

OUTSIDER:

THE VOICE OF THE TUTOR

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ATTEND THE CUPE 3911 MONTHLY MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

OUR NEXT GENERAL MEETING, OPEN TO ALL MEMBERS, WILL BE HELD ON SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 930 AM. SUGGESTED AGENDA ITEMS SHOULD BE SENT TO THE ADMINISTRATOR'S EMAIL ADDRESS BY 1100 PM, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 21. THE MEETING WILL BE CONDUCTED REMOTELY VIA ZOOM.

CUPE 3911 Collective Bargaining Report

by Glynnis Lieb, Co-Chair

Dear Member,

My name is Glynnis Lieb and I am a psychology tutor at AU. I serve as CUPE 3911 co-chair and I chair the bargaining committee. Today, we wish to thank you for all the work you do serving students at Athabasca University every day. We also want to update you on current challenges facing us as we prepare to negotiate a new collective agreement in the coming months.

Our CUPE local is made up of 375 part-time Individual Study Tutors, Academic Experts and Markers. We are unique in so many ways, including being the only academic CUPE local in the province. Unfortunately, it is becoming harder to do our jobs. As you know, the provincial government has set its sights on major public sector cuts, including post-secondary education in the province.

We have joined forces with the coalition at Stop PSE Cuts to build a province-wide campaign to stop the cuts. We've hosted town halls, built grassroots regional organizing networks, held rallies, and distributed thousands of lawn signs to every corner of the province. The Alberta Federation of Labour and CUPE Alberta have also run major campaigns to stop Kenney's cuts.

However, we know there is so much more to do. The provincial cuts have not stopped. They are now adversely affecting every postsecondary institution across our province.

Athabasca University is no different. Management is under considerable pressure to cut wages, benefits, and working conditions wherever they can. And this includes us: Our [collective agreement](#) expired in 2019 and requires renewal. We have identified a number of priorities we will fight for at the bargaining table that are covered in our petition.

We've heard the provincial government has issued orders to employers to either cut wages and contract language or lock public sector workers out of the workplace. For example, support staff at Norquest College are facing just such a challenge. There, the employer is demanding a wage rollback of 3% in the first year of the contract and 0% for the second and third year. Norquest is also seeking other serious contract rollbacks.

We also know that the Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA) has been [struggling](#) in its negotiations with AU management and has sent out messages warning of a possible strike or lockout. Given these trends, we have many good reasons to believe we will be affected as we enter bargaining in the fall.

We must fight back. There is hope.

With your support, we will fight back to protect our jobs and working conditions. We are the backbone of AU. In the coming weeks and months, we will be asking for your involvement and engagement.

Today, we're asking for each member to sign our petition calling for a fair contract from the employer. We will present the petition to the Board of Governors and show we demand a fair contract. We would like 100% of our members to sign the petition and send a clear message to the employer that we are united and have the resolve to negotiate. There is strength in numbers and our efforts for a fair contract will be far more effective if we all work together at this critical time. Please fill out the petition today.



But this is just a start.

We need every member to contribute their voices, passions and energy in the process of negotiating a new collective agreement. We are not powerless when we work together. In fact, we are powerful as critical front-line workers at AU. We need to mobilize the many resources we have to fight for a fair contract now.

Until next time,
Glynnis

You can also sign up today to volunteer by emailing us at cupe3911@gmail.com. We also invite all members to attend upcoming town halls and other meetings designed to solicit your input and show our resolve to renew our collective agreement. Please fill out the petition today by clicking on the link below:

[I Support a Fair Collective Agreement!](#)

Is Unconscious Bias Training an Unconscious Bias?

by Dougal MacDonald, Communications Officer

Athabasca University recently announced its support for employees undergoing what is called “unconscious bias training” (UBT). What is unconscious bias? In a nutshell, unconscious bias refers to those deep-seated prejudices that many people may absorb due to living in deeply unequal societies. Such prejudices can influence important decisions of various kinds, e.g. who gets hired for a position, how a course is structured, etc. UBT is alleged to combat these prejudices.

The strange thing is that when one looks at academic research on UBT, the overwhelming conclusion of existing studies is that while UBT may make (some) people more aware of their biases to some degree, that increased awareness seldom translates into meaningful and permanent changes in behaviour. In fact, this very point was raised by AU professor Dr. Rory McGreal in a recent email sent out to all employees on the AU server:

*“I was very pleased to see the announcement of the beginning of the competition for CRCs (Note: Canada Research Chairs), which arrived today. However, my excitement became concern when I read this limitation on the committee membership: “All members **will have received unconscious bias training** and been provided with the CRC EDI (Note: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion) Action Plan. Rankings will be established using the same selection criteria established for the CRC review adjudication committees.*

Is it the intention of AU to limit the adjudication of CRCs to those who take this controversial training? There is a preponderance of evidence showing that unconscious bias training has little or no effect on reducing bigotry or racism. Some evidence even shows that it can cause serious harm to some minorities and be otherwise counter-productive. So, it is not surprising that many faculty will not wish to participate.

Many, AU academics, including minorities who strongly support EDI do not agree with unconscious bias training. As a UNESCO chair, I am a member of the UNESCO working group on EDI and have been involved for many years supporting EDI initiatives. I accept the considerable evidence on the lack of efficacy of UB Training and do not consider, the lack of such training to be a reason for exclusion from this adjudication process. (Nor do I support the exclusion of those who support UB Training.)”

Obviously, there is nothing in Dr. McGreal’s comments (or in this article) opposing AU’s stated commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI). What is at issue is how to go about effectively implementing an EDI policy, i.e., whether UBT is a way forward for EDI. Supporting Dr. McGreal’s reservations about using UBT, here is a relevant quotation from a comprehensive study carried out by the UK’s Equality and Human Rights Commission (Note 1):

“Overall, our evaluation of rigorous studies on the effectiveness of UBT indicates a mixed picture and a need for further research to determine the effectiveness of unconscious bias training. We found that:

- *UBT is effective for awareness raising by using an IAT (Note: Implicit Association Test) (followed by a debrief) or more advanced training designs such as interactive*

workshops. How effective is unconscious bias training? An assessment of the evidence
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- *UBT can be effective for reducing implicit bias, but it is unlikely to eliminate it.*
- *UBT interventions are not generally designed to reduce explicit bias and those that do aim to do so have yielded mixed results.*
- *Using the IAT and educating participants on unconscious bias theory is likely to increase awareness of and reduce implicit bias.*
- *The evidence for UBT's ability effectively to change behaviour is limited. Most of the evidence reviewed did not use valid measures of behaviour change.*
- *There is potential for back-firing effects when UBT participants are exposed to information that suggests stereotypes and biases are unchangeable.*
- *Evidence from the perspective of the subjects of bias, such as those with protected characteristics, is limited. This evidence could provide additional information on potential back-firing effects.” (Atewologun, D., Cornish, T., & Tresh, F. [2018, March]).*

I emphasize the findings of the above and other academic studies here because in the context of a university, such findings should be the bottom line when it comes to informing decision-making. Decision-making should be evidence based. Certainly, it would be questionable that important matters should be decided simply based on pragmatic considerations such as jumping on the latest bandwagon, “fiscal restraint”, or covering apparent legal obligations.

So, at present it looks the available evidence strongly suggests that the whole question of UBT needs to be re-evaluated, beginning at square one, before it is mandated for AU employees in any context or for any reason. This should begin with a comprehensive review of the academic studies that have investigated it, followed by evidence-based decision-making as to how to go forward.



In response to my request, Dr. McGreal very kindly sent me a list of 14 academic studies relevant to the above issue, 3 meta-analyses and 11 standalone studies. The list is provided below in the spirit of actually providing evidence from some academic studies that could help everyone who works at AU, and not just upper administration, evaluate the efficacy of UBT.

Metanalyses of UBT

Forscher, P., Lai, C., Axt, J., Ebersole, C., Herman, M., Devine, P., & Nosek, B. (2019, August 9). A meta-analysis of procedures to change implicit measures. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 117(3), 552 - 559. <https://doi.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fpspa0000160>

Kalinoski, Z. T., Steele-Johnson, D., Peyton, E. J., Leas, K. A., Steinke, J., & Bowling, N. A. (2012, November 5). A meta-analytic evaluation of diversity training outcomes. <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1002/job.1839>

Oswald, F. L., Mitchell, G., Blanton, H., Jaccard, J., & Tetlock, P. E. (2013). Predicting ethnic and racial discrimination: a meta-analysis of IAT criterion studies., 105(2), 171-192. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 105(2), 171 - 192. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23773046/>

Other UBT Studies

Atewologun, D., Cornish, T., & Tresh, F. (2018, March). *Unconscious bias training: An assessment of the evidence for effectiveness*. Equality and Human Rights Commission. <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/sites/default/files/research-report-113-unconscious-bias-training-an-assessment-of-the-evidence-for-effectiveness-pdf.pdf>

Blanton, H., Jaccard, J., Klick, J., Mellers, B., Mitchell, G., & Tetlock, P. E. (2009). Strong claims and weak evidence: Reassessing the predictive validity of the IAT., 94, 567–589. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94(3), 567 - 589. <https://psycnet.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fa0014665>

Forscher, P., Lai, C., Axt, J., Ebersole, C., Herman, M., Devine, P., & Nosek, B. (2019, August 9). A meta-analysis of procedures to change implicit measures. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 117(3), 552 - 559. <https://doi.apa.org/doiLanding?doi=10.1037%2Fpspa0000160>

Forscher, P. S., & Devine, P. G. (2017, May 17). Knowledge-based interventions are more likely to reduce legal disparities than are implicit bias interventions. In S. E. Redfield & A. B. Association (Eds.), *Enhancing Justice: Reducing Bias*. American Bar Association. <https://www.americanbar.org/products/inv/book/279580409/>

Gawronski, B. (2019, June 10). Six Lessons for a Cogent Science of Implicit Bias and Its Criticism. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 14(4), 574 - 595. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1745691619826015>

Goldhill, O. (2017, December 3). The world is relying on a flawed psychological test to fight racism. *Quartz*. <https://qz.com/1144504/the-world-is-relying-on-a-flawed-psychological-test-to-fight-racism/>

Kalev, A., Dobbin, F., & Kelly, E. (2006, August 1). Best Practices or Best Guesses? Assessing the Efficacy of Corporate Affirmative Action and Diversity Policies. *American Sociological Review*, 71(4), 589 - 617. <https://doi.org/10.1177/000312240607100404>

Liesch, K. (2020, July 15). Don't Do Unconscious Bias Training. *Tidal Equality*. <https://www.tidalequality.com/blog/dont-do-unconscious-bias-training>

Noon, M. (2017). Pointless Diversity Training: Unconscious Bias, New Racism and Agency. *Work, Employment and Society*, 32(1), 198 - 209. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0950017017719841>

Oswald, F. L., Mitchell, G., Blanton, H., Jaccard, J., & Tetlock, P. E. (2013). Predicting ethnic and racial discrimination: a meta-analysis of IAT criterion studies., 105(2), 171-192. *Journal of personality and social psychology*, 105(2), 171 - 192. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23773046/>

Payne, B. K., & Vuletich, H. A. (2017). Policy Insights from Advances in Implicit Bias Research. *Policy Insights from the Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, 5(1), 49 - 56. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/2372732217746190?journalCode=bbsa>

Academic Research: Doves in the Time of Cold War Era

by Dougal MacDonald, Communications Officer

The Cold War is generally said to have begun shortly after the end of the Second World War. Reference is often made to Winston Churchill's "Iron Curtain" speech in Missouri on March 5, 1946 (Note: "Iron Curtain" was a term coined by Joseph Goebbels.) The Cold War was marked by fear and suspicion, mainly spread by the U.S. government and the monopoly media, who falsely claimed that a Soviet nuclear attack on North America was imminent. Some of us remember school air raid fire drills in the 1950s when we crawled under our desks as "protection" against a nuclear attack. Later we read about the U.S. government blacklisting progressives such as Paul Robeson, Arthur Miller, and Charlie Chaplin.

The Cold War was felt as much in Canada as abroad. There were communist "witch hunts" throughout Canadian government and society, including trade unions. Sam Carr, national organizer for the Labour

Progressive Party, was jailed for seven years.

Elected MP and trade union organizer Fred Rose was jailed for 4.5 years. McGill University chemistry professor Raymond Boyer was sentenced to two years in prison. LGBTQ

individuals, considered susceptible to blackmail, were purged from the federal public service and the armed forces. In 1957, Canadian diplomat Herbert Norman committed suicide under mysterious circumstances after almost a decade of accusations by American spy agencies.

The Cold War is said to have ended in 1991 when the Soviet Union dissolved itself into



Canadian MP Fred Rose

its constituent republics. However, it would appear that, as Mark Twain once said, "Rumours of my demise are greatly exaggerated."

Currently a new Cold War is up and running, but this time focusing on the People's Republic of China (PRC). In May 2021, the Alberta Government asked for information from AU and Alberta's other three research universities about formal partnerships that researchers have with entities in the PRC. The Alberta government also asked that those universities pause pursuit of any new or renewed partnerships with the Chinese government.

On July 12, 2021, the Trudeau government "released new National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships, developed in collaboration with the Government of Canada-universities working group. The new guidelines will integrate national security considerations into the development, evaluation and funding of research partnerships... While remaining committed to preserving a collaborative and open approach to science and discovery, the Government of Canada is taking action to protect Canadian research and intellectual property against foreign interference, espionage and theft."

There is no specific mention of the PRC in the federal announcement or in the guidelines. However, recent events like the firing of two research scientists of Chinese origin from the National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg in 2019, as well as statements by individuals like Richard Fadden, former head of CSIS, leave no doubt as to the target. Fadden recently claimed that China and Russia are "prepared to use virtually any means to attain their goals" (*HuffPost*, November 28, 2019). Jumping on the bandwagon on May 24, Alberta's Minister of Advanced Education stated: "I am deeply concerned about the potential theft of Canadian intellectual property and further concerned that research partnerships with the People's Republic

of China may be used by Chinese military and intelligence agencies”.

So, what is the upshot for AU? Well, as pointed out in the July 19, 2021, AU listserv announcement from VP Andrew Perrin, there will be additional restrictions on what research may be undertaken and with whom, as well as additional paperwork. Certainly, academics want their research to be useful to society and not harmful. The problem lies in how this might be defined. As is well-known, much Canadian university research serves private corporations, often foreign-owned, as well as the U.S. military. The pattern is clear: public money funds the research, which if useful is turned over to the corporate sector and/or the military for a song.

For example, from 1967 to the late 1980s the US Air Force and then the Canadian Department of Defence gave grants and contracts for research

in McGill’s department of mechanical engineering related to development of fuel-air and thermobaric explosives (which produce prolonged explosions). This research continues at McGill in collaboration with the US military. A case could be made that McGill’s research threatens our national security because it serves the world’s most aggressive military, notorious for dragging Canada into its foreign wars.

However, it would be naïve to assume that any federal or provincial government will end the McGill research program, now in its 54th year. Other similar programs serving U.S. corporate and military interests that are ongoing at other Canadian universities will also remain untouched. It would seem that our governments at both levels would much rather kowtow to the U.S. and demonize China instead of objectively funding and supporting academic research that places the peaceful interests of the Canadian people as their number one priority.

NASA Statement on Custodial Outsourcing: July 13, 2021

(University of Alberta Non-Academic Staff Association)

Earlier this morning, Facilities and Operations managers held meetings with all University of Alberta building service workers at the North and Augustana campuses to inform them that President Bill Flanagan and the rest of the President’s Executive Committee (PEC) has made the decision to outsource all remaining university custodial operations to the private contractor Bee-Clean this fall. Over 60 employees will be affected by this decision.

As with many of the shortsighted moves university leadership has made over the last two years, the decision to fully outsource custodial services has been justified by “the imperative to reduce operational spending” in response to the \$170 million cut in provincial funding the University of Alberta has had to absorb since October 2019.

While NASA is well aware of the bleak financial realities the university is facing as a result of the provincial government’s cuts, we are appalled that university leadership has made the decision to address this crisis by sacrificing some of its lowest-paid and most vulnerable workers, who are overwhelmingly women of colour and new Canadians. A number of these workers have been employed at the university since the late 1980s and early 1990s and have committed a significant part of their working lives to the university community.

Of course, the critical work of keeping our campuses safe and clean will still need to be done, but the largely-invisible people who do this work will simply be paid far less. While NASA is not informed about the salaries of outsourced staff, the initial information provided to NASA by the university indicates outsourced custodial staff will “cost” the university just 54% compared to current in-house university cleaning staff—on average just over \$28,000 per person annually. Since this figure presumably includes a

profit margin for Bee-Clean, the people doing these jobs will receive significantly less in pay and benefits for the same work NASA's members performed.

This decision—which the university says will save \$400,000 in the first year and \$2.6 million annually after that—seems all the more insulting given that the university reported a \$35 million operating surplus for the 2020-21 fiscal year. The university's own comparison also shows that the U of A already has the second-lowest custodial cost per square foot compared to other U15 institutions, meaning these workers are being made to pay the price for past university administrations allowing the size of the campuses to sprawl well beyond the U of A's peer institutions. The decision also stands in stark contrast to the hiring of a new level of upper administration as the new “college model” is implemented as well as the new hires of middle management due to the SET initiative.

While this heartless decision would be an insult to the hard work of these staff members at any time, it is especially egregious that the university will be outsourcing these staff members just as the university emerges from the tumult of the COVID-19 pandemic and is welcoming back tens of thousands of students, faculty, and staff to our campuses. Rather than making the necessary investment to ensure a clean, safe, and healthy campus environment, university leadership continues to cut custodial services to what it admits is a “barely acceptable level.” This decision to outsource all remaining university custodial staff follows the April 2020 decision to downgrade the university's custodial standards to the level of “moderate dinginess” on the APPA scale (level 4 to be specific)—the second-lowest standard, with only the option of “unkempt neglect” available to realize further cost reductions.

While the university has been slowly moving to increase its level of contracted custodial services since 2000, this is the first-time university staff have been laid off—all previous outsourcing was accomplished through attrition or voluntary severance agreements. In the past, technical and sensitive facilities such as research labs were intentionally kept in-house due to concerns about contractors operating in sensitive research spaces. Why this long-standing issue is seemingly no longer a concern is unclear. NASA was able to negotiate voluntary departures for some custodial staff in March, and will be working with the impacted members over the coming months to ensure they receive the severance owed to them for their years of commitment and service to the university.

Finally, NASA has also been extremely frustrated with the failure of the administration to follow its own well-defined procedure for making decisions regarding outsourcing, which includes providing the campus unions with “sufficient information to understand all of the business considerations relating to the possible outsourcing” prior to the final decision being made. Despite numerous requests for information, NASA still has not seen or received the university's business plan—which includes the business case for this round of outsourcing, a draft of the request for proposals, a plan to address HR impacts, and how the university will evaluate whether the outsourcing has been effective—despite the fact that the final decision to outsource has been made by PEC. This failure of university leadership to follow its own policies to meaningfully involve and consult with campus unions and other impacted constituencies is, unfortunately, becoming a consistent pattern.

On June 29, NASA President Jillian Pratt wrote to President Flanagan and other members of PEC (President's Executive Committee) with a request to delay and revisit the decision until such time as the university's procedures regarding information disclosure and consultation were met. We received a response from VP (Facilities and Operations) Andrew Sharman on July 9 indicating the university would be proceeding with the outsourcing and justifying PEC's actions to date. We feel this response and decision is inadequate and are in the process of responding.



UNA Strongly Opposes UCP Attempts to Force Salary and Other Rollbacks

The United Nurses of Alberta (UNA) Negotiating Committee met recently with Employers participating in "Provincial Negotiations" which includes Alberta Health Services (AHS), Covenant Health, Lamont Health Care Centre, and Bethany Group (Camrose).

The employers now want to add a 3% salary rollback to other rollbacks, such as the elimination of semi-annual lump sum payments, reduced shift and weekend premiums, etc. This represents at least a 5% reduction in overall compensation. UNA, which represents 30,000 nurses in Alberta, strongly opposes all these rollbacks. (It has become clear that the 3% salary rollback is coming straight from the UCP; it has already been proposed by several Alberta universities and colleges.)



Finance Minister Travis Toews claims rollbacks are necessary because Alberta nurses make 5.6% more than nurses in other provinces and because of the need to bring the province's finances in line with "fiscal reality". But the numbers cited by Toews

are not supported by data from the Canadian Job Bank, which says Alberta nurses make an average of \$44.90 an hour, putting them in the middle of the pack nationwide. Further, Alberta MLA's are the highest paid in Canada at \$120,936 per year. Will the UCP be cutting their MLA salaries to the PEI level of \$74,394 as a recognition of the same "fiscal reality"?

Toews also fails to acknowledge that we should actually be proud if Alberta's nurses are the best-paid in the country. And, of course, he neglects to mention that many alleged fiscal problems could be solved by his government

increasing funding to health care. Instead, the UCP throws away \$1.3 billion of our money on the Trans Canada Pipeline that will never be built and hands over almost another \$1 billion to oilsands giant CNRL and various other Calgary investors as part of the recent "upgrader deal" announced by Minister of Energy Sonya Savage.

Said UNA president Heather Smith: "The responses we've had from members feels like being kicked in the gut. (They are asking) When is the strike vote? Many members are saying today, 'Let's get on with it. Let's speed up the process. And let's get to our ability to legally exercise our right to strike.' There's certainly some who would suggest that legal or not, we should do it now. But we have our own internal steps in terms of how a strike is authorized by our members."

UNA and the employers are scheduled to meet again. More details will be provided.

AHS Wants to Slash GSS Workers' Wagers by 4%

(AUPE media release)

EDMONTON—Alberta Health Services (AHS) has informed the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE) that it intends to slash General Support Services (GSS) workers' wages by 4 per cent.

AHS shared this news with the AUPE AHS GSS bargaining team today (July 15) as negotiations restarted after being put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic. This comes after AHS initially entered bargaining with a proposed 1 per cent wage cut in February 2020. AHS is proposing the 4 per cent cut apply immediately after ratifying the new agreement, followed by three years of zero per cent increases.

"It is indecent and obscene," says AUPE Vice-President Susan Slade. "Everyone knows Premier Kenney and Health Minister Shandro have no respect for front-line health care workers, even after everything they've done for

us during the pandemic, and here we see AHS following their orders to add insult to injury.

“How dare they attack front-line health care workers who are already stressed and beaten down because of the pandemic.”

AHS GSS workers are often the lowest paid AHS employees, and many have to work multiple jobs because of AHS frequently offering part-time and casual work. These AUPE members work in cleaning and environmental services, food services, laundry, lab work, protective services, supply chain and purchasing, long-term care, and more.

“It seems AHS wasn’t content attacking registered nurses with their own proposed wage cut,” says Slade. “Now they’re going after the lowest paid and most precariously employed workers in the entire Alberta health care team.”

Slade went on to say that these are the same 11,000 workers who Minister Shandro has

shamelessly threatened to fire as part of his UCP government’s privatization schemes.

“What AHS considers job security is a joke,” she says. “Not only does Shandro and AHS want to roll back these hard-working health care heroes’ wages, but they also want to fire approximately one third of them anyway.

“The only way to stop them is to fight back. We’re going to give our all to protect AUPE members and all the Albertans who rely on the services they provide.”



Local 146 Boilermakers Locked Out for Over a Year Now

(International Brotherhood of Boilermakers of Canada)

Thirty Boilermakers from Local 146 (Edmonton, Alberta) have now been locked out of their jobs at CESSCO Fabrication and Engineering Ltd., 7310 99 St., since June 28, 2020. Since then, workers have stood their ground on the picket line every day from 5:30 a.m. to 6 p.m., greeting the scabs CESSCO busses in to do their jobs, in all manner of weather, including bitter temperatures that dipped below minus 29C in February. Workers, their families, fellow-workers, political activists, and members of the community have participated in picketing daily since the lock out began.

Boilermakers are going without paychecks and other benefits after the company served up “last, best and final” contract demands that reduce wages and pension contributions and gut critical seniority language. Boilermakers had been bargaining with the company for over two and a half years and had not seen increases in wages or benefits in over five years. They had hoped to continue bargaining until a satisfactory compromise could be reached, but CESSCO locked them out.

CESSCO is a subsidiary of Can-Erector, a Toronto-based company with an annual revenue of \$US20 million, owned by the wealthy Hawkins family. Amanda Hawkins is the current CEO.

“We’d rather keep working and honor our commitments while we continue the bargaining process with CESSCO,” said L-146 steward Jeff Burns. “We’re just asking for fair wages for an honest day of work. We’ve been locked out because of corporate greed, pure and simple.”



The company presented what it claimed was its last, best and final contract demands on June 25, 2020, along with a threat to lock out workers. The CESSCO contract called for a 10% wage decrease, as well as decreases in pension contributions. Additionally, it removed seniority language that sets specific rules for worker layoffs—language that protects workers against favoritism or bias and cementing clear practices based on seniority.

CUPE 3911 Co-Chair Glynnis Lieb joined the June 28, 2021 rally held to mark the one-year anniversary of the CESSCO lockout. *Glynnis tweeted:* “I JOINED DAY 365 OF THE CESSCO LOCKOUT AND OTHERS OF MY @CUPEAB SIBLINGS. THIS IS A SHAMEFUL WAY TO TREAT WORKERS. I WAS HEARTENED TO SEE SO MANY OTHER UNIONS & POLITICAL FIGURES OUT TODAY. LET’S PUT REAL PRESSURE ON THIS EMPLOYER.”

Local 146 has set up a link for contributions to support the locked-out workers: <https://boilermakers.ca/please-support-our-locked-out-boilermakers-from-cessco-2/>

New Brunswick CUPE Workers Give Government 100 days to Negotiate Collective Agreements with Wages Acceptable to Themselves *(CUPE, New Brunswick)*

At a press conference held on May 28, the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) New Brunswick put the provincial government on notice that it had 100 days to settle collective agreements with many CUPE locals or face job action by the workers. Nearly 30 have now passed. Close to 22,000 of the 28,000 CUPE New Brunswick members are still trying to negotiate labour contracts with wages workers deem acceptable. For 8,580 workers negotiations are deadlocked and more than 13,280 are headed for conciliation in the next two months. The union is giving Premier Blaine Higgs until Labour Day in September to meet the workers' demands to fix recruitment and retention issues and offer wages that workers find acceptable.

"If the Premier and his cabinet refuse to act in a reasonable and responsible way, once these 100 days have passed, CUPE members will have to mount a province-wide coordinated action. The Premier is forcing job action on the citizens of New Brunswick," said CUPE New Brunswick President Steve Drost. "This ultimatum, as far as we are concerned, is the most responsible way to get this government to act," Drost added. "By

September, most residents will already be vaccinated. A hundred days is more than generous, considering that most of these workers have been waiting up to four years to get a contract."

To add insult to injury, last year, on December 11, the Higgs government announced that they were going to give all public sector workers a zero increase for the year that they worked through the pandemic. Drost made the point that the provincial government should not make the mistake of thinking that essential workers who went all out to fight COVID-19 for the people of New Brunswick will not unite and defend their rights and dignity through coordinated job actions.



What Does Real Accountability Look Like?

(Editor's transcription of CTV Interview with Dr. Pam Palmater on "Your Morning", July 7, 2021)

CTV: Prime Minister Trudeau says his government is committed to searching all of Canada's former residential schools for burial sites. Indigenous leaders say in order for true reconciliation there needs to be more than promises there needs to be accountability. With us today is Pam Palmater, Chair of Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University. Great to speak to you this morning Pam. When we talk about justice and accountability for Canada's residential school system, who needs to be held accountable and accountable for what? Is it the schools, is it the deaths of these children? What are we talking about?

Pam: Well, we're talking about everything. We're talking about accountability for the churches, and staff that were in those schools, the federal government, and now the provincial governments in terms of who had controlling minds about what was happening in those schools? We know it was the churches and the federal government. Who had access to documentation that would allow us to identify the rest of the perpetrators? The federal government has identified about 5300 who haven't been brought to justice. Who has the rest of the documents? We know it was the churches and the government. And then also you know, identifying, locating the rest of the unmarked graves, identifying who they were, what was their cause of death. So that we can more easily identify them and return them to their families and bring them home. And that's just Part One related to unmarked burials. And what about justice? What about ending the exact same policies that happened during residential schools right now. Like stealing children from our families and communities and putting them in foster care. The failure to address Murdered and Missing. The failure to decarcerate all our people that are in prison, most of whom either came from residential schools or foster care. So that the justice part needs to be done. And then we need to do reparations. How do you properly compensate people for all the horrific acts of violence that hurt them.

CTV: And what can the government or the Catholic Church do right now that would be seen by indigenous communities as meaningful?

Pam: Well, this week they have the power to say "We're not going to fight any residential school survivor or any First Nation in Court we're going to release every single document, even remotely related to residential schools, to the children who passed away, and of course the perpetrators." And, the second thing they could do, the federal government, is to stop fighting the residential school survivors in Court, like the Ste. Anne survivors. Stop fighting First Nations kids in foster care in Court, and actually comply with their own Court orders to compensate these children. And I would add also, stop fighting First Nations women and children who they excluded from their communities under the Indian Act. And they have been told by numerous courts that this is sex discrimination and they need to remedy it and remedy it right away.

CTV: Pam just before you go, I want to ask you about something that came out yesterday, that is the appointment of Mary Simon as the new Governor-General from Canada. I want to know is this seen as a step forward for reconciliation in some indigenous communities? And is this position even recognized by some indigenous communities.

Pam: Well I think you're going to have a mixed reaction there. It's going to depend on what kind of Treaty you have. If you have a treaty, how you see this role. I think that first and foremost Mary Simon is a phenomenal Inuk woman. She has been a



leader advocating for Inuit all over Canada and of course internationally. So, her working on anything related to the government is a positive step. However, in terms of the position itself, so aside from whoever is appointed, it really has very little power. It's supposed to represent the queen but that role hasn't taken up an active role in addressing and implementing treaties, especially the historic treaties which were signed with Her Majesty overseas and so I think you're going to have First Nations who really value that role because it does represent the Crown and then you're going to have First Nations who say, it doesn't have any power, they don't do anything to help us First Nations so it's just another empty, symbolic position instead of doing real work at reconciliation. So, you'll find views on both sides at this point.

CTV: Pam, always great to have you on "Your Morning". Take care.

(Note: Dr. Pam Palmater was the keynote speaker for COCAL XII [Conference on Contingent Academic Labour] which was organized by CUPE 3911 and held very successfully at the University of Alberta in August, 2016.)

Random Thoughts:

Workers across Canada could not help but notice that only a week after he stepped down as president of the Canadian Labour Congress, Hassan Youseff accepted Justin Trudeau's offer of a seat in the federal Senate. This is rather interesting as Trudeau's anti-labour bent is well-known, e.g., legislating the striking postal workers back to work in November 2018 and legislating the striking Montreal dock workers back to work in April 2021. So, just as we all know that corporate executives and government bureaucrats move back and forth from corporations to government and vice versa, it looks like former union leaders are doing the same. From head of the CLC to a Liberal Party Senate seat. Was it some kind of reward and if so, what for? And will Youseff become the official "voice of labour" emanating from the Liberal Party? Finally, let us see how the CLC's future unfolds under the guidance of the promising new leadership team of Bea Bruske, Siobhan Vipond, and Lily Chang which has replaced him.



CUPE 3911 Monthly Grievance Summary Report

By Barret Weber, Grievance Officer

A grievance results from a violation of the Collective Agreement, Human Rights, Occupational Health and Safety Act, Labour Relations Act, or other University policies. If you feel there has been a dispute or difference of opinion or interpretation between yourself and the employer you should contact your administrator and/or your executive immediately. If the matter cannot be resolved informally then a grievance can be filed.

There are three types of grievances: individual, group, and policy.

- An individual grievance is a complaint that an action by the employer has violated the rights of an individual as set out in the Collective Agreement, law or by some unfair practice. E.g., discipline, demotion, timesheets etc.
- A group grievance is a complaint by a group of individuals all affected the same way, e.g., all employees in a particular department.
- A policy grievance is a complaint by the Union that an action or failure or refusal to act by the employer is a violation of the Collective Agreement that could affect all members covered by the agreement.

Grievance Committee Activity Report for June 2021:

CUPE 3911 is working hard on a number of individual, group and policy grievances on behalf of members. Here is a brief summary of the recent activity. Note that activity does not mean that previously listed grievances were not active but just that they were not active this month. Many of these activities were carried out in collaboration with our CUPE National Representative

- Received employer Step 2 response re:iPhone consultation grievance
- Especially busy month; supported numerous members on understanding their rights and contract challenges, especially around workload, performance appraisals, discipline, and accessing employee files this month
- Worked on research related to recent bargaining update to members
- The union currently has 1 active grievance, 5 grievances going to arbitration, and several areas of discussion with the employer

Announcements

CUPE 3911 Monthly General Meeting. September 25, 2021

Municipal Elections, Alberta. October 18, 2021. Co-chair Glynnis Lieb is running in Ward Ipiihkoohkanipiaohsi

CUPE 3911 Website. We have a shiny new CUPE 3911 website which we urge all our members to visit and use. The URL is CUPE3911.ca



Editorial Policy: The Outsider

The Outsider is the voice of CUPE 3911. It is our vehicle for communicating with our members, on a regular (monthly) basis, about the issues that concern and confront us as workers. The Outsider is also the voice of our members. We encourage and welcome relevant contributions from members. While contributions are welcome, they need to contribute positively to the welfare of our union local and our members. They also need to contribute positively to the advancement of public post-secondary education in Alberta. We will not accept or print attacks on any of our members or our union leadership/executive. We also reserve the right to reply to any submissions that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of CUPE 3911 and its policies. Please direct all articles, letters, comments, and ideas to our administrator.