

## BC Federation of Labour Convention Report – Roger Leroux

Thanks to a generous \$500 subsidy from PSAC I was able to represent my component and local at the BC Federation of Labour Convention, November 28 to Dec 2, 2016. I thank PSAC for this opportunity as there is still a lot for me to learn about the union movement and this kind of event is an opportunity to educate myself.

I was a first time attendee at the convention and had the opportunity to witness the launch of the NDPs campaign launch for the upcoming provincial election. I had the opportunity to hear John Horgan speak, to meet my MLA Melanie Mark, and to talk to a candidate from PSAC who is running for the NDP in the coming election.

The resolutions phase was an educational experience. Someone described the proceedings as “our parliament”, that is to say, the parliament for the provincial labour movement. I was nonplussed that the resolutions, many of which were proactive, positive, and what I could consider “bread and butter” for the labour movement, take so long to get passed. There were pro and con microphones set up around the room, and with two exceptions, there was never a contentious resolution and yet the chair would let numerous people speak in favour of these resolutions, which I felt took too much time.

It was good to see motions from PSAC reach the floor, specifically the CPP/OAS issues. I do not work in that department, but know from my union brothers and sisters about the issues they face on a regular basis. It was good to know they had support from the floor and the resolutions were passed. Should I attend a future convention, I would consider the possibility of having resolutions germane to PSAC brought forward within the context of my business line.

I was disappointed with the tone in the room that gainsaid development issues, especially the recently approved pipeline, and the issue of jobs vs. the environment was definitely a hot topic, with many of the trade unions, especially from the rural areas of BC hardest hit by the current economic realities desperate for the work that would come with the Kinder-Morgan pipeline. It's not an easy conversation to have between unions and people had to vote their conscience.

It was a great opportunity to connect with other members of the labour movement, especially members from other business lines/departments within my component, from PSAC at large, and members of other provincial unions.

I thank PSAC for their support – without it I would not have been able to participate.

In solidarity,  
Roger Leroux,  
President, CEIU Local 20937