

Fifth Report of the CAW-CEP New Union Proposal Committee

The Proposal Committee established by the CAW and the CEP to develop a plan for a new Canadian union held its fifth meeting in Montreal June 25-27, 2012.

The highlight of this meeting was a comprehensive report describing the purposes, objectives, structure, finances, and other main operating principles of a new union.

Based on this draft report, the Proposal Committee unanimously recommended the formation of a new union.

The National Executive Boards of both unions will now consider the draft report from the Proposal Committee at respective meetings occurring in early July. After that the full report, along with a resolution to create the new union, will be presented to delegates at the upcoming conventions of both unions.

The CAW Constitutional and Collective Bargaining Convention will occur in Toronto August 20-24, 2012. The CEP Convention will occur in Quebec City October 14-17, 2012.

The final report of the Proposal Committee will be made public before the two conventions, and will be posted on the unions' special joint website (www.newunionproject.ca) at that time.

The Proposal Committee completed its recommendations for the structure of the new union. It was agreed that the National Executive Board member representing racialized and aboriginal members of the new union will be selected by their peers at a national conference of aboriginal and workers of colour. This conference will include the standing committees on racialized and aboriginal issues that will be established within the Regional and Quebec Councils of the new union.

In addition to its previous commitment to ensure that the proportion of women on the NEB is at least equal to the proportion of women members in the new union, the Proposal Committee agreed to recommend a constitutional provision ensuring a regional balance on the Board.

The new union's NEB will consist of 25 elected representatives, 19 of whom will be rank-and-file union members. These include 11 representatives from the various Industry Councils of the new union. The Proposal Committee recommends that candidates for these positions are nominated by the Industry Councils, and elected by delegates to the Canadian Council. The NEB will present recommendations to Canadian Council delegates for these elections, balancing the nominations to meet constitutional requirements for gender, regional, and industry representation.

Only after delegates to the two unions' conventions approve the proposal to form a new Canadian union, will preparations begin for its founding convention in 2013. The Proposal Committee is recommending the creation of six working groups to oversee the preparations required to form the new organization, including constitutional matters, a name and logo, operations, and communications. One working group will focus on preparing a major push to organize new members in conjunction with the launch of the new union.

The New Union Proposal Committee was formed in February of this year, and consists of eight senior leaders from each of the CAW and the CEP. It was tasked with developing a proposal for a new Canadian union that responds to the challenges facing the Canadian labour movement. It also hosted a series of joint meetings in all regions, attended by over 1000 local leaders from the two unions. Full reports on the activities of the Proposal Committee are posted on a special joint website, www.newunionproject.ca.