

January 19-22, 2009

CEP 2008-2009 Budget

The main business before the January Executive Board meeting was the adoption of the 2008-2009 budget. After two consecutive years of surplus budgets, which eliminated CEP's debt and provided a surplus in all funds at the time of the October national convention, this year's budget will plan for a deficit of \$1.1 million. The reason for the deficit is lower revenues due to job losses. In spite of the deficit, CEP will not go into debt and will cover the shortfall in this year's budget from the union's accumulated surplus of over \$7 million.

Secretary-Treasurer Ménard cited the following financial objectives for the budget:

- Limit our general fund deficit over the next year and come back with a balanced budget quickly
- Control spending in order to efficiently utilize our available resources
- Maintain a good quality of service to our members
- Improve CEP internal and external communications
- Prepare for significant potential expenses in the future, such as the possibility of restarting pension fund contributions in 2011

On the positive side, the CEP Defense Fund is in excellent shape with more than \$28 million in assets. With the settlement of some long-standing disputes, Defense Fund monthly revenue is, at this time, greater than expenses.

CEP in Construction

CEP's construction organizing drive began in 2001 and has slowly gained momentum. Today, we have about 2,500 working members in B.C. and Alberta with new projects that will soon expand our base into Saskatchewan and Ontario. The construction sector is largely non-union and that is where CEP has focused its efforts. After about three years of organizing in this sector, there is a net financial benefit to our union. In addition, CEP has helped laid-off pulp and paper workers transition to construction, sometimes moving from one province to another.

Petro-Canada

In his report to the Board, President Coles stressed that the 13-month lockout of Local 175 is a great victory for CEP. The members of Local 175 have protected and strengthened national bargaining for all CEP energy workers. They are to be congratulated for their solidarity and perseverance. Brother Coles also commended CEP members and staff across the country for their support, which helped to bring the lockout to a successful conclusion.

Federal Politics

CEP has been successful in communicating its budget proposals and its support for the Bloc Quebecois-backed Liberal/NDP coalition, to our activists, to political leaders, and to the mainstream media. Our union's strong support for the coalition is rooted in the fact that labour-supported parties like the NDP and the Bloc Quebecois, cooperate on key issues like jobs, employment insurance and anti-scab legislation. All of these matters and other initiatives to bring leadership and stability to our country in this time of crisis are part of the coalition's program for Canada. The Executive Board strongly condemned the Harper government's tactic of slamming the coalition (and dividing the country) by attacking the Bloc Quebecois.

CLC Review

Each CLC affiliate has been asked to consult its leadership and to provide answers to a few fundamental questions about the structures, governance and mandates of the labour movement. It's part of a Canada-wide review stemming from a 2008 CLC convention resolution about the role of central labour bodies in advancing the needs of the labour movement.

Anti-Harassment Policy

The CEP Executive Board discussed Policy 903 – the union's anti-harassment policy. A re-drafted policy is almost ready for circulation, but it was decided to defer adoption of the new policy until the next Executive Board meeting to allow for some further discussion and refinements of the new proposed procedure for addressing complaints. In the meantime, the interim policy adopted by the Executive Board in 2007 will remain in place. The interim policy incorporates the anti-harassment statement into the rules of procedures for each CEP event and provides the chairperson of each event the responsibility and the authority to respond to any harassment charge that may arise.