

**Political Action Report**  
**PSAC BC Regional Council**

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This report covers most of the Political Action participation, recent past and projected current future.

**CUPW Strike/Lock Out**

The PSAC was supportive and visible to our CUPW brothers and sisters throughout the province during their latest round of bargaining. While not unexpected the Harper Government's heavy handed legislation which denies the workers their right to collective bargaining was a tragedy for democracy.

## Day of Mourning – April 28

PSAC members were visible at numerous Day of Mourning events throughout the province.

Day of Mourning - April 28



**MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS AGO** the Canadian Labour Congress declared April 28 a National Day of Mourning for workers who have been killed, suffer disease or injury as a result of work. Every year since, unions, labour councils, families and community partners gather by the thousands to 'mourn for the dead'. What began through the efforts of Canada's labour movement is now observed in more than 100 countries..

On April 28 honour those who have lost their lives or paid with their health. You can:

- encourage others to attend a Day of Mourning event
- draft a message for your organization's publication or web site
- work with local media to promote the Day's significance, write about worker monuments and cover Day of Mourning events
- lobby politicians to recognize the Day through proclamation
- invite faith communities and social justice groups to observe the Day
- convince employers and public institutions to lower flags to half-mast.

The Day of Mourning though, is also intended to focus attention on what we can do to break the silence of indifference and say **enough** to the suffering caused by hazardous working conditions. On April 28 let's

resolve to action that restores and promotes dignity and health in our workplaces and our communities. On this day and each that follows you can:

- educate others about basic health and safety rights and prevention measures
- help social justice and other groups educate at-risk members of our communities
- negotiate greater decision-making power for worker representatives and joint committees
- make health and safety a collective bargaining priority
- encourage local media to report on health, safety and environmental issues
- encourage MPs and/or MPPs to support ergonomic and violence regulations and stronger enforcement of existing legislation
- create monuments to promote public awareness of workplace health and safety.

**The Workers Health & Safety Centre (WHSC)** mourns with you on April 28. But what began as Canada's Day of Mourning has also become an annual day to breathe new life into efforts aimed at securing safer and healthier workplaces.

For more information about April 28 or how the WHSC can help you pursue prevention through training and other information resources contact a [WHSC near you](#).

## **Labour Day Celebrations**

PSAC members participated in Labour Day activities across the province.

<http://www.psacbc.com/area-councils/photos-labour-day-2011>

## **Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) Pension Proposal**

This issue resonated with the public during the last federal election but the Harper government was slick enough to evade any commitment to making our pension system right for all Canadians. The lack of adequate pensions for all Canadians is an issue that will become more important to Canadians over the next several years. While we may have to wait 3 years before we can make this a federal election issue we can make this an issue during the provincial election which will probably happen in just over a year's time. Provincial governments have to agree to changes to the CPP.

*RETIREMENT SECURITY for everyone AFTER A LIFETIME OF WORK*

Here are the main points without a lot of detail:

- Double the average CPP earnings to 1,635 per month. Phased in over 7 years. Cost would be an additional 3% of salary for worker and employers but less would be paid into your workplace plan.

- A 15% increase to the Guaranteed Income Supplement of the Old Age Security benefits.
- Pension Insurance to protect people's pensions.
- Increase EI payments and relax eligibility requirements

While as federal government workers we might not see the need for these pension reforms as acutely as workers with no or insufficient pension plans, it is the right thing to do.

## **Elections**

### *Provincial*

Christy Clark called off the election after reading the HST tea leaves. While disappointing it may well be a blessing in disguise. It gives the NDP the chance to increase finances, fine tune policy, promote their agenda and give Adrian Dix the opportunity to introduce himself more thoroughly to British Columbians.

### *Municipal*

Municipal elections are only a few short weeks away middle of November. The labour movement has been successful over the last couple of elections getting progressive candidates elected. Labour Councils throughout British Columbia will be interviewing potential candidates, soliciting and encouraging progressive candidates, directing resources to those candidates selected and distributing poll cards to affiliates come November.

Municipal elections seem to be the political arena that garners the least amount of publicity. That does seem strange as municipal elections have a huge impact on how your community operates schools, libraries, parks, transportation, infrastructure etc. This lack of interest while deplorable in the larger scheme of a vibrant democracy does present an opportunity for those that do get involved to elect progressive candidates.

The municipal election also form a platform for increased progressive activism into the provincial election and then on into the federal election.

## **Campaigns**

This is certainly not a complete list of PSAC/component campaigns, however I would venture that “Don’t cut Public Services” is our most important campaign at this time. For a complete list of campaigns go to: <http://www.pfac-afpc.org/issues/index-e.shtml>

### **Don’t Cut Public Services.**

<http://www.pfac-afpc.com/issues/campaigns/cuts-e.shtml>

June 6, 2011

## **PSAC launches campaign to protect public services**

Ottawa – The federal budget that was tabled in Parliament today by the Harper Conservatives aims to reduce the deficit on the backs of hard working Canadians by slashing essential services, said the Public Service Alliance of Canada. In response, the PSAC launched a national campaign to reach out to Canadians in workplaces and communities across the country.

“Cutting public services and jobs is the wrong priority at the wrong time,” said John Gordon, National President of PSAC. “A majority in Parliament does not give Harper the license to ignore the Canadian public.”

The national campaign will begin with a Google and Facebook ad campaign that will direct people to send a message to Stephen Harper and Tony Clement in favour of public services. PSAC is also calling on everyone to Tweet their support for public services to @TonyClementCPC.

A secret Cabinet committee led by Tony Clement will make the final decisions on cuts to services. But the vast majority of Canadians did not give Harper a mandate to cut the services they depend on. Instead of listening to Canadians, the Harper Conservatives have decided to transfer \$4 billion from vital public services to corporate bank accounts with no strings attached.

“Tony Clement has a responsibility to safeguard the public services Canadian families depend on,” said Gordon. “He also has a legal obligation to uphold collective agreements.”

Standing together with its partners, PSAC will work to ensure this government respects its obligations to protect quality public services and jobs for all Canadians.

In the coming months, PSAC will organize its members to engage their communities from coast to coast to coast, and meet with Parliamentarians in their constituencies to ensure public services are not eroded in favour of corporate tax cuts. In addition, the union will be contacting and bringing thousands of its members together to train them in their rights and in a campaign to defend services.

