



BANNON SLAMS HARPER

Mr Harper, (sent Nov 27-08 11:49PM via e-mail)

I am aghast at the recent Economic Statement made November 27, 2008. Instead of trying to trigger better economic times in and for Canada you have decided to go after the very people that make the Government work.....your Public Employees. All this against any form of democracy, respect for your employees, adherence to the law or any vision of equity. You have indicated that your party plans to table legislation that:

- Limits wage increases to 2.3%, 1.5%, 1.5% and 1.5%
- Rolls back negotiated and signed Collective Agreements to the same increases as above
- Takes away the right to strike for a specified period 2010 and 2011
- Wanting to deal with "pay equity" during negotiation and not in the Courts
- Change the Human Rights Act in ensure that "Pay Equity" is dealt as stated above

I am the National Union President of one of the largest Agencies within the Government and the PSAC. We negotiated in good faith with our employer, the Canada Revenue Agency, a Collective Agreement that was ratified with our 26,000 members and was signed in good faith by all parties, to have your government with one sweep of a pen change all of the hard work and respect that we built with our members, the union and our employer without a second thought. Your party's dictatorial and paternalistic attitude to everyone, employers and unions alike, does not sit well with me, my executive or my members. What economic stimulus will be triggered with you interfering with our signed Collective Agreement? I also draw your attention to the BC Court case involving the Nurses that went to the Supreme Court? Your employees have a right and freedom of association and all that entails, including Collective Bargaining.

I will tell you that you will not have peace in the Union/Management house with actions like this. In my opinion, you have stepped over the boundary of decency when it comes to your own employees. It is with great anticipation that I await to see the consequences that your party will have to face when this comes to the House. I will also point out that we will take whatever legal action necessary to ensure that the Economic Statement and subsequent legislation does not harm our members.

Betty Bannon
National President

**SI VOUS PRÉFÉREZ AVOIR CE COMMUNIQUÉ EN FRANÇAIS, VEUILLEZ VOUS
ADRESSER À VOTRE PRÉSIDENT- E DE SECTION LOCALE**

SNOWSTORMS AND GETTING TO WORK

Every year, members request leave under Article 54.01(a) of our collective agreement, (leave with pay when circumstances not directly attributable to the employee prevent his or her reporting for duty, such leave shall not be unreasonably withheld), because weather conditions kept them from getting to work.

The majority of these requests are denied and the employer requests that the members take annual leave. If you are in a situation where the weather is such that it is not possible for you to get to work, please ensure that you have made reasonable efforts to get in and document this. Examples of things to document are:

- Road closures by local or provincial government
- Directives to stay off roads by police
- Public transportation shut downs, etc.

Listed below are examples of things that you can do in terms of attempting to get to work:

- Getting a ride from neighbours
- Using public transportation, etc.

In all situations, record what you did including the name of individuals, etc. By doing this, it does not guarantee that the employer will grant the leave but it will certainly make a strong case to challenge the employer's denial through a grievance, and then to adjudication at the Public Service Labour Relations Board (PSLRB).

This article deals with snowstorms but in any case where you are prevented from reporting for duty due to circumstances beyond your control, document all your efforts to report for work, as this will always assist you in making your case to the employer.

Pierre Mulvihill
Labour Relations Officer

UTE UPCOMING EVENTS

**March 31 - April 5th
2009**

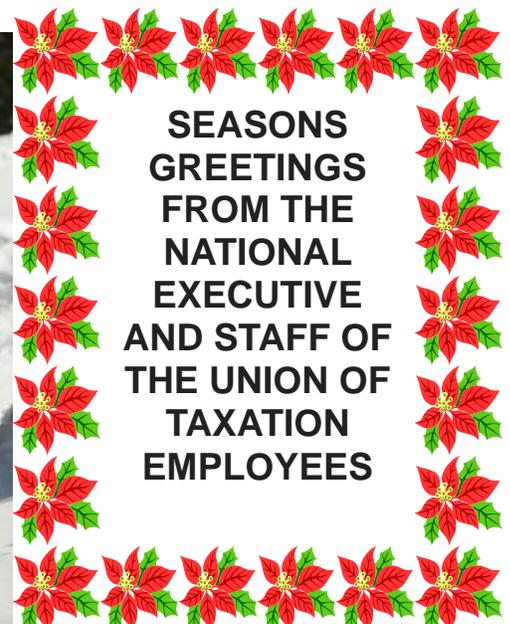
Executive Council
(Ottawa)

April 2—4th, 2009

Presidents
Conference
(Ottawa)

**April 26th - May 1st
2009**

PSAC Convention
(Vancouver)



WHAT'S ON THE UTE WEBSITE?

At our last Presidents' Conference, the Communications Committee had a presentation on the UTE website and all of the resources that are available on it. Since it was so well received, we would like to outline some of the items we covered, to ensure that you are getting the most value from it as well.

Our website address is: www.ute-sei.org and it can also be accessed from the Info zone. It is in both official languages.

In the middle section of the home page, you will find the items that have been most recently updated. These usually include items such as bulletins, minutes from meetings and various presentations. On the right, you will see a link to our **Calendar of Events**. If you click on it, you will see the current month and any related events. Most of the events will be of a national or regional nature, but we also list upcoming AGMs.

Most of the sections are self-explanatory such as **Bargaining**, for information on the bargaining process including the ongoing bargaining demands collection process, and **By-laws & Regulations**, which outlines the criteria that governs our organization. Under **Committees**, you will find a list of the members of the committee as well any Terms of Reference, Minutes and Reports for that committee. Under **Documents and Minutes**, you will find the minutes for Executive Council and Presidents' Conferences going back to 2002. You will also find the current and previous Collective Agreements, archived headlines and other documents of interest. Under **Publications**, you will find links to the electronic versions of our past newsletters, bulletins, our New Member's Kit, the Help Manual for Locals and more.

Other items of interest would include:

- the **Change of Address** form which will send the change directly to our office
- the **Contact Us** page which has contact information for the national office, executive council and the locals. If you click on the organizational chart and find your local, you will get a list of ***your local executive and their contact information***.

If you cannot find something on the site you can try our Search option, or failing that, contact us and we will try to find it for you.

Susan Duncan
Web/Communications Officer

the president's corner

IMPROVING OUR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

At the September Presidents' Conference all attendees were divided into small working groups with a goal to identify factors that impact on UTE's ability to better serve the membership.

Five divergent groups approached the problem in five unique ways. For three hours each group brainstormed factors and issues that impacted local effectiveness. The resultant huge lists have now been categorized into three impact domains: Environmental, Organizational, and Functional Resources.

Our organizational effectiveness is affected by our: KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, ATTITUDES, AND ENVIRONMENT.

It's all about: What we know; what we can do; our attitudes, values, beliefs, and motivations; and the conditions where we work.

The National Office is currently reviewing the input in order to develop an initial action plan. The plan will include identifying objectives, considering alternatives, along with action plan design and delivery. While all of this is still below the horizon, rest assured the foundation is being built carefully and expeditiously.

Betty Bannon
National President

2008 UTE SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED

The Union of Taxation Employees each year offers two \$2500 National Scholarships and ten \$1000 Regional Scholarships. The scholarships are available to members in good standing of the UTE, their spouse, children and/or their grandchildren.

The winners of the 2008 National Scholarships are Brittany McLean (Atlantic), winner of the Diana Gee Scholarship Fund and Brianne Axelson (Pacific).



Brittany McLean



Brianne Axelson

THE WINNERS OF THE REGIONAL AWARDS ARE

RECIPIENT	REGION	RECIPIENT	REGION
Catherine Bruneau	Montréal	Sophie Andrews	Ontario - Northern and Eastern
Stephanie Lombaert	Prairie	Rhiannon Evans	Greater Toronto
Benoit Fraser	Québec	Lesleigh Elgie	Ontario - South western
Marcus Drover	Atlantic	Giridhar Kaushik	Greater Toronto
Ariel Hartman	Pacific	Stephanie Price	Ontario - Northern and Eastern

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL !

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.



“HARPER TO ROLL BACK UTE MEMBERS WAGES”

On November 27th the Harper government tabled an Economic Statement that personally attacked every UTE/PSAC member who works at the Canada Revenue Agency.

Mr. Harper's true arrogance and disdain was shown when the Conservatives attacked the public service workers and their unions, by threatening fixed economic wage increases, taking away the right to strike, rolling back negotiated collective agreements and stating that pay equity belongs at the bargaining table versus under the purview of the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

The principal of fair collective bargaining is another issue for our members. This proposed rollback will reduce your wage increase of 2.5% to 1.5 in November 2009 and at this point in time we are unsure of any further ramifications.

The UTE will be lobbying Members of Parliament in Ottawa but we need your help. You must contact your MPs and state clearly that the contract fairly negotiated in November 2007 was done in good faith and has nothing to do with the economic crisis facing Canadians. (Contact your local reps for further information and on how to contact your MP.)

The savings from this rollback are so minimal that the effect will never be noticed. The arrogance of Harper and the Conservatives is nothing more than a slap in the face to CRA employees and their Unions.

WE CAN NOT LET THIS HAPPEN.

Contact your MP now.

Please refer to the UTE web site (www.ute-sei.org) for correspondence already sent out by the UTE National President to Prime Minister Harper and Revenue Minister Blackburn. There is also information on the PSAC web site (www.psac-afpc.com) and the Canadian Labour Congress web site (www.clc-ctc.ca).

PLEASE GO TO WWW.MAKEPARLIAMENTWORK.CA AND SEND AN E-MAIL MESSAGE TO YOUR MP SUPPORTING A COALITION GOVERNMENT FROM THIS SITE, AND SEND THE LINK TO YOUR FRIENDS. THANK YOU!

**UNION OF TAXATION EMPLOYEES (UTE)
MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE 2009**

DON'T GET CONFUSED

We know you have just been inundated with pleadings
by the employer to complete the

“Public Service Employee Survey 2008”

that ended December 12, 2008.
It was the employer's survey.

THE 2009 UTE MEMBERSHIP QUESTIONNAIRE

is coming out shortly.

Not to you at work, but mailed directly to you at home.

**PLEASE - PLEASE - PLEASE
TAKE THE TIME
TO COMPLETE IT AND RETURN IT.**

**REST ASSURED THIS IS A COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL
QUESTIONNAIRE**

**YOUR INPUT HELPS TO SHAPE THE ACTIVITIES AND ACTIONS
OF YOUR UNION ON YOUR BEHALF**



MEMBERS SPEAK OUT

SUPPLEMENTARY DEATH BENEFITS

The Supplementary Death Benefits Plan (SDB) is, in a way, a diminishing term life insurance plan. People who contribute to the Public Service Superannuation Plan participate in the SDB plan. Most participants can maintain their coverage after leaving their job, without undergoing a medical exam.

Unfortunately, since it is insurance, it is necessary to submit an official claim to receive the insurance payment. According to the Association of Public Service Alliance Retirees, in the past five years, 52 members have passed away and, of those members, only 4 estates have claimed their due; the APSAR is currently working to ensure that the other 48 estates received the amounts due.

To prevent your estate from ending up in the same situation, it is important to take one very simple step: go to the PWGSC site, print the SDB application form, fill in the information that can be filled in and attach it to your will or papers you keep for assisting your estate.

Here is how to obtain the form:

In the address field, enter <http://www.tpsgc-pwgsc.gc.ca>

Select your preferred language.

At the right side of the page, under Most Requested, click on Compensation Sector

Then on the next page, click on Forms and go to the form called

PWGSC-TPSGC 2223 SUPPLEMENTARY DEATH BENEFIT CLAIM FORM.

You must also attach a copy of birth, death and marriage (if applicable) certificates to your application because if they do not have these documents, processing will be delayed.

As of May 1, 2008, the information must be sent to the Superannuation, Pension Transition and Client Services Sector (SPTCSS) whose offices are located at:

Public Works and Government Services Canada
Superannuation, Pension Transition
and Client Services Sector
Box 5010 Shediac NB E4P 9B4

It is never too early to be prepared, and this will only help your estate.

Daniel Gagnon
Local 10004 Jonquière

BENEFITS COVERAGE FOR CRA EMPLOYEES

It has come to our attention that many newly hired CRA employees; especially determinate hires, are not provided with proper information regarding certain health care benefits and thus their coverage does not start in a timely fashion. This has resulted in a number of members having to pay for health care benefits out of their own pocket because of the false impression that they were covered by the health care plan.

This bulletin is designed to provide you with accurate information on when and how members become covered under: 1) Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP), 2) Dental Care Plan (DCP), and 3) The Supplementary Death Benefit (SDBP). Your local has grievance wording for situations when a member is out of pocket because of the CRA making an error in not getting the member covered.

Public Service Health Care Plan (PSHCP)

Effective date of coverage:

If you apply within 60 days of becoming eligible (the date you are hired), coverage is effective the first of the month following the month your personnel or pension office receives your completed form.

If you do not apply for coverage within 60 days of becoming eligible, the requested coverage will take effect on the first day of the fourth month following the month your personnel or pension office receives your completed application. Employees must fill out an application form in order to be covered.

Dental Care Plan (DCP)

Membership in the DCP is automatic if you have been appointed for more than 6 months and you are a full-time employee or a part-time employee working more than one-third the normal work week. Benefits can be paid after a waiting period of three months of coverage.

Members can apply to cover their eligible dependents. Dependent coverage is effective immediately.

Supplementary Death Benefit (SDBP)

Enrolment is automatic, but members must complete a beneficiary form naming their beneficiary or the benefit would be payable to their estate.

If you are a member who was not covered under the PSHCP due to an administrative error on the CRA's part and had to pay for benefits which would have been normally covered by the plan, or if you have any questions or require further clarifications, contact your local.

In Solidarity,

Shane O'Brien
Senior Labour Relations Officer



BARGAINING

It was with pride and honour that the members of your PSAC/CRA Bargaining Team accepted the Award of Excellence for the Canada Revenue Agency's Team Accomplishment on November 19, 2008. The employer's recognition of a Union is a first in the history of these awards. The pride and pleasure that this recognition produces must also be shared and reflected across the entire Union organization from the Executive Council, the Local Executives through to the rank and file members.

This award is not for the quality of the agreement, but rather for the bargaining process and for the approach taken by the bargaining teams and their respective management to be able to reach an agreement.

The recent bargaining processes in the Public Service with the Treasury Board only emphasize the importance of having signed an agreement and being able to benefit from it.

The Harper government back in power just showed its colours with its budget of projected profit before the elections, has now melted like snow in the sun and has become the possibility of a deficit.

Bargaining is a difficult process. Delaying tactics or pressure tactics are often used by the parties for achieving their aims, and the bargaining process often ends in conflict. These tactics extend the bargaining for long periods, creating uncertainty and discontent among the workers, which needlessly affects their attitude and their work.

The bargaining process that generated this award of excellence is cited as an example. It would be nice to think that this way of behaving at the bargaining table during bargaining processes would not remain the exception, but would become the rule. The UTE will attempt to perpetuate a healthy bargaining practice; and will continue discussions with the CRA for taking the steps we deem necessary for achieving this goal.

Although this award is not for the quality of the agreement and the CRA had a major interest in the SP conversion, we believe that the CRA benefited from the opportunity that a bargaining process provides for recognizing the quality work of its employees. Bargaining involves all UTE members. It's your business.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you happy holidays filled with love, friendship, and the joy of family and friends. I also wish you health in the coming year for you and your loved ones because that is what counts the most in life.

Sincerely and in friendship,

Denis Lalancette,
2nd National Vice-President

UTE POSITION ON REFERRAL AGENTS

I have been asked to address the confusion with respect to UTE's position regarding Referral Agents.

This position was originally adopted by the UTE Executive Council at their June 2004 meeting, endorsed at their December 2005 Meeting, and reaffirmed at the UTE 2008 Triennial Convention.

The UTE supports the External component of the Employee Assistance Program, and fully endorses the use of the external provider by our members.

The UTE does not support the internal component of the program, namely the Referral Agent System for three major reasons:

- The possibility of breach of confidentiality
- The concern for Referral Agents providing counseling outside their mandate
- The concern for the possible demise of the external component due to the internal usage.

Furthermore, UTE has established a position and issued a Directive regarding UTE Union Representatives becoming Referral Agents.

***UTE UNION REPRESENTATIVES CANNOT ACT AS A REFERRAL AGENT.
SHOULD A UNION REPRESENTATIVE WISH TO BECOME A REFERRAL AGENT
THEY WILL HAVE TO RESIGN FROM THEIR UNION POSITION.***

“We feel that the role of a Referral Agent is very different than that of a Union Representative. We do not believe that Union Representatives should be or could be Referral Agents. Union Representatives are trained to give advice, to guide, to resolve situations, to speak on behalf of our members, to represent, to intervene etc. Referral Agents are not mandated to do any of these roles. It would be very difficult to listen to someone and not to offer help to resolve his/her situation.”

Doug Gaetz
Chairperson EAP