



## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

As we head into summer, we would normally be looking at relaxing and recharging our batteries. The recent developments surrounding our collective bargaining process suggests this is not about to happen.

The resolve of the membership is being questioned by management. There has been a break in normal protocol whereby the Commissioner issued an email to all employees, including those outside of our bargaining unit, outlining their so called final offer. (We are still negotiating and could receive multiple "final" offers.)

This is just not a good offer.

We stated from the beginning, that to even consider signing off on our severance we would need to be offered, at a minimum, something of equal value. The offer from management is a concession of a benefit that has an accumulating value of 2% per year to a maximum of 30 years, for a payment now amounting to 0.75 percent accumulation. They are dangling a carrot in front of people with the amount of money they will get now. This is your money, as it is already in your contract. They just want to force you to take it now.

Remember your severance payout is based on your salary the day you retire or voluntarily leave the Public Service with a minimum of 10 years' service. So the numbers above would be even greater considering salary increases or promotions over those 18 years.

In their offer of a payout the employer does not mention that this is taxable income and you could lose almost half right of the top. It could also affect your child tax benefits and GST credits. Upon retirement severance is considered a retirement allowance and can be sheltered without the need to worry about RSP room as would the case with the employer's payout.

The employer's offer also includes an additional one week vacation leave, which they say is a value of 2%. It is the same as severance, meaning, one week's pay is a 2% value. However, this is a one

*Using the Commissioner's own example and similarly using net amounts an SP4 and **not** factoring in any increases in salaries or change in job level, the employer is offering you approximately \$418 a year in additional salary representing the cumulative effect of the .25 % and .50% offered to you for giving up your severance. Accepting the employer's offer you would be giving up the opportunity to accumulate severance for another 18 years and for this, you would receive \$7520 over this period. Alternately not accepting this offer you would accumulate \$1092 in severance annually for a total of additional severance upon retirement of over \$19,600. This is not a good deal.*

*Numbers used in this example are for illustrative purposes and are estimates only.*

*(Continued on page 8)*

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

## BARGAINING

By the time you read this many of you, hopefully, will have had time to read and digest the mountain of information available on the current state of our Bargaining. I say hopefully as I am amazed at the number of members who continue to say they don't know what's going on with bargaining even though there is a ton of information available, most of which has been distributed directly by your local executive. This information is available on the UTE website under the tab "Bargaining".

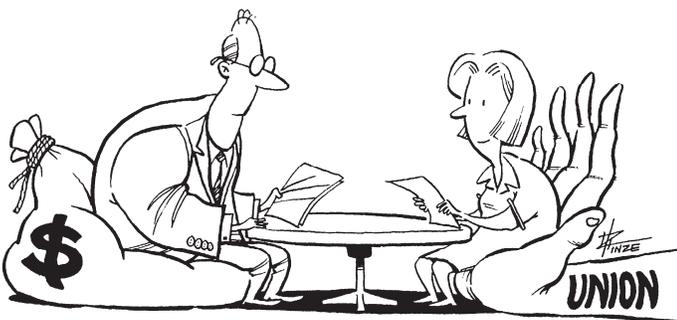
We need all our members engaged in the bargaining process and keeping themselves updated, your local executive can only do so much and I wish to thank them for all that they do but each individual member has to take responsibility as well. If you haven't got the information, get it. Your local executive is there to help.

### Which side are you on?

And if you think this is not about picking sides I am afraid you are sadly mistaken. Don't get me wrong, I don't expect anyone to blindly follow your national leadership. Your bargaining team has been elected to represent you, who have the best interest of the union and its membership at the root of all decisions they make. Their purpose is to get you the best collective agreement possible and to date there has not been an offer worthy of putting out to the membership. The national leadership has provided updates at every turn and continue to keep the members updated as much as possible. However they can't do it alone.

They are doing it for the membership and you need to do it for yourself. But we, and I mean you too, are not only doing it for ourselves but for the many that have gone before us and fought for the many gains we have in our collective agreement, such as our severance. And we are doing it for those that will come after, our children and grandchildren.

I am proud to say my mom was a UTE member and worked out of the St. John's TSO in Newfoundland for 21 years. She participated in the 1980 and 1991 strikes. She passed on to me a sense of fairness and justice. When she was first employed with the CRA (Revenue Canada) it was very different place to work than it is today. Many things we take for granted today were very different back when she started. But with the support of its members the Union was able to change things for the better. She was not on the executive but a general member but she stood up when her Union needed her and I am asking you to do the same.



We all have busy lives and spend our time taking care of our family, volunteering etc. The Union activist chooses to spend their time serving you, the membership, right from the local executive members and stewards to the National Executive and Bargaining team. I want to thank them and every member who has shown support for our Union and most importantly our Bargaining team. It is time to stand up in solidarity my friends.

The Commissioner said in his e-mail of May 22, 2015 that the Agency is committed to reaching a new collective agreement, that the CRA has made every effort to show good will at the table. I ask you, how can this be true when they come to the table with no change in mandate? Tell him to get his team back to the table and negotiate.

In Solidarity;

**Madonna Z. Gardiner**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> National Vice-President**

## YOUR PENSION?

Wake up, get up, and speak up! The clock is ticking on your sick leave brothers and sisters, but be very aware that it is our pensions that is the true target of this morally corrupt conservative government... Our employer has created an illusion as to the value of our sick leave and has cleverly used this benefit as yet another lie to garner support from an antagonized and misinformed general public. The big C in this conservative cabinet stands for conman, and while the truth is out there, such entities as the parliamentary budget officer, the auditor general and Statistics Canada itself (all of whom disagreed with the PMO) are discredited or ignored, as all resemblance of parliamentary process has been eroded away and replaced by the PMO smoke and mirrors roadshow.



Our current pension is not gold plated, in fact the average benefit is less than \$25000, nor is it a fiscal liability as claimed by the Harper spin doctors... In fact the greatest jeopardy to the plan is that it can be used as a slush fund and billions can be siphoned off on a whim as did the previous liberal government under Chretien and Martin.

It is a direct benefit pension that has a fixed return upon retirement. However members have to contribute for 35 years in order to receive maximum benefit and the benefits are reduced dollar for dollar upon receipt of the Canada Pension retirement benefit.

The relationship between the Public Service and the public in general has been systematically weakened by this government over the last 7 years and we have been demonized by our own employers simply for adhering to our mutually negotiated collective agreements.

We now face a public that has been conditioned and programmed to reach for the lowest common level... The idea "if I don't have it, you should not have it either" was not the Canadian view prior to this government's brand of reformed conservatism. What Canadians should be asking is why don't I have the same benefits, and what is this government doing to help me in my retirement? Seniors deserve more than false promises. This government is not at war with the union, we are in fact only collateral damage. This government is at war with public services and clearly wants to bring in a "Service for Profit" system and contract out our services to those who can afford to pay for them.



Now is the time to stand up and fight back... For our benefits, for our pensions, but also for a free and accessible public service that most of us have dedicated our adult lives to.

We have to become active; call your MP's, demand answers and explanations, speak to your coworkers, family, friends, and call any and all retirees that you know... Their pensions, their lives are at just as much risk of being impacted by this government's policies, as our own.

Get out and vote, bring a friend bring two friends... Brothers and sisters, we are a force to be reckoned with, and together we can stand against an employer who has long since abandoned fairness, honesty and most importantly the ethical treatment of its own employees.

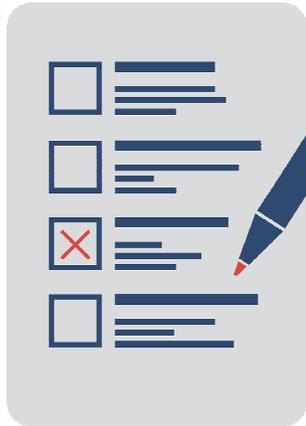
The battle begins today...

**Tony Tilley**  
**National President of the National Health Union**

## WHY YOUR VOTE MATTERS

“Official turnout for the 41st federal general election held on May 2, 2011 was 61.1%, 2.3 percentage points higher than the all-time low of 58.8% for 2008. The participation in 2011 is comparable to the turnout seen in other elections since 2000, but much lower than participation prior to 1993, when turnout typically varied between 70% and 80%.” – Elections Canada

Forget that the right to vote in a democratic society was hard fought for by those before us, forget that the right for women to vote was won after a long struggle. Forget the countries abroad who celebrated their first chance ever to vote by lining up at polls for hours to exercise their participation in a democratic process.



In Canada voting day comes and goes and the routine excuses or reasons begin. “It’s not as if my vote will change anything,” “I’m too busy,” “I’ll vote when I can online”. It’s not just simply a right, it’s the pinnacle of your civic duty like jury duty would be for example, or the mandatory long-form census was (if you can remember way-back-when). A right is a bit like an abandoned Chevy in the back field. If it is not exercised or used it tends to seize and rot away. Voting is not playing the odds at Las Vegas. If your party doesn’t win it doesn’t mean that you lose.

If you were part of the 39% eligible voters who did not vote in 2011 the reasons will be varied I’m sure. But, in our first-past-the-post system 32.69% of the 61% who did vote decided a majority government for you, allowing almost limitless control over legislation. Essentially 20% of eligible voters in 2011 chose your government for you.

To put this in a different perspective, would you let 20% of your colleagues, friends or neighbours decide which laws would govern your day to day lives? Would you be comfortable letting 1 out of 5 people determine your future?

This is your country and your democracy but it requires participation, and your vote does matter. Not for the principles above but more because it is your voice; your voice at a ballot box is the great equalizer. Doctor, lawyer, municipal worker, teacher, or accountant your voice is equal. Imagine the power for change if 100% participation was achieved. The engagement process may have failed. I can’t for a moment argue that disillusionment with politicians does not exist, is this not even more of a reason to be heard? People who love power most would really like you to stay home, it’s been a strategy for ages and is not going away.

Take pride in your rights and your voice. Do not let this election go by without being part of the action.

*Adam Jackson*

*RVP Northern & Eastern Ontario, Chair of the Political Action Committee*

## WHAT ARE THE CONSEQUENCES?

Voting is a privilege that others through history have fought for and sadly died for. It is something that should not be taken for granted. The consequences of individuals not exercising this right can have significant impacts on the citizens of a country or have similar impacts on certain elements of society.

For us, not only are we electing a government, we are electing our employer. This can have a

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profound impact on our work lives and our working conditions. This is one reason that the importance of voting is so significant. Will our employer view us with respect and dignity, or will they use us as a political pawn to support their agenda?

It would be nice if everything that involves your workplace rights and benefits could be negotiated at the table. Unfortunately this is not the case.

Legislation which became law or have been introduced by the Harper Government that have or may affect you:

**Bill C10** - rolled back 1% of your negotiated salary increase. (This is still being fought and will be heard someday in the Supreme Court.)

**Bill C4** - put at risk our health and safety and the Canadians we serve by redefining “danger” to include only imminent risks.

**Bill C4** - makes it harder to refuse unsafe work and replaces health and safety officers with anyone the Minister appoints.

**Bill C45** - gave Treasury Board effective control over CRA bargaining. This has directly affected our ability to negotiate with the CRA. All aspects of negotiations are controlled by Treasury Board and the Prime Minister’s Office (PMO).

**Bill C377** - would single out unions to provide detailed and intrusive reports to CRA, costing unions likely millions of dollars. (This Private Member’s Bill was lost in the Senate, the government is so intent on this Bill they reintroduced it, and is now once again back in the Senate.)

**Bill C525** - changes how unions are certified and de-certified. This Bill has recently received Royal Assent and is now law.

**Bill C59** - Budget Implementation Act - would allow the government/employer to unilaterally change a negotiated collective agreement to remove benefits such as sick leave and the accumulation of same and replace with a short-term disability program.

As noted above, the government has just recently tabled legislation which would allow them to take away your current sick leave provisions; and there is a strong likelihood they will likely be looking at your pension next. Then what, is this is who we want to elect as our employer?

Sadly, they will continue to look at anything we have in our collective agreements that their friends in private industry do not offer to their employees. Consider family related leave, personal days, our vacation leave quantum, there is nothing that might not be considered.

In order to protect your rights and benefits, you need to do a very simple thing, exercise you’re your right to vote. We must elect leaders and political parties who will respect us as employees and treat us fairly, as we perform a valuable service to the citizens of Canada.



**Communications Committee**

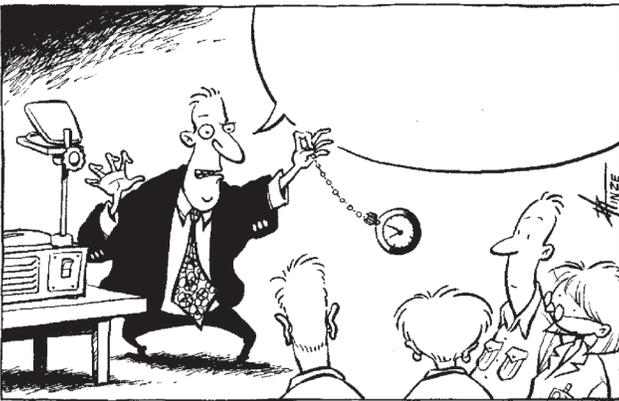
## LETTER TO THE COMMISSIONER

Mr. Treusch,

I was disappointed, once again, to see your open letter to UTE president Bob Campbell being published on the InfoZone for ALL CRA employees to see.

That includes the other group of employees CRA is also currently in bargaining with.

I just wish that for once you would let ALL of the CRA employees see the letter sent to you by the UTE president. Then perhaps the employees you pretend to value so much would see that there's another side to your story. One that doesn't paint as perfect a picture of you and the Agency as you are trying to portray.



Then do you think the employees would still consider your offer a fair one? Why don't you tell your employees the reason they are being offered less than what had been offered other groups for giving up their severance pay? Do you think the employees would still consider your offer a fair one? Why don't you tell your employees the reason your monetary offer, severance aside, is so far less than the cost of living over that period of time? Do you think your employees would still consider your offer a fair one?

I think not, sir.

You say you have bargained in good faith for the past two and one-half years. Does an open letter to your employees stating only your side of the bargaining story to be bargaining in good faith? Do you consider attending two mediation sessions for a total of one-half hour to be bargaining in good faith?

I think not, sir.

If you want to bargain through the InfoZone, then why don't you let the bargaining agent put forth their positions on the InfoZone too. Do you think your employees would still consider your offer a fair one?

I think not, sir.

It's time to stop this behind the back positioning and get back to the bargaining table and get serious about negotiating.

Thank you.

**Bob Carpenter**

**RVP, Rocky Mountains Region**

## LETTER TO HIS MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT

Budget Bill C-59

Honorable Member Nina Grewal  
Fleetwood-Port Kells

I am writing you regarding the above mentioned topic. I want to let you know that I am upset over this government's latest attempt to use a budget bill to curb our right to collective bargaining. I want to let you know that I will be working closely with my union to maintain that our rights to bargain with our employer without any legislative interference.



I personally have not had to use my sick leave and yes, I have the banked sick leave. I am thankful that I have the insurance available to me in the event that something serious should happen. Over my career of close to 29 years, I have calculated that I have only used three weeks of sick leave. That is pretty good and I thank God every day for the good health I have had since I started in my career. However, I have had several colleagues who have had to utilize their sick leave, because they get diagnosed with cancer, or they have been involved in a serious accident. I am close to the end and if I don't get to the point that I will need that banked sick leave it is gone. It does not get paid out, it simply disappears. No liability to the taxpayers, to which I too am a taxpayer which this government does not seem to recognize.

In 2007, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that freedom of association contained in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms include the right to free collective bargaining. The latest Conservative budget implementation bill (C-59) violates that right. It will allow the government to by-pass the bargaining process and make unilateral changes to the sick leave provisions in its collective agreements with federal public service unions.

I believe the government is determined to force its employees to choose between getting paid and going to work sick. The change that is proposed wants to make will drastically change the current sick leave provisions. But the reality is that this government has never been able to make a case that this change is necessary.

Both the Parliamentary Budget Officer and Statistics Canada have shown that the governments claims that sick leave is abused or too costly are wrong. Further, this government has not revealed to Canadians just how much more it will cost for a large insurance company to administer the short-term disability plan the government is wanting to impose. Nor has it explained how the public service will be a healthier place to work when employees are forced to battle it out with the insurance company over their claims.

I know that as a Conservative MP, you are obliged to support the budget bills. That's why the Conservative's put changes to so many different laws into them. However, when legislating any changes to collective agreements this is not acceptable and that I expect that you as my MP and this government to respect my collective bargaining rights.

I thank you for taking the time to read this and trust that this government will for once, do the right thing and remove this piece of legislation from the budget bill.

Yours sincerely,

**Richard Hyatt**  
**Local 20050—Pacific Region Call Centre**

-time only deal. Use it and lose it. Moreover, to get this you must give up something else out of your contract (Marriage Leave). So again, to get something you must give something up. Looking at their offer for the third year of the contract, management states that they have agreed to a three year duration as the PIC stated, except they do not mention that the “me too” clause means we would be signing an agreement without knowing what is in the economic increase for the third year. It would be based on some other group’s bargaining that could go on for a long period of time and could potentially be a 0% increase for you if the other group was offered something other than a direct salary increase. This could include a lump sum payment or higher increases in other years, none of which you would be entitled.

The employer has not been willing to change their compensation offer since it was initially presented, yet they state they believe in the process and they believe they are making a fair offer. Are we worth less than other groups in the public service, some of whom are your co-workers at the CRA, who have received more generous wage packages for the same period of time?

I believe that you are worth more and that you deserve to be treated fairly. Concession bargaining is a slippery slope. If we agree to roll over on severance, then they’ll table proposals to dismantle our sick leave. Even now, we are hearing the government floating proposals to amend our pensions.

We all have something to lose here. If you are a fairly new employee you would lose the opportunity to accumulate severance for your retirement. All of us will face the loss of sick leave banks with no compensation. While the Commissioner states this is not on the table this round, the minute we return to the table, it will be there so we must consider it.

These are tough times and it is difficult to go three years without a wage increase, especially when the cost of everything is increasing. However, I cannot believe that it is worth accepting a small raise now, only to weaken our bargaining rights in the process.

We must all stand together in support of each other, and in support of our Bargaining Team. Take every opportunity to tell the employer to return to the table and truly negotiate.

I have attended meetings across the country and talked to members. UTE has held telephone town hall meetings. Overwhelmingly the membership has told us to keep up the fight. Join in, talk to your local executive and ask them what you can do.

Together we can make this a contract that benefits all of us, now and in the future.

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

### **CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

Please note that all address changes should be done via e-mail to Louise Dorion ([dorionl@ute-sei.org](mailto:dorionl@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.