. As a member of your constituency I assure you my vote will not be for the Conservative party come the next election if you continue on this outrageous vendetta against the Public Servants of Canada.

*June Whyte  
Local 70030, Ottawa Technology Centre*



# MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

## PRESERVING WHAT WE'VE GAINED

We are going through a difficult period when employees must fight to preserve the gains that were hard won through previous battles. In the public service that appears to have ideal working conditions in our society, it is just a myth.

The current government seems to focus on a market economy and free enterprise.

Government services are no longer considered.

Why have the government do what private companies can do?

In 2007, the newly elected conservative government sold the building at 305 René-Lévesque to private interests. This was only a precursor to a set of attacks against government employees and against services to Canadian taxpayers.

In a unilateral and arbitrary way, our employer decided to reduce the salary increase established by our collective agreement that was previously signed by both parties (employer and employees).

Then, the *Treasury Board* President, Tony Clement, accused federal public employees with abusing the sick leave system and threatened to reduce it. Mr. Clement continued on in the same vein by proposing mandatory performance reviews to [translation] “*get rid of those whose work is not up to par*”.

Another of the employer's ideas (which was subsequently dropped) was to establish a system where, for one year starting January 2014, the government would have taken 25 collection payments on your pay cheque to put you in arrears for two weeks.

Major changes occurred last year with our pension fund, to which we have to contribute more. The employee contribution rate was increased in January 2013.

Likewise, new employees who started in the public service pension plan on January 1, 2013 will receive unreduced retirement benefits, no longer at age 60, but age 65.

The Harper government is apparently about to launch a new attack against the union movement by going after the funding of union organizations with Bill C-377 and by eliminating the Rand Formula. I would like to remind you (and remind us) that a strong union is important for defending our rights.

Last year, the government, hoping to save hundreds of millions of dollars, cut thousands of positions at the CRA, on October 1st of this year, closed the cash and service counters in Montreal.

Also last year, the Conservative government decided to entrust the storage of individual and company tax records to a private firm.

What will be the next services to be contracted out?

In closing, I would like to remind you that we have been without a collective agreement since October 31, 2012.

## Let's get mobilized!

*Réal Vermette*  
*Local 10008, Montreal*