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## EDITORIAL

TORONTO

# Edmonton is organizing, Toronto Editorial preparing



ROB LAMBERTITI  
CHAIRMAN

June ended with the announcement that the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union has launched a drive to organize the employees of the Edmonton Sun and the Edmonton Examiner. The drive follows the apparently merging of certain operations involving the Sun and 24 Hours, basically speeding up the work while the company allowed wages to lag behind the rate the inflation.

Wages at the Edmonton and Calgary Suns have always been behind Ontario. There was the excuse that they were smaller, or that there was some sort of corporate pride in keeping weekly wages in Calgary below \$1,000. But the boom has hit Alberta. The work has increased and widen to encompass other media, but the wages still lag. Our brothers and sisters in Edmonton are going through the emotion roller coaster we went through: The product isn't what it was and the corporate culture has changed, it's cut-throat in the non-union side; the quality because of cutbacks has suffered tremendously despite the continuing exemplary work by those who remain; and finally, acknowledging that our superior standards can't be maintained with the demands put upon on smaller workforce. It's demoralizing. Edmonton, I believe, face the same issues we faced in 2002 and 2003 as we strived for union certification. In the first letter to employees, the Edmonton organizing committee stated:

"We have all suffered through massive layoffs, job cuts through attrition, wage cuts, roll backs, increased workload, budget cuts, the elimination of perks, sabbaticals, and the erosion of benefits and

pensions. There have also been direct and subtle pressures that affect our day-to-day work lives involving issues such as overtime. "Our wages, already much lower than the competition, are being steadily eroded with cost-of living increases that do not come close to the exponential and unrelenting inflation rate in Alberta. Sales targets and workloads have become unbearable.

"Just when it appears things can't get worse, they inevitably do. Many of us are now coping with the new demands of publishing 24 Hours. We have to ask ourselves, 'What's to stop Quebecor from squeezing even harder next year?' "There's power in numbers and we're already growing faster than you might have thought."

The issues were similar in Ottawa. Those issues remain unchecked in the non-union sections of our workplaces. Our Local President Brad Honywill and CEP Local 255 G (Graphical) President Ray Wade joined with the Edmonton organizing committee on June 27.

The organizing committee includes:

Brendon Dlouhy, Photographer, [brendondlouhy@yahoo.ca](mailto:brendondlouhy@yahoo.ca), 780-982-2891  
Brookes Merritt, Reporter, [brookesmerritt@gmail.com](mailto:brookesmerritt@gmail.com), 780-217-7729  
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Shauna Lawrence, Pre-press,  
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In other welcome news, the company will be seeking to hire two part-timers on the rim. It has also hired Jolene Gallant and a part-timer on rich media. The part-timer will man the weekend shift for video. Everyone welcome Jolene Gallant and Adam Bernstein (video) and Melissa Nguyen (information services enhancer) to the Toronto Sun.

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The summer solstice has past and we begin the slow slide into winter. It's a reminder that we are also closing in on the time to determine what's important to us in the upcoming negotiations for a new contract. After Labour Day, we will be assembling a bargaining team and reaching out to the membership to determine what's important to us. Howard has led a magnificent charge to settle five Quebecor contracts and we are hoping achieving our second editorial contract will go smoothly, please consider putting off any major purchases if possible and pay off as much debt as possible.

In solidarity,

Rob Lambertiti  
Chair, Toronto Sun Unit  
Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild  
Local 87-M  
Communications, Energy and Paperworkers of  
Canada

[lamberti@cogeco.ca](mailto:lamberti@cogeco.ca)

## EDITORIAL/PREPRESS

EDMONTON

# First organizing letter to staff

This was the first message sent by the Edmonton organizing committee to the employees at the Sun and Examiner on the day the union drive was launched on June 27, 2007:

Dear Sun/Examiner Colleagues and Friends,

It is with great sincerity and respect that we offer you this letter today. You are our colleagues, our friends, our neighbours. Most of us have worked, played, laughed and cried together over the years. Some of those years have been great, but more recently our lives here at the Sun/Examiner have become filled with uncertainty, injustice and fear.

None of us ever thought the day would come when our beloved newspaper would be torn apart, hundreds of its loyal employees cast aside and the product itself jeopardized. But the day is here - and it's been here for some time now.

Our owners, Quebecor, are located far away in Montreal. Events of the last several years suggest that they don't know or care who we are. Nor

does Quebecor care about our loyal Sun/Examiner readers. Quebecor has no other interest other than to milk these newspapers of profit to pay off huge debts from acquiring new companies and multi-million-dollar compensation packages for senior management.

We have all suffered through massive layoffs, job cuts through attrition, wage cuts, roll backs, increased workload, budget cuts, the elimination of perks, sabbaticals, and the erosion of benefits and pensions. There have also been direct and subtle pressures that affect our day-to-day work lives involving issues such as overtime.

Our wages, already much lower than the competition, are being steadily eroded with cost-of-living increases that do not come close to the exponential and unrelenting inflation rate in Alberta. Sales targets and workloads have become unbearable.

Just when it appears things can't get worse, they inevitably do. Many of us are now coping with the

new demands of publishing 24 Hours. We have to ask ourselves, what's to stop Quebecor from squeezing even harder next year?

In the past two years, dozens of people have been laid off, including some very senior and well respected colleagues. There was no attempt to re-position or re-train these long-time Sun/Examiner employees who helped build these papers. Many more just walk out the door, frustrated, burned out and demoralized.

All of us are still loyal to the Sun and Examiner; we are still dedicated and we are still energized. But we need a fair deal. Our argument is not with Edmonton based management: we know that many of the managers are suffering under the same conditions as we are. The problem is with Quebecor.

Today, a group of employees have launched a drive to unionize the Edmonton Sun/Examiner, and have sent a letter to the publisher notifying

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him of our intentions. Many of you will be familiar with the names on this letter. Many of you know us personally and therefore you know this is hardly a left wing insurgency. We are reasonable, realistic and loyal Sun employees who care about the future of our colleagues and friends at the Sun, the integrity of the newspaper and the loyal Sun reader.

And we believe that establishing our own union is the only answer to ending the fear, stress and injustices permeating the Edmonton Sun.

In doing this, we will not be alone. Unions exist at Quebecor dailies in Ottawa, Toronto, London, Montreal, Quebec and Winnipeg.

Our group, with the active encouragement and backing of many colleagues, has had discussions with the Communications, Energy & Paperworkers Union (CEP) over the last month and sought guidance from its local, the Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild (SONG) Local 87-M, representing Sun Media employees at the Toronto Sun, Ottawa Sun and London Free Press, Stratford Beacon Herald and the Simcoe Reformer.

With 150,000 members, CEP is the largest media union in Canada. Its membership includes 20,000 media members from sales, administration, pre-press, circulation, production, IT, editorial, and Internet departments. CEP represents more than 50 western Canadian workplaces such as Quebecor World, the Edmonton Journal, CTV & Global Edmonton, the Calgary Herald, the Winnipeg Free Press, Vancouver Province, Trader Classified Media and Transcontinental Coronet.

SONG is the biggest newspaper union local in North America, representing 3,200 industry employees, and has negotiated contracts for the Toronto Sun, Ottawa Sun, London Free Press, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail, etc. We feel CEP will do an excellent job representing Sun/Examiner employees and our concerns.

The time to act is now.

We have every reason to believe that a majority of editorial and pre-press employees will choose a union in the very near future. We urge all Sun/Examiner employees throughout the building to join us and form a strong, dedicated and united voice that Quebecor must respect.

For your future, and that of these great newspapers, we urge all employees to join us and contact Local CEP

President Ray Wade  
(w: 780-426-0624 / c: 780-668-6400),

SONG President Brad Honywill  
(905-334-9259) or the members of the organizing committee.

THE ORGANIZING COMMITTEE:

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## LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

EDMONTON -- As many of you may know by now, SONG (CEP 87-M), along with Edmonton Local 255-G, have launched an organizing drive at the Edmonton Sun/Examiner/24 Hours.

The Edmonton employees have experienced the same kind of downsizing that Toronto Sun employees have experienced but it was done without considering seniority. And they've seen their wages, already low by Toronto Sun standards, greatly eroded over the last few years. With an annual inflation rate of 5% in Alberta over the last year, many employees received a 2% wage increase. Others received nothing. And there is no wage grid. So a typical reporter in Edmonton gets \$45,000 per year while a reporter at the top of the grid in Toronto gets \$76,000 annually.

Of course, with no union and no contract, there's also no grievance procedure to contest management decisions. And no protection from unjustified dismissal. So, if the company decides to get rid of a senior employee in Edmonton, like was tried in Toronto with sports copy editor Rolf Rimstad, there's no one to go to bat for the employee. SONG, for eg., spent many thousands of dollars in legal fees defending the principle of seniority in our first grievance that's gone to arbitration. And we won. Rolf can have his job back or negotiate a better settlement, whatever he chooses. And the company owes him his back pay for the year its taken to settle the case and he was off work.

This battle was fought on behalf of all employees, of course, because now the principle of seniority has been clearly defined in our favour.

Here's another big difference between Edmonton and Toronto. Edmonton reporters get paid a mileage rate for gas of 32 cents per km. Under our union contract in Toronto, we get 42 cents per km plus a guaranteed minimum allowance equal to 250 km per month.

SONG has invested heavily in the drive in Edmonton, paying my salary while I've coordinated the organizing here for almost a month. We're doing it because we hope to bring the benefits of unionization to another Sun paper but also because the Sun has used the Alberta papers as a recruitment ground for scabs in the event of a strike at SONG Sun Media papers, which now include the Ottawa Sun, Toronto Sun, the London Free Press, the Simcoe Reformer and the Stratford Beacon-Herald.

The bottom line, however, is that greater unionization raises the bar for all of us.



**BRAD HONYWILL**  
PRESIDENT  
CEP LOCAL 87-M

[brad@song.on.ca](mailto:brad@song.on.ca)

# Tough Quebecor Bargaining yields five agreements

Intensive negotiations, strike votes and eleventh hour settlements over the past several months have resulted in five contract settlements between Local 87-M and Quebecor, including two first agreements in Toronto and Ottawa.

All five concluded talks in late May, including three deals in four days at the Simcoe Reformer, Toronto Sun Pre Press and the Stratford Beacon-Herald. The Ottawa Sun and London Free Press newsrooms ratified in the prior two weeks.

Wage settlements were 2% in each year in Simcoe, London, and Ottawa. Slightly lower numbers resulted in Stratford and Toronto Pre Press.

Quebecor brought sweeping concessions to each bargaining table, beginning with the neutralizing of seniority, cuts to benefits, vacations, paid holidays, and the lengthening of work weeks. In each case the concessions were fended off.

"There was a point late in each set of negotiations where a strike looked very possible," said

Local Union Representative Howard Law who participated at all five bargaining tables. "The unity and state of preparation in the membership made the difference in our favour. Quebecor seems to prefer the eleventh hour stuff. When we got serious, so did they."

At the London Free Press newsroom, the union plugged a few job security holes by tightening the freelance language, introducing a "work of the bargaining unit clause," and streamlining the layoff and bumping procedures. Vision care was topped up another \$50.

At the Ottawa Sun newsroom, the 35 member unit gained a first collective agreement after several months of difficult talks. The agreement is patterned heavily, with the obvious exception of wages, after the Toronto Sun newsroom's deal from 2004. A wage grid will accelerate the pay of a substantial number of underpaid staff.

In Simcoe, the 17-person unit's second collective agreement improved pay grids, accelerated

underpaid staff through the grid, boosted long frozen mileage rates, added a paid floating holiday, and increased severance pay entitlements. The company's main goal -- introducing a 10% sharing of benefit premiums -- was delayed until the final day of the contract when most staff have reached the top of their pay grids.

At Stratford, the nine-member unit ratified a contract that introduced a new commission plan adapted from the Simcoe plan. The 10% premium sharing on benefits was delayed for a year, an additional paid holiday was negotiated, and mileage rates were increased.

In Toronto, the 35-member Pre Press unit seemed destined for a first contract strike in the face of an unyielding employer demand to reduce most salaries by 5% annually. The union applied to the Ontario Labour Relations Board for first contract arbitration. At the pre-hearing, Quebecor agreed voluntarily to arbitrate the crucial pay issue. All other items were settled, and an arbitration board will decide the salary dispute soon.

# BARGAINING UPDATES FROM PRE-PRESS

Dear Members

Here's a headsup and background on the recent contract settlement for our 36 members in Pre Press. The deal was struck on May 30<sup>th</sup> at a Labour Board mediation. It looked like we were headed for an ugly confrontation with Quebecor because they were determined to cut the "overscale" pay of 25 staff, in amounts ranging from \$6,000 to \$50,000 in annual salary.

Our choices were stark. We could strike. We could be locked out. The company could wait for the strike deadline in June, unilaterally cut salaries, and dare us to strike. Or we could go to the Labour Board asking for the option to settle the contract by binding arbitration.

We asked the Labour Board for binding arbitration: we were prepared to argue that the company was bargaining unreasonably, and the company was geared up to defend against that claim. We knew we had to prove our claim that the company was bargaining unfairly as a precondition to getting binding arbitration. We were well prepared, but we knew the case could go for us, or against us.

We attended the Board pre-hearing mediation on May 30<sup>th</sup>, expecting it was a formality and even a waste of time, before the big legal fight in front of the Board adjudicator. But the company surprised us by pitching a fair and reasonable deal: settle right there all of the remaining contract issues, including the wage grids, and we could submit the contentious issue of overscale salaries to binding arbitration. Looking to avoid a

strike, lockout, or unilateral cuts to salaries, your bargaining team agreed.

The arbitration is scheduled for October. The case for the staff will be presented by CEP's top lawyer, Jim Nyman. He will make our case for "green circling" of salaries, meaning that all staff should maintain their current salaries with the annual cost of living increases. The company will argue for wage cuts, at the rate of 5% per year. We think we'll win. We know the long wait and uncertainty will provoke anxiety, but in the opinion of your bargaining team it is the best hand we could have been dealt to protect salaries.

Under Ontario labour law, the rest of the collective agreement is not official until the arbitration award settling the overscale issue is handed down several months from now. However we have persuaded the company to put the rest of the contract into force right away: one of the many advantages of this will be to protect staff against arbitrary dismissal or discipline, immediately. But even though the union contract is in effect right away, we will still follow through with our promise not to collect union dues until the arbitration award is final.

Randy



**RANDY MILLER**  
CHAIRMAN OF THE  
BARGAINING COMMITTEE  
FOR PRE-PRESS

randalljamesmiller@yahoo.ca

## EDITORIAL

OTTAWA

# Ottawa Sun editorial workers ratify first collective agreement

Rob Ludlow  
Unit Chair for Ottawa Editorial

The Ottawa Sun Editorial Unit ratified its first collective agreement on May 23, 2007, 17 months after organizing began in earnest.

We began signing cards in January 2006, held a successful certification vote in March and began preliminary bargaining last summer.

The pace of bargaining picked up into the fall and winter and yet it still took until this May to reach agreement. That agreement came only after the company had presented us with its "final, final" offer on May 16, which our members found to be wholly inadequate and generally insulting.

The May long weekend was a tense time for all, as we faced a strike/lockout deadline of midnight Monday, May 21. We had made detailed strike plans and were quite prepared to take out 32 reporters, editors and photographers — just as the Senators were heading into the final round with Anaheim.

The company had made detailed plans to try to function without us. Nobody wanted a labour dispute but both sides were ready.

It's unfortunate that this kind of brinksmanship is necessary to reach a deal but that's how the process works. Both sides approached the precipice and peered over and decided that saner heads would prevail and suicide might not be so painless after all.

Over the long weekend, further discussions continued and after considering some alternate proposals, the company was able to present our committee and our members with an offer that they could accept.

We ended up with 2% in each year of a 4-year contract, a signing bonus for all, a wage grid, an immediate bump up in pay for almost a dozen below-scale staffers, an improved kilometre rate and cellphone allowance and, of course, an overall framework for fairness described in clear language that includes a grievance procedure and seniority protection in layoffs.

Over the 17-month process, we went through two CEP chief negotiator staff reps (Gail Lem until the end of 2006 and then Paul Keighley took over), we went from around 48 members at certification to 32 members at ratification as Sun Media's downsizing and layoffs continued, we lost half of our 4-member bargaining committee as colleagues departed for other challenges and it took 42 bookoff days (mostly bargaining but some prep days in committee) to complete the process.

Lessons learned? It takes stamina, persistence and vision to see through a process that can be arduous and frustrating. And I learned early on, thanks to Howard Law's lesson in reality which feels very much like a cold shower, that you can't use the "fair" argument.

More than once, I commented that something "wasn't fair" and Howard eventually told me that I had used up all my "fair" cards in this game!

It isn't about what's fair or right or proper, it isn't about who can make the best argument, it isn't about principles (although you must still be guided by all those values) — it's about what you can bargain. It's bargaining, one chip for another, one package for another and very much about the strength of your support.

Solidarity in the membership is vital to sending a strong message to the employer.

I should also mention that while the company was tough and we clearly had different objectives being on opposite sides of the table, in our case there was always mutual respect, good faith and professionalism. Honourable, well-intentioned people can agree to disagree on fundamental issues and Sun Media negotiators have a tough mandate from their superiors.

Thanks (in alphabetical order) to Bob Hatfield, Brad Honywill, Paul Keighley, Howard Law, Gail Lem, Danny McBride, Alan Tate, my terrific, courageous and hard-working organizing committee of Trevor Bunke, Holly Lake, Sean McKibbon, Derek Puddicombe and Dave Washburn and long-suffering bargaining committee members Laura Czekaj, Holly Lake, Raina Toomey and Dave Washburn.

A word of thanks and recognition should also go to John Mather, a conciliator from the Ontario Ministry of Labour, whose shuttle diplomacy between the two sides was invaluable in taking some heat out of some friction points, bridging differences and finding nuanced areas of agreement.

We now set about implementing and administering our first collective agreement. We encourage our western colleagues in their struggle. It's a challenge and a tough battle but it's worth it!

Rob Ludlow  
Chair, Ottawa Sun Editorial Unit  
CEP 87-M  
Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild

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# Upcoming Events

## CEP ANNUAL PICNIC

Mark Sunday, Sept. 9, on the calendar.

It's the annual SONG barbecue at Ward's Island.

A lot of fun, a great way to meet people from other units, a great day for the family.

It started in 2004 as a Sun event but it's grown to include invitations to CEP members from other units.

More details to follow.

# Supreme Court upholds fundamental rights of labour association

The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that collective bargaining is a fundamental freedom that all Canadians are entitled to enjoy.

In last week's judgment in BC Health Services Sector, the nation's top court struck down a 2002 British Columbia law that deleted "no contracting out" clauses from collective agreements in the health care sector. The law, imposed by Premier Gordon Campbell's Liberal government, also made it illegal for unions to bargain back those no-contracting-out clauses. This led to the massive contracting out of more than 10,000 health care worker jobs in B.C. Lost wages are estimated in excess of \$1 billion so far.

In making its ruling the Court said the law was unconstitutional and violated the workers' "fundamental" freedom of association protected under article 2(d) of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. It said that since the nineteenth century Canadian workers have formed labour associations, undertaking organizing, bargaining and strike action to improve wages and working conditions. Governments responded positively

to trade unionism by repealing criminal laws that outlawed "combinations" and "conspiracies" of collective labour action, and then after WWII passing Labour Relations legislation that punished anti-union behaviour by companies. That shows freedom of labour association is deeply rooted in our democratic traditions, the court said, and deserving of legal protection.

Pronouncing in favour of freedom of labour association, the court broke from 25 years of judicial hostility to union claims that the Charter protects collective bargaining. In fact only six years ago the court rejected union arguments that an Ontario law prohibiting farm workers from engaging in collective bargaining under the Labour Relations Act was unfair.

However in that case, known as "Dunmore," the court went as far to say that farmworkers had the right to organize with legal protection, even if they didn't have the right to collective bargaining with a duty imposed on companies to bargain in good faith.

Now the court has taken the extra step in the BC

Health Services case and affirmed the right to bargain and the duty of companies to act in good faith.

The impact of the court's decision is likely to land most heavily in the public sector where governments habitually tamper with collective agreements in times of fiscal stress or political expediency. In times of dire need, the Charter will still allow governments to violate fundamental freedoms like collective bargaining if there is a compelling reason and it searches out the most modest means to achieve its end. But the days of imperiously rolling back public sector wages and collective agreement protections in the name of the public good are numbered.

Canadians now have the constitutionally protected right to organize and bargain collectively, thanks to the court, and governments will not easily be able to trample on those rights. While the court did not have to rule on the right to strike, it is likely to find court protection in future legal challenge.

Excerpt from CEP web site

# Media Ownership Pyramiding Continues

June 1, 2007

OTTAWA - "The sale of the Osprey newspaper chain to media giant Quebecor represents a further pyramiding of ownership in Canada's media," says Peter Murdoch, Media Vice-President of Canada's largest media union. "Meanwhile, the federal government continues to sit on its hands."

"The problem with every major purchase in the media is that it has translated into the 'more is less' model -- more profit for large media corporations less local

content in community newspapers," says Murdoch.

"The chains have been complicit partners in the continual erosion of our once-distinguished newspaper community. Circulation is falling at most newspapers, and no wonder. There is little or no new investment in the essential ingredient of the product -- solid, old-fashioned reporters out there digging up the news at every venue."

Murdoch says "the Harper government's 'let-the-free-market prevail' ideology will

do for media democracy what it has done for the environment -- create crisis.

"The government has enough research and recommendations sitting on its shelves today that it could act responsibly on behalf of the public interest to end this dangerous concentration of ownership in Canada's media. It is clear we need a stronger voice than Heritage Minister Bev Oda's in Cabinet."

For More Information: Peter Murdoch - (613) 230-5800, ext. 249; cell (905) 516-5720.

# Union flashes

## Edmonton Sun/Examiner organizing

The Edmonton Sun and Edmonton Examiner have made the move to organize an union. Brad Honeywill is presently in Edmonton to help spearhead the drive. It appears that the response is positive which is no wonder considering the history of Quebecor and the upheavals being experienced by Edmonton and Calgary. We wish them to know that they have our attention in the Sunfamily and our support and that they can reach any unit chair for moral and information with their endeavour. Good Luck!

## Le Journal de Quebec put up picket lines

Le Journal has finally put up picket lines at Le Journal de Quebec. The placards read "Made in Toronto" which we can be sure will not be going over with the public there. But the truth should prevail.

## Rolph Rimstad reinstated

After a year, an arbitrator with the Ontario Labour Board ruled in favour of Rolf Rimstad in a grievance filed by the union. In part, arbitrator Janice Johnson wrote in her decision:

"In light of the facts as I have found them to be and after carefully considering the submissions of the parties, I conclude that in laying off Rolf Rimstad on June 20, 2006, the employer did not act in a manner that was consistent with the terms and conditions of the collective agreement as is required by Article 401. Specifically, the employer violated Article 710 of the collective agreement in that it laid off Mr. Rimstad from his classification of copy editor and retained employees classified as copy editor, who had less seniority than Mr. Rimstad. The grievance is therefore upheld.

Accordingly, the layoff of Mr. Rimstad was a contravention of the collective agreement. He is to be immediately reinstated."

## Quebecor closes profitable plant

OTTAWA -- The president of Canada's largest media union, Dave Coles, is calling on the president of Quebecor to review

its sudden decision to close its Southeast Marine Drive operation in Vancouver, a profitable printing plant that employs nearly 200 workers.

"I am surprised and disappointed that Quebecor has decided to abandon its employees," says the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union president in a letter to Wes W. Lucas, president and CEO of Quebecor.

Meanwhile, the members of CEP Local 525G are still absorbing the implications of the closure, expected later this year.

The plant, in operation at that location for more than 50 years, prints a host of familiar magazines as well as products destined for other markets and the popular new commuter daily, "24 Hrs." It employs 130 unionized workers and about 60 non-union staff.

"This facility is profitable," says union Local president Alex Charles. "The employer called all of the staff together to congratulate them on meeting their sales targets for the year – by April – and two days later assembled them again to tell them the place was closing."

"While plant closures are not uncommon, most involve facilities that were no longer profitable," continued Charles. "That's what frustrates us about this situation. The employer's negotiators were absolutely up front with us about it. They said they were closing the plant because they don't want to do business under this collective agreement any more".

"That's a pretty powerful admission," Charles observed. "Even though they're still getting their profit, they're closing the place because they think the workers there make too much. That's just spiteful. It's a lousy way to treat the people that have been generating your company's wealth".

"This highly profitable employer is simply trying to send a message to working people that it's okay for corporations to make good money, but not for workers," said Charles. "That's not going to wash in Canada in the twenty-first century. Our members won't be pushed backwards, to face tomorrow's prices with yesterday's wages. What is this company thinking?"

# Want to organize?

## KNOW YOUR RIGHTS!

**Q: Are strikes common?**

**A:** No. The great majority of contracts are achieved through dispute-free negotiation. But if the members at a particular workplace are not willing to accept an inferior settlement they can decide to take a strike vote. A strike vote raises the stakes in negotiations, and contracts are often settled after a strike vote but before a strike is begun. No strike can occur without a majority vote by secret ballot, and only the bargaining team of elected employee representatives may actually call the strike.

**Q: What will be in our contract?**

**A:** That depends on what the members want, and what we can negotiate with the company. The members at your workplace will determine their own priorities, and negotiations will reflect those priorities. Members have the right to ratify any settlement that is reached, by secret ballot vote. However, it is fair to say that most newly organized groups negotiate contracts that are similar to those negotiated in similar-sized unionized publications.

**Q: Are some employees not eligible to be unionized?**

**A:** Any full-time or part time employee is eligible. However, labour laws exclude from unionization anyone who exercises managerial authority, including for example, the authority to hire and fire. Often we have disagreements with companies over who is managerial and the labour board has to decide. We usually argue that anyone who wants to be protected by a union should have that right. Freelancers are also not eligible for unionization because they are not employees; however, someone who is dependent on one company for the bulk of their income and who has little in the way of independence may be eligible. The best way to answer these complicated questions is to discuss with us your own particular circumstances.

**Email your questions to:**  
[info@song.on.ca](mailto:info@song.on.ca)

# ARE YOU STRESSED BY YOUR WORKING ENVIRONMENT?

Feel you are alone with no one to turn to who sees you as an individual?



Then it is time to have others stand up with you and fight for your rights to security and a stable working environment in which you have some control. Relax knowing there are others who will go to bat for you, who also want the same things you want. You should be able to look forward to the future with optimism, not dread!

**IT'S SIMPLE! BECOME A MEMBER OF C.E.P. LOCAL 87-M!**

CONTACT ONE OF THE MANY REPRESENTATIVES IN THE SUN FAMILY UNION STAFF AND JOIN TODAY. WITH ENOUGH MEMBERS FROM YOUR UNIT YOU TO CAN BE TREATED FAIRLY. STAND UP AND BE COUNTED.

**You can also email one of the members in this Newsletter. Discretion is assured.**

