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CUPE 3911 GRIEVANCE
REPORT

ATTEND THE CUPE 3911 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 26, 2022

Our next general meeting, open to all members, will be held on Saturday, February 26, at 930 AM. The meeting will be conducted remotely via ZOOM. Details of how to connect will be sent out.

UPDATE: CUPE 3911 COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REPORT BY GLYNNIS LIEB, CO-CHAIR

The bargaining committee met twice with the employer during the month of January for a total of seven bargaining days so far. We have two more bargaining dates scheduled in February.

Thus far, we have been negotiating articles that both sides see as being the least contentious. We have signed off on approximately eight articles so far. Most of the proposals that we have discussed to this point have been about setting intentions for the culture and environment in which we work, such as increasing equity among members of our bargaining unit and between bargaining units.

We are now beginning to enter into negotiations about articles that involve more substantive as opposed to philosophical changes. We anticipate some challenging conversations ahead. We have been meeting regularly with representatives from the other AU bargaining units to ensure that we understand each other's experiences and where we are at in our own bargaining processes. We are being very intentional about supporting each other.



We have also been closely watching collective bargaining developments in other post-secondary institutions. We actively supported the Concordia University (Edmonton) Faculty Association when they took a job action at the beginning of January. We are now looking to the University of Lethbridge as they are the next potential group to walk off the job. We along with other institutions are setting our intentions to support each other and demonstrate that we are all in this together and will fight together for better working and learning conditions in Alberta.

Kind regards, Glynnis Lieb PhD

CUEFA STRIKE AT CONCORDIA SETTLED

MEDIA RELEASE FROM CUEFA: JANUARY 15, 2022 2:00 PM

(Edmonton, January 15)—The Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association (CUEFA) today ratified the tentative agreement it reached with university administration, ending a landmark strike in Alberta's union history. *The agreement opens the door for classes to start on Wednesday January 19th, 2022. An official announcement is expected to follow from CUE administration.* 89% of the membership (73 of 82 members) voted in favour of ratification. **“This new agreement is a win for faculty, students and the community because it will enable the University to recruit and retain excellent faculty and lays the foundation for a stronger learning environment,”** said CUEFA President, Glynis Price. “Collective action is what made it possible, and CUEFA is grateful to the students, parents, other associations and allies across Canada who rallied in support of this strike.”

CUEFA members went on strike on January 4, making history as the first Alberta faculty association to take job action. They were joined on the picket line by dozens of students, community allies and members from other faculty associations. Over 1350 individuals and organizations from across Canada sent messages to the university administration to put the interests of “students and staff before profit,” and a student-run petition gained more than 500 signatories supporting the faculty.

As CUE marks its hundredth anniversary, CUEFA asserts this Collective Agreement looks to the future. “Our vision for the future is a respectful and accountable workplace, a vibrant centre of learning,” said Price. “We are proud that the placards on the picket line read ‘We are all CUE’ because each and every one of us is part of the community, and we will keep working hard so that our sessional colleagues and non-academic staff also realize better working conditions.”

Salary gains will begin the process of bringing CUE faculty and academic service officers into line with other institutions; CUE faculty salaries rank 68 th of 70 Canadian universities. This new agreement also improves working conditions for CUEFA members by moving towards manageable workloads for professors, laboratory instructors, librarians, and field placement coordinators. The agreement also restores job security to members and preserves their ownership of their intellectual property.

CUEFA represents the interests of all probationary and permanent faculty members, professional librarians, laboratory instructors, and field placement coordinators.

For more information, please contact: Glynis Price, cueassociation@gmail.com



MILITANT STRIKE AT CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY

BY DOUGAL MACDONALD

Striking Concordia University (Edmonton) faculty and their many allies have continued daily pickets of the university despite the almost minus 40

temperatures. In addition to the approximately 80 members of the Concordia University (Edmonton) Faculty Association (CUEFA) who called the strike,

members of CUPE 3911, Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), Athabasca University Faculty Association (AUFA), the Association of the Academic Staff of the University of Alberta (AASUA), Non-Academic Staff Association, Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT), Alberta Federation of Labour, CUPW, Teamsters, Ironworkers, teachers, nurses, and many others are walking the picket line and sending messages of solidarity and support.

CUEFA is the first faculty strike in Alberta's history, and the first strike in the post-secondary sector in the last 2 ½ years. The strike began January 4, 2022, after many months of unsuccessful bargaining with the recalcitrant employer. CUEFA President Glynis Price stated in a January 8 interview: "One of the biggest issues for our members was in fact workload. Our faculty members have one of the highest workloads in the country, teaching 4 courses a term. We were able to negotiate a decrease in teaching load with increased research expectations." Price added that other important issues still outstanding include job security, intellectual property rights, and faculty salaries that are the lowest in Canada. She also mentioned the need to organize and protect the sessionals.

The status of the over 100 sessional instructors who teach on contract and who are not members of any labour organization is of grave concern. As they are not CUEFA members, they receive no strike pay even though they have been locked out by the university to try to use them as a wedge against the full-time faculty. Further complicating the situation is that Concordia is a "private" university, which means there is no requirement for employees to be organized. Attempts have been made to organize that have been undermined by the administration's underhanded tactics. Besides being precarious employees with no job security, sessionals are paid at a low rate compared to at other universities. They receive approximately \$5900 per course, while sessionals at University of Alberta with equivalent qualifications, for example, are paid over \$9000 per course.

The CUEFA strike is the first strike by post-secondary faculty under Alberta's Bill 4, introduced

in March 2016, which finally "gave" Alberta's post-secondary faculty the legal right to strike. Prior to that, faculty fell under either the Post-Secondary Learning Act (PSLA) or the Public Services Employee Relations Act (PSERA) both of which made strikes illegal. But on April 2, 2015, Alberta Judge Denis Thomas ruled that the no-strike clauses violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and gave the provincial government until April 1, 2016 to rewrite the offending sections so that strikes were legal. His ruling followed a January 30, 2015 ruling by the Supreme Court of Canada in Saskatchewan which struck down a provincial anti-labour law that prevented public sector workers from striking on the grounds that the law was unconstitutional. In fact, public-sector workers in Alberta have not had the legal right to strike since Tory premier Peter Lougheed eliminated it by legislating PSERA, 38 years ago.

As expected one of the feeble arguments put forward by the employer to keep faculty salaries low is that "there is no money". However, the facts directly contradict this claim. Enrolment has increased about 50% in the last five years alone. Tuition has also gone up for students. So, the university has been in the black for a number of years, including a surplus of \$11.5 million in the last year during the pandemic. To add insult to injury, just as collective bargaining began the university spent \$1.75 million to buy a nearby mansion. The mansion is a heritage property and requires upkeep and tax payments. The area is zoned residential so that would disallow large parties and conferences, not to mention the rooms are tiny. No credible reason for the mansion's purchase has been provided.

In the broader context of post-secondary education in Alberta, the Concordia strike fits with a number of other provincial faculty associations now going into bargaining, being in mediation, and potentially getting into a strike position. As Price pointed out in her interview: "There has been a slow and steady attempt to dismantle our postsecondary system in this province...all higher education is under attack." Here Price is referring to the current UCP government's vicious cuts to post-secondary education which has in turn led to dismantling of the system by firing staff, privatizing services,

cutting programs, eliminating courses, and even closing libraries. With their strike, the Concordia Faculty are defending their rights and those of their students, pointing out that their working conditions are students' learning conditions. They are also standing up for the right to education and fighting for the public education system upon which the whole society depends. What workers have not produced cannot be consumed.



AN INJURY TO ONE IS AN INJURY TO ALL

(Joint Letter from PSE's)

Dear Tim Loreman,

We, the undersigned, are writing in solidarity with our colleagues at the Concordia University of Edmonton Faculty Association (CUEFA) who have been on strike since January 4, 2022. This is the first strike of its kind in Alberta and the first strike within the post-secondary sector within the last two and a half years. We commend and applaud CUEFA for their bravery to take such important action under such difficult conditions.

The reason for the strike is that CUEFA is simply asking for job security, reasonable working conditions, and above all, fair compensation. Although progress has been made on job security, it is unfortunate that the Concordia University of Edmonton has not committed to paying CUEFA members with comparable salaries at similarly sized institutions. For example, faculty at Grant MacEwan University make more than \$23 000 on average than CUEFA faculty members. CUEFA members, on the other hand, remain amongst the lowest paid faculty in Canada. Furthermore, the Board of Governors at the Concordia University of Edmonton passed a change to the bylaws stating that the negotiations over the salary of the President would be guided by the compensation paid to the Presidents of an agreed-to set of comparator Canadian universities. This happened as the board was in bargaining with CUEFA. We are surprised that the same approach to compensation was not offered to CUEFA members.

Moreover, Concordia University of Edmonton announced a surplus of \$11.5 million in 2021 according to its 2020/2021 annual report. That is a 25% profit on their operating budget of \$46 million (by way of comparison, the Bank of Montreal ran only a 21% profit in its second quarter this year). With such a significant surplus, the Concordia University of Edmonton chose to purchase a mansion without a clear vision of how this would support the university's operations or its students, faculty, and staff. It is disappointing to see, to say at the very least, that these funds weren't directed back to its faculty, librarians, laboratory instructors, and field placement coordinators.

We strongly believe that an injury to one is an injury to all. The issues that impact CUEFA - low pay, high workload, and stressful bargaining - impact unions across the post-secondary education sector in Alberta. Furthermore, cuts to the Campus Alberta Grant have meant that thousands of non-academic staff have lost their jobs, students have faced skyrocketing tuition increases, and faculty are under worsening working conditions with increased workloads. The post-secondary education sector in Alberta has suffered long in these past two and a half years, but we stand together in solidarity. Consequently, we will continue to support our colleagues in CUEFA throughout this strike. Their energy inspires us to remain engaged and active in defense of our members and our sector.

It is up to the employer, not the faculty association, to put an end to this strike. We urge the Board of Governors at Concordia University of Edmonton to put forward a fair agreement.

Sincerely,

Academic Staff Association at the University of Alberta - represents 4000 academic staff at the University of Alberta

Alberta University of the Arts Faculty Association

Athabasca University Faculty Association

AUPE Local 39 - represents over 500 non-academic staff at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

AUPE Local 52 - represents 5200 non-academic staff at the University of Calgary AUPE Local 53 - represents over 500 non-academic staff at the University of Lethbridge AUPE Local 71 - represents over 2800 non-academic staff at 11 Alberta colleges and 2 school boards

Calgary and District Labour Council - representing 47 000 affiliated members CUPE 3911 - represents 370 part-time instructors at Athabasca University Mount Royal Faculty Association - represents 800

academic staff at Mount Royal University Mount Royal Staff Association - represents 700 non-academic staff at at Mount Royal University NAIT Academic Staff Association - represents 900 members at Northern Alberta Institute of Technology

Non-Academic Staff Association at the University of Alberta - represents over 5000 non-academic staff at the University of Alberta

NorQuest College Faculty Association - represents 400 faculty members at NorQuest College SAIT Academic Faculty Association - represents over 1200 permanent and adjunct faculty at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology

University of Lethbridge Faculty Association - represents 600 academic staff at the University of Lethbridge



PICKET LINE SOLIDARITY WITH STRIKING CUEFA WORKERS, JANUARY 14

By DOUGAL MACDONALD

(Note: The CUPE 3911 Communications Officer was asked to make a brief statement at the January 14 CUEFA picket. The day was dedicated to expressions of solidarity from PSEs outside Edmonton.)

Hi everyone, my name is Dougal MacDonald. I'm here representing CUPE 3911 which is the local for the approximately 370 part-time tutors, academic experts, and markers at Athabasca online University.

We fully support CUEFA's historic strike, which is the first one ever by an Alberta faculty association. As a number of the signs say, we also believe that we must all fight for better working conditions because teacher working conditions are student learning conditions. Like many others in post-secondary education right now we too are trying to bargain a new contract with an obstructive employer. So CUEFA's action of going on strike to

enforce their demands is a real inspiration to us all and, as we can see by the well-populated picket line, is also helping to create more solidarity across the whole sector.

CUPE 3911 is also very aware that that all of us are not only fighting our employers but also the Kenney government whose vicious cuts continue to damage post-secondary education across the province and undermine people's right to education. We must all continue to wage that very important battle as well as our own.



So, again, thanks to CUEFA for leading the way by taking a stand, thanks to everyone for the ongoing solidarity, and be assured that you all have CUPE 3911's full support in this fight for post-secondary education and in all the fights for rights that are yet to come!

Victory to CUEFA!

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF STRIKES

The January 2022 CUEFA strike has ended with a settlement voted on by the members. Although the strike was the first by an Alberta faculty association, the strike itself was not an unusual event. While some suggest that the Canadian labour movement has, in the main, been quite peaceful over the decades the opposite is actually true. For example, the Labor Action tracker at Cornell University Institute of Labor Relations documented 346 strike locations in Canada in 2021 as of December 10.

Over the years some Canadian strikes have been very significant, including Canadian Union of Postal Workers 2018, Stelco 2010-2011, Vale 2009-2010, CPRail 2007, General Motors 1996, Inco 1978-79, CPR 1957, Asbestos 1949, Stelco 1946, Ford 1945, Kirkland Lake 1941-42, Dominion Textile 1937 and of course the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 (Note 1).

Even in "conservative" Alberta many significant strikes have taken place, including: Concordia University 2022, AUPE health workers 2020 ("wildcat"), Real Canadian Superstore 2013, Palace Casino 2006, Lakeside Packers 2005, Alberta Teachers 2002, Maple Leaf Foods 1997, United Nurses of Alberta 1988, Gainers 1986, and the Edmonton General Strike 1919. The abundance of strikes suggest that class-conscious workers need to

more and more concern themselves with such questions as the significance of strikes, strike methods, and what roles striking workers should play during the strike.

The large number of strikes in Canada requires an explanation. Strikes occur because we live under an economic system where a small number of owners own the land, factories, machinery, etc. and the majority of people are compelled to hire themselves out to them as workers for wages. Within that dynamic, owners continually try to drive down wages to increase their profits and the workers continually fight their employers to get the highest possible wage so they can live at a Canadian standard. A constant struggle therefore goes on between owners and workers over wages and working conditions.

It is also clear that it is impossible for a single worker to wage a protracted struggle against an owner. If a worker demands higher wages or opposes a wage cut the owner can simply fire them (under whatever pretext) and hire someone else who needs to earn a living. Yes, labour laws exist but such laws only slightly restrict the owners and any decisions made regarding labour disputes almost always favour the owners, as workers soon find out through their own experience. Further, whatever decisions labour courts make do not in any way

change the existing system where the minority are wealthy owners and the majority are wage workers.

As workers see that individually each one is powerless and can be crushed they begin to revolt jointly against the owners. This first takes the form of isolated revolts which give rise to more or less peaceful strikes, on the one hand, and the all-sided struggle of the working class for its emancipation on the other hand. Also, when industry prospers and the owners are making big profits they still share as little as possible with the workers. Then when a crisis or alleged crisis breaks out the owners try to push their losses onto the workers.

So strikes signify the ongoing struggle of the working class against the owning class. The workers withdraw their labour power leaving the owners without a means of generating their profits. When workers state their demands jointly and refuse to submit to the rich, they begin to demand that their labour should not just enrich a handful of idle owners but should also enable those who do the work to live like human beings. The workers begin to put forward the demand to become masters of their own fate. Strikes always instill fear into the owners because they undermine their supremacy. The whole machinery of society is set in motion by the workers; when the workers refuse to work the machinery grinds to a halt.

Every strike reminds the owners that it is the workers who are the real masters, that their position is not hopeless, that they are not alone. Strikes have a tremendous effect both on the strikers and on workers at nearby worksites or who work in the same industry. The workers loudly state their demands and claim their rights. Yes, every strike means difficulties for the workers—hungry families, loss of wages, often arrests because representatives of the owners who hold power criminalize the strike. But despite all these difficulties striking workers and their allies gain renewed courage by fighting. Often when one place of work strikes, workers at other places of work also down tools. The workers see that they have ceased to be wage slaves and have become people on an equal footing with the rich

A strike teaches workers to understand what the strength of the owners consists of and what the strength of the workers consists of. It teaches them to think beyond their own situation, to think of the whole class of owners and the whole class of workers. When an owner who has amassed millions from the toil of several generations of workers refuses to grant a modest wage increase or tries to reduce wages, and, if the workers offer resistance, throws thousands of hungry families into the streets, it becomes clear to the workers that the owning class as a whole is their enemy and that the workers can only depend on themselves and their united action. A strike always exposes that any owner who claims to be a “benefactor” is really just a wolf in sheep’s clothing.

A strike opens the eyes of the workers to the nature not only of the owners but of the government and the laws as well. Just as some owners try to pose as the workers’ benefactors, government officials and their agents try to assure the workers that the government wants to be equally fair to both workers and owners, as justice requires. Prior to a strike, the workers may believe this. Then comes a strike and the workers quickly realize that the law is against them. Police may appear at the picket line to enforce anti-worker laws or even make arrests. Workers are punished for doing things that the owners are allowed to do. It quickly becomes clear that the government is controlled by the owners, defends the owners, and obstructs the aims of workers at every turn.

Strikes, then, teach many lessons. They teach the workers to unite, they show that workers can only struggle against the owners when they are united, and they teach the workers to think of the struggle of the whole working class against the whole owning class and their government. This is why many call strikes “a school of war”, where workers learn to fight their enemies to liberate themselves from the power of the owners. A “school of war”, however is not war itself. When strikes are widespread some workers begin to think that the workers can confine themselves to strikes, that by strikes alone they can considerably improve their conditions or even emancipate themselves. But this is a mistaken idea.

Strikes are certainly one way that workers struggle to emancipate themselves but they are not the only way. If workers do not turn their attention to other forms of struggle they will impede their own success. Even today in Canada where huge unions like CUPE exist and have millions of dollars at their disposal, the workers should go beyond strikes as a means of struggle. In fact, some owners will even deliberately cause strikes because it is to their advantage to cease work and deplete the workers' funds or because it is to their advantage to create a temporary shortage of what their workers produce.

Further, strikes can only succeed where workers have a good grasp of strategy and tactics, where they can select an opportune moment to strike, where they know how to put forward their demands, and where they have strong and intelligent leadership. Finally, strikes repeatedly show the workers that the government is their enemy and that a protracted struggle must be carried on against it. From individual strikes, the workers can and must

go over to a struggle of the entire working class for the emancipation of all who labour. When workers strive for emancipation on a broad scale they become part of that great movement of workers everywhere around the world which bring them all together and raises the banner inscribed with the memorable words, "Workers of all countries unit."

(Note 1: Labour historian Stuart Jamieson's detailed history of labour unrest in Canada from 1900 to 1966, published 1968, is aptly titled *Times of Trouble*.)



FYI: HOW THE ALBERTA LABOUR CODE RESTRICTS WORKERS' RIGHTS

One potential outcome of an industrial dispute is a strike or a lockout. In order for a legal strike or lockout to occur, the union(s) or employer(s) involved must comply with the provisions of the Alberta Labour Relations Code. The Code defines a strike as a cessation of work, a refusal to work or a refusal to continue work "by 2 or more employees acting in combination or in concert or in accordance with a common understanding for the purpose of compelling their employer ... to agree to terms or conditions of employment" or to aid other employees to do the same.

This definition contains three basic elements: 1. a refusal to work; 2. concerted action; and 3. the purposive or subjective element of intent. The Code defines a lockout as including the closing of a place of employment by an employer, suspending work or refusal to continue to employ employees "for the purpose of compelling the employer's employees, or to aid another employer in compelling the employees of that employer, to accept terms and conditions of employment."

A strike or lockout may be conducted if the following conditions are met: 1. no collective agreement is in force; 2. a Board supervised strike or lockout vote is conducted with a majority voting in favour of a strike or lockout; 3. strike or lockout notice is given and the strike or lockout commences on the day and at the time and location specified in the notice; and 4. where a disputes inquiry board is established, the time limits in section 105(3) have expired. (Note 1).

When a union commences a legal strike, it is required to provide the affected employer(s) with 72 hours of notice (Note 2). Section 78(1)(a) requires the notice specify the initial date, time and location of the strike. A

union may decide at any time after the strike has commenced to alter the nature or location of its strike activity. This flexibility commonly leads to:

Rotating strikes: Unions may choose to have members withdraw their services on a rotating basis. For example, a union may strike one employer site one day. The next day, the employees at the first location may return to work while a second location may strike. A different variation is where employees strike for a period of time, return to work and then strike again. The disruption rotating strikes cause is intended to pressure employers into accepting the union's last offer. Employers may pre-empt such a tactic by serving unions with lockout notice.

Progressive strikes: A progressive strike is one where less than an employer's full workforce strikes. As time passes, additional employees or locations may join the strike. A progressive strike is intended to gradually increase the disruption experienced by the employer and pressure the employer to accept the union's last offer. Again, employers may pre-empt such a tactic by serving unions with lockout notice.

When an employer lockouts employees, the bridging provisions of Section 130 that extended the collective agreement during negotiations terminate. This means that employees who return to work following a lockout do so on the terms and conditions set by the employer. Employers may choose to lockout their employees for a short period of time as a way to end the bridging provisions of Section 130 and thereby apply additional pressure on the union to settle the dispute.

A struck employer or one that has locked out a union, may still have personnel at work. These workers may be members of a different union, non-unionized, or workers statutorily excluded from the bargaining unit. A strike may impact these employees in several ways.

Non-striking employees and their union(s) may be reluctant to cross a picket line. There are no provisions in the Labour Relations Code that allow non-striking employees to refuse to cross a picket line. (Note 3). Unionized employees who refuse to cross the picket line may be participating in an illegal strike. Both unionized and non-unionized employees who refuse to cross the picket line may be subject to employer discipline.

The Code prohibits employers from disciplining employees who are not on strike for refusing to perform the work of striking employees. This effectively permits employees to refuse to do the work of striking employees. Section 85(a) states that no employee shall refuse to perform work because other work is being performed by someone who is not a member of a union that is on strike.

The Code also prohibits employees from refusing to handle goods because the carrier is being struck or has locked out its employees. (Note 4). This is commonly referred to as a "hot cargo" provision. A strike or lockout ends when a settlement agreement is reached (a new collective bargaining agreement or otherwise) or after 2 years expire from the date the strike or lockout commenced. While the strike or lockout ends after 2 years, the union's certification is unaffected and remains in place and a new notice to commence collective bargaining must be served.



Note 1: All these conditions remove the basic right of workers to withhold their labour as a means of fighting for their just demands.

Note 2: The need to give the employer 72 hours notice of a strike undercuts the potential effectiveness of a sudden work stoppage.

Note 3: Quebec, Ontario and British Columbia have all enacted laws to ban the use of replacement workers (scabs) in strikes in their respective provinces. Why hasn't Alberta?

Note 4: Refusing to handle hot goods is a time-honoured tactic, e.g., longshoremen refusing to load goods from struck companies onto ships.

**ALBERTA WORKERS OPPOSE GOVERNMENT VIOLATION OF RIGHTS:
JOINT STATEMENT FROM ALBERTA UNIONS (JANUARY 11)**
(Reprinted from Workers Forum)

The joint statement issued by the unions together with the Alberta Federation of Labour on January 11 is calling for a temporary prohibition of large gatherings, including concerts and sporting events; closing restaurants and bars to in-person dining; shutting down movie theatres and casinos; moving services at churches and other houses of worship online; moving all university and college classes online; closing gyms and suspending recreational sports; and, as a very last resort, moving all students in K-12 schools to online learning. Other measures proposed include the following:

Income supports must be provided to impacted workers and businesses, with only essential services continuing to operate while the emergency measures are in place.

Recognizing that COVID-19 is airborne, cloth or surgical masks should be replaced with respirators (N95 or KN95) provided free of charge and required in indoor public spaces; air quality monitors, upgraded HVAC systems and portable HEPA filters should be provided in the short term and, in the longer term, there must be new standards for air quality in all indoor work environments and public spaces, including schools.

The Precautionary Principle which says that public health authorities should implement all reasonable safety measures, even if all the science related to those measures is not yet completely settled, should be used to guide all decision-making. As recommended by the SARS Commission Report, policy should reflect the lens of workplace safety in addition to the lens of public health. The SARS Commission emphasized the integral role of workers in making workplaces safe, and that in worker safety, the integrated whole is greater than the uncoordinated parts.



The letter calls on the government to re-institute “Test-Trace-Isolate,” and reverse its dangerous decisions including ending most testing, moving to a five-day isolation period and allowing employers to “self-designate” as essential services in order to get around even the shortened five-day isolation period.

“Unless the goal is to actually infect the whole population (which would be outrageous, both from a medical and moral perspective) these policies are bound to backfire. Forcing people back to work when they’re still infectious will simply lead to more infections and a longer, more brutal fifth wave. Clearly this is in no one’s best interest,” the statement says.

The government must also acknowledge “long-COVID” and that COVID-19 can attack multiple systems of the body, and persist as long-term disability. “The reality of ‘long-COVID’ needs to be factored into all decisions the government makes about the pandemic.”

On-site booster clinics should be established in workplaces, acknowledging the difficulty of getting time off for many workers, as well as in schools to address the reality that Alberta has the lowest rates of vaccination among five to 11-year-olds in Canada.

Implement paid sick leave for all. About two-thirds of Alberta workers have no access to sick leave, the statement says. Ten days of employer paid sick leave must be made available to all workers.

(For the full statement:

https://www.afl.org/joint_statement_from_alberta_unions_calling_for_immediate_circuit_breaker_measures_to_deal_with_the_omcr_on_wave

WHAT IS REALLY HAPPENING ON WET'SUWET'EN LAND

(GITIMT'EN CHECKOUT, JANUARY 14, 2022)

"Whatever man builds, breaks. You can't warranty a pipeline. This for our grandchildren, and great great grandchildren, and those not even born yet. That's who we're doing this for." – Dinī ze' Madeek

On January 14, Gidimt'en Checkpoint reported that Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs along with the Office of the Wet'suwet'en met on the Yintah to witness firsthand the destruction caused by Coastal GasLink (CGL).

"They wonder why we're mad. Look at the clearing ... Look at the man camp, enough for a couple armies ... It reminds me of when we were kids and we had toys and the white people, they didn't have it, so they broke our toys. And now they grew up and they're breaking our land. Just cause they can't have it." – Dinī ze' Gisday'wa



Hereditary Chiefs Madeek, Gisday'wa and Namoks visited multiple sites, including Gidimt'en Checkpoint and the drill pad site, to monitor CGL's illegal project and denounce the Royal Canadian Mounted Police's third militarized raid on Gitimidt'en Territory this past November.

Standing on the site of one of the Gidimt'en cabins that CGL bulldozed, Dinī ze' Namoks remarked, "you don't knock down people's houses, their homes. Same with burning down [the Skiy ze' Cabin] over there. I'd go to jail if I went into a city and did that. I'd never see the light of day again. But they're [CGL] allowed to according to British Columbia and Canada."

Throughout the day, the Dinī ze's met with numerous water protectors and supporters. After viewing the ongoing devastation caused by CGL, the Dinī ze's are strengthened in their demands calling for CGL work to stop immediately, and for there to be an end to the ongoing colonial violence on the territory. The fight is not over!

"It will never go through—it's dead in the water now." – Dinī ze' Madeek

Random Thoughts: I randomly happened to look up Athabasca University using Google and noticed that the Athabasca University page that came up included about 200 student comments about the university. Of course, I had to look. What I saw kind of shocked me in terms of how negative many of the comments were. Here's the first one I read: "It's amazing how this place likes to take your money but then not help in return. You are truly left in the dark with this university regarding information." And there are many more in a similar vein. Certainly, there are supportive comments too. And we are all aware that sometimes a criticism is a personal rant due perhaps to a low grade. But I guess what still struck me was how so many comments conveyed the firm conviction that the manner in which the AU system deals with student needs could use some serious improvement. I hope that such matters get better taken care of in the near future. All of us—

students, tutors, academic experts, markers, faculty, support staff, administration, and the institution itself are negatively affected when the system we work within is (allegedly) malfunctioning to such an extent.

CUPE 3911 MONTHLY GRIEVANCE SUMMARY REPORT

By ERNIE JACOBSON, GRIEVANCE OFFICER(NEWLY ELECTED)

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 January 2022

CUPE 3911 is working on a number of individual, group and policy grievances on behalf of members. Here is a brief summary of 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 and with members of the CUPE 3911 grievance committee.

- Supported numerous members on understanding their rights and contract challenges, especially around seniority issues and supporting workplace accommodations
- Worked on arbitrations with National Representative, CUPE National, and union Co-chair. Deferred two arbitrations indefinitely for strategic reasons
- Supported a member alleging nonacademic misconduct by a student, and after HR decided this was not academic misconduct, resulted in CUPE defending the member against a countercharge of harassment by the student. Claim by student was eventually reviewed by HR, and the claim was dismissed.
- Supported a member facing employer sanctions due to a charge laid by students. Employer decision is being grieved at step one.
- Employer dismissed another grievance at step one. This grievance will be continued to step two.
- Discussions taking place with another employee that will first involve an informal discussion and if there is no satisfaction, a grievance will be filed.
- Support, advice to a member dealing with a charge related to fulfillment of a SME contract, which is not directly covered by the collective agreement.

The union currently has 2 active grievances, 3-4 grievances going to arbitration, and several areas of discussion with the employer. It appears that AU Administration through its HR Department is taking a very aggressive stance at this time, and CUPE must ensure that AU is following clause 23.03 in the Collective Agreement: 23.02 The employer accepts the principle of progressive discipline.

Ernie Jacobson, January 19, 2022

ANNOUNCEMENTS



CUPE 3911 Monthly General Meeting, Saturday, February 26, 2022.

EDLC Annual Labour School, February 26 & 27, 2022

International Women's Day, Tuesday, March 8, 2022.

May Day, Sunday, May 1, 2022

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.