



PRIVATE CLINICS A THREAT
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Also inside: WORKERS OF COLOUR
CONFERENCE
>> pages 4 and 6



VOLUME 1, NO.4

WWW.UNIFOR.ORG

OCTOBER 31, 2013

uniforum

Let's Rethink Child Care.
Together We Can Make It Better.

CHILD CARE WORKER AND EARLY
CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR APPRECIATION DAY
OCTOBER 30, 2013

Repensons les services de garde.
Ensemble, on peut améliorer
les choses.

JOURNÉE DE RECONNAISSANCE DES TRAVAILLEURS EN GARDERIE
ET EDUCATEURS DE LA PETITE ENFANCE
LE 30 OCTOBRE 2013



Unifor is a proud sponsor of the annual child care worker and ECE appreciation day in October.

Let's see the CETA



Unifor National President Jerry Dias says full disclosure of the proposed Canada-EU trade deal negotiating text is the only way to ensure a fully informed and democratic debate on the accord.

"It's not good enough for the Harper government to release spin-doctored briefing papers and

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page 3

Improve energy safety



The derailment and explosion of a train carrying liquefied petroleum gas and crude oil in Alberta underlines the need for tougher safety rules and public consultation about getting petroleum products to market, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.
"As frightening as this

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page 2

GM line extended

The recent announcement that General Motors has extended the life of its Assembly Complex (Consolidated Line) in Oshawa is good news for the workers at the plant, and the entire community, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

"This was great news to wake up to," Dias said. "It

is a testament to what we've been saying about this plant all along - that the skills and efficiency of the workers at the plant make it worth keeping open."

General Motors announced that in order to meet expected demand for the Impala and Equinox, both made on the Consolidated Line, it was extending production there until 2016. The plant had been scheduled to close in within the next year.

"By maintaining

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#unifor



Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@Jordan_Asher: Exciting week for myself my colleagues and @UniforTheUnion . Big vote on Wednesday to become #Unifor at Catalyst Paper Surrey! #Solidarity

@unifor_kaikit: Thank you #Brazil for a wonderful week in meeting the Labour, we will take your spirit & solidarity back to Canada. #Unifor @UniforTheUnion

In brief

Lobster program popular

Another 23 lobster enterprises have been accepted for retirement under a program set up to boost incomes for those remaining in the industry. The Newfoundland Lobster Sustainability Board announced the results Oct. 25, bringing the total number of retirements to 248. Program coordinator Bill Broderick said interest in the program increased dramatically in the most recent round. The Lobster Enterprise Retirement Program runs to March 2014. **U**

Minimum wage meeting

Unifor is helping to sponsor an upcoming public meeting on the need to raise the minimum wage in Ontario. The Ontario government has frozen the minimum wage in the province for three years at \$10.25. In a submission to a panel studying the minimum wage in Ontario, Unifor recently recommended raising the minimum to \$14 an hour. The public meeting is on Nov. 5 at 7:00 p.m. at R.H. King Academy, 3800 St Clair Ave E, Toronto, Ont. **U**

Private clinics a threat



Proposed changes would seem to open the door to public money going to private clinics in Ontario.

An Ontario government proposal to license private clinics as community health providers is a fundamental shift in public policy and a prelude to the transfer of public services to the private sector, Unifor is warning.

Unifor is calling for a vigorous public debate on the issue before any such change is made.

"The regulatory proposal ... should be withdrawn until that debate has reached some form of broad consensus or conclusion and no further evidence is available," the

submissions says.

Proposed regulatory changes under the Local Health System Integration Act and the Independent Health Facilities Act would seem to set the stage for Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) and Cancer Care Ontario to directly fund "community-based specialty clinics" licenced as independent health facilities.

"This represents a fundamental shift in public policy that inherently places in jeopardy the ongoing capacity of our community-based, publicly

funded and publicly governed hospitals."

Such private clinics would draw money away from already struggling publicly funded health facilities.

"Our hospitals are already under great financial pressure, and diverting money away to private clinics will only hurt them," said Katha Fortier, Unifor Ontario Director.

Former Saskatchewan premier Roy Romanow said in his 2002 report on health that there is no evidence private clinics can bring more resources to health care, and no evidence to the contrary has come up since, the submission says.

"We are deeply concerned that this regulatory change not only conflicts with prior policy announcements but is also a prelude to the creation or transfer of public services to corporate for-profit entities." **U**

>> Continued from "Improve energy safety" on page 1

crash was, we can be thankful that no one was hurt and the environmental damage has been limited," Dias said.

Members of Unifor Local 100, which represents workers at CN Rail, have been assisting in the cleanup. Unifor represents 9,000 workers in the rail

industry across the country.

The safety and security of rail workers and our communities depend on sound transportation and environmental regulations and consultation with all communities the trains pass through. The same is also true of pipelines.

That means regulating the pace of development, requiring strong Canadian content regulations, managing economic side-

effects (including limiting resource exports and foreign ownership), and limiting Canadian greenhouse gas emissions.

"The federal government should be leading this discussion, but so far has shown little interest in doing so," Dias said. "They assume the private decisions of huge global corporations will find the best solution. This is wrong." **U**

>> Continued from
"GM line extended"
on page 1

production over the next few years, we have a chance to bring in another product and keep the plant open longer," said Ron Svajlenko, president of

Unifor Local 222, which represents workers at the plant.


Svajlenko said the awarding of a J.D. Power Silver Plant Assembly Line Quality Award on Oct. 2 was a testament to the hard work of unionized

auto workers, and a key factor in why the plant will now remain open longer.

"The workers at that plant have done a great job," he said.

The Consolidated Line has consistently been a top plant in North America, and

the decision to extend operations is evidence of that, he said.

The decision also means that workers in the plant will be able to continue supporting their families and the local economy, Dias said. 

First Unifor Women's Advocate



Unifor MFW Local 1 has come to an agreement with the Halifax Shipyards to introduce the Women's Advocate Program to ensure that all workers at the shipyards have a healthy and safe work environment. This makes them the first local to negotiate the program since the formation of Unifor.

A Women's Advocate is a specially trained workplace representative who assists women with concerns such as workplace harassment, intimate violence and abuse. The Women's Advocate is not a counselor but rather provides support for women accessing community and workplace resources.

"This is an excellent

example of a successful joint initiative between the union and management that helps create respectful, healthy and safe workplaces, and that these efforts exist beyond just the bargaining table," said Julie White, Director of Unifor's Women's Department.


"We hope to one day have a Women's Advocate in every Unifor workplace."

The employer, the Halifax Shipyards, agreed to share the cost of training for two advocates and the continuation of the program at the workplace. Two sisters from the Shipyards, Koren Beaman and Elizabeth Cummings, completed the Women's Advocate 40 hour basic program at Port Elgin.

"I'm excited to be one of the first Unifor Women's

Advocates, joining roughly 300 others negotiated before the formation of our new union," said Koren Beaman. "We're seeing more and more women working in the skilled trades, and we need to

ensure they are supported and protected at work."

For more information about the Unifor Women's Advocate program contact Julie White at women@unifor.org 



Participants in the women's advocate training.

>> Continued from
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summaries," said Dias.

The Conservative government on Oct. 29 released a technical summary of the agreement-in-principle, originally signed on October 18 in Brussels.

The 26-page summary contains sparse, bullet-point details of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement

(CETA) that fails to provide important information on everything from the coverage of public services to the deregulation of Canada's telecom sector.

Trade deals can be either good or bad, depending on the details of what is negotiated, Dias said, which is why the full CETA agreement needs to be released.

"Canadians have to see the full text to best determine if they're getting a raw deal," Dias said.

Unifor has expressed its

general concern over the CETA, including the possible negative impact on Canadian jobs, the escalating price of pharmaceuticals, the extraordinary rights granted to private investors and the diminished capacity of local governments to institute job-creating and community-enhancing economic development policies.

Unifor is calling on the federal government to release the full text of the

deal and engage in a full democratic debate and vote on the passage of the CETA. Unifor is also calling for provincial parliaments to hold individual votes on the deal.

All are encouraged to take a moment to send a letter to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, asking that the full CETA text be released.

Simply go to www.tradejustice.ca and click on the Sign Now button. 

Photo spotlight: Aboriginal and Workers of Colour Conference

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS TO COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG



PHOTO BY RON ARJOON

A circle meeting at the Aboriginal and Workers of Colour conference allowed delegates to share experiences. See P. 5.



PHOTO BY BRYAN MOMBOURQUETTE

Aboriginal and Workers of Colour conference delegates discussed issues affecting racialized workers. See P. 5.

International crew receives back pay

The Panamanian ship, the Kouyou, detained under the Maritime Labour Convention in the port of Quebec City has been released after its crew were awarded back pay of \$51,000 USD.

Transport Canada stepped in to detain the vessel after it was notified. The vessel was the third to be detained in Canada since the MLC came into effect in August. The international


convention has been adopted by shipping nations around the world, and adopted by member states of the International Labour Organization.

The crew, made up of 20 Vietnamese and Burmese nationals, along with Canadian captain James Maung, had not been properly paid, in particular being shorted on the home-allotment, which provides for their families while abroad. A number of

the crew had paid high recruitment fees to agencies prior to departing.

"We're extremely pleased that Canada has seriously given life to the MLC," said Peter Lahay, International Transport Workers Federation Canadian Co-ordinator.

ITF-Unifor inspector Gerard Bradbury, the labour inspector handling the case, said that Canada has been the first nation to detain a ship under the

convention. "Canada's recognition of the importance of these new rules means that our country will not be an entry port for greater exploitation," said Bradbury. "Workers aboard the vessel were badly treated, and could have been cheated out of many months of much needed income. Seafarers often work under difficult conditions, far from home for months on end." 

Featured campaign

Rethink Child Care

Unifor is involved in the national "Rethink Child Care" campaign, with the goal of moving the conversation beyond individual solutions to supporting a truly national, affordable, quality child care strategy.

Hundreds of union activists and members have already taken part in the first initiative of the campaign - kitchen table discussions about the current child care short fall.


This discussion involves moms, dads, grandparents, neighbours, friends, child care workers and many others, in the effort to change the conversation and make child care a federal election issue in 2015.

Hosting a kitchen table discussion is easy! Materials are already available and simple to follow. To host a discussion in your local union, your town or at your actual kitchen table, please get in



Materials available to host a discussion

touch with Women's Department Director Julie White at: women@unifor.org

For more information visit: <http://rethinkchildcare.ca/> 

TO PROMOTE A CAMPAIGN IN YOUR LOCAL OR REGION, CONTACT COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG

Gift ensures a happy Thanksgiving

Cheyenne Armstrong wanted to help a few people in Winnipeg have a better Thanksgiving, but once her father's Unifor brothers and sisters heard about what she was doing, Cheyenne ended up helping a lot of people.

"Some people don't have a house and don't have jobs and money. I do and I want to help out," said Cheyenne, who saw a TV news story about people struggling to pay for a Thanksgiving feast. "I asked my Mom and Dad if I could use my vacation money and they said sure."

Cheyenne decided to give her \$50 in vacation savings to the local

Salvation Army, which puts on turkey dinners in Winnipeg. Her parents took to social media to ask for support.

Cheyenne's father, Mark Armstrong, was at the Port Elgin Family Learning Centre taking a course at the time. When he told his classmates about Cheyenne, other Unifor members immediately opened their wallets.


"In just one week, Cheyenne was able to raise almost \$800 to make sure others in need were able to enjoy a Thanksgiving turkey dinner," he said.

That was enough to buy 36 turkeys. Mark Young of the Salvation Army said about 100 people had been



Cheyenne Armstrong collected enough money for 100 more people to get a Thanksgiving dinner.

told there would not be enough food for them. After Cheyenne's donation,

they were called back to dinner after all. 

Did you know?

In the latest federal Conservative government budget bill, tabled on October 22, there includes amendments that would radically weaken the Canada Labour Code. The changes in the Code are related to the health and safety provisions. If made, they would water down the right to refuse dangerous work, end the role of federal Health and Safety Officers in the investigation process and give employers the power to discipline workers when they invoke the right to refuse dangerous work.

All together, these changes would make the Canada Labour Code provisions on the right to refuse dangerous work the weakest in the country, and put workers' lives at risk. The changes would directly impact workers in federally regulated sectors, including tens of thousands of Unifor members.

Concerned about these terrible amendments? Take a moment to voice your concern.

Send a letter to your MP now: <http://www.canadianlabour.ca/right-to-refuse-unsafe-work>

Featured activist


Name: Jim Sadlemyer

Age: 50

Local: 114

Workplace: Loomis Express

Hometown: Nanaimo, BC

Jim is a dedicated union, social and political activist. A long-time member of Local 114, he's never shied away from tackling the tough jobs, whether it's bringing the local and its members into the digital age via the website, Facebook and Twitter, or undertaking "mapping" of membership to build a network to bring the awareness of the Conservative attacks on labour. Jim's a huge asset to his local. 



Jim Sadlemyer works with social media

DO YOU KNOW AN OUTSTANDING ACTIVIST? CONTACT:
COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG

Aboriginal and workers of colour debate issues

More than 120 people attending Unifor's Aboriginal and Workers of Colour conference in Port Elgin recently discussed ways they could work with their union locals to improve conditions for racialized workers in their workplaces and the community.

Unifor activists from across the country shared their experiences and


hopes for the future, said Vinay Sharma, human rights director for Unifor.

"Members had very good discussions on how they could make a difference through Unifor" Sharma said.

Participants discussed such issues as missing and murdered aboriginal women, racism, the attack on union security, and justice for migrant workers.

Unifor National President Jerry Dias spoke on the opening night and met with many of the participants.

"We have come a long way but we need to do a lot more," Dias told the group, noting that having a member of the National Executive Board representing racialized workers is only a start for Unifor.

"One NEB position is the floor, not the ceiling." A special guest at the conference was Bromley Armstrong, a long-time human rights advocate. Sharma said that with several young activists in attendance for the first time, the conference had a strong balance of the past, present and future. 

"We will push back," Dias tells CUPE

Unifor President Jerry Dias lit up the CUPE convention hall and the Twittersphere with his call to put young people in this country back to work. He spoke to the more than 2,500 delegates and observers attending the union's 50th anniversary national convention on October 22 in Quebec City.

Noting that Unifor and CUPE together represent almost a million members, he stressed the responsibility our size entails, and in particular



Photo From CUPE National

the duty we have toward young people who are feeling betrayed by the policies of government.


"Young people have

always been told to get an education go to college, get a diploma; go to university, get a degree; upgrade your skills and jobs will be

waiting," said Dias. Well guess what? Seven hundred thousand manufacturing jobs later, there are no jobs for young people."

"It's time for the trade union movement to take back our country to put young people back to work," he said.

Dias also had sharp words for the Harper Conservatives.

"Why is it that they can order us back to work, yet Harper can prorogue his government four or five times? I don't see the labour minister ordering herself back to work." 

Tax is not a 4-letter word

A new book, featuring a chapter by Unifor economist Jim Stanford debunks the conservative anti-tax ideology that is used to justify austerity measures that gut our social service.

The book, *Tax is Not a Four-Letter Word*, is published by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternative is edited by Alex Himelfarb, director of Glendon College at York

University (and former Privy Council member), and Toronto Star opinions editor (and Unifor member) Jordan Himelfarb.

Stanford wrote the opening chapter in the book, *The Economic Consequences of Taxing (and Spending)*, in which he challenges the conservative argument that lower taxes are always good, saying good social programs that all

Canadians rely on require stable funding.

"The goal of progressives is not high taxes, or bigger government for its own sake," Stanford writes. "Rather we campaign for good policies and programs, recognizing that those programs need to be financed by taxes in order to survive."

A book launch is Nov. 5 at 6pm at Ryerson's George

Vari Engineering Building, Sears Atrium, 245 Church Street, Toronto. 



Harper telecom policy in disarray

Industry Canada's rejection of a planned investment in MTS-Allstream for unspecified national security reasons is another sign the federal government's entire telecommunications policy is inconsistent and failing, said Jerry Dias the leader of Unifor, Canada's largest telecommunications union.

"The federal government has completely mismanaged the policy framework for this industry," said Dias, "The bizarre rules for the coming spectrum auction, and the inconsistent and arbitrary approach to foreign ownership, have created nothing but confusion and uncertainty across the industry."

Unifor represents some

30,000 workers across Canada's telecommunications sector, including workers at MTS-Allstream. MTS-Allstream had reached an acquisition agreement with Accelero, an international firm that would help Allstream expand. Industry Canada suddenly rejected the deal on October 7.

For decades, Canada's telecommunications sector was off-limits to foreign corporations, but the Harper government began opening loopholes in their 2012 omnibus budget bill. The government claims its policy will facilitate an elusive "fourth national carrier," which would supposedly create benefits for consumers.

This was also the

rationale behind other policies, like rules in the coming spectrum auction which clearly favour foreign entrants, and restrictions on purchases of smaller companies by the three existing Canadian-owned major suppliers.

"The government owes it to Canadians to ensure the future stability of these vital jobs under an alternative ownership structure," said Dylan Gadwa, president of Unifor Local 2000-A representing workers at the company.

Unifor favours clear limits on foreign ownership, a National Wireless Code to protect consumers and Canadian-content thresholds. 

Solidarity with media workers

Unifor urges the chief executive of Maritime Broadcasting to return to the table and work out a first contract with seven workers at his company's radio station in Saint John, New Brunswick.

The group - dubbed the Saint John 7 - have been on strike for nearly 16 months.

A letter to CEO Robert Pace, signed by Unifor Atlantic Director Lana Payne, media sector chair Randy Kitt and media sector director Howard Law, calls on Pace to settle the dispute.

"This is an extraordinarily long time for a first contract dispute to be going on. These seven workers are now facing the prospect of a

second Christmas on the streets. As a union representing other MBS workers across the Atlantic, we find the situation intolerable," the letter reads.


In addition, Unifor is donating \$5,000 to help the strikers. Payne said Unifor locals in the region have been making their own donations since the strike began.

The workers at Kool 98, K-100 and CFBC in Saint John, part of Halifax-based MBS Radio, have been on strike since June 2012. Top issues are a living wage, respect in the workplace and quality local radio.

"These workers deserve a fair deal and a living wage. All media workers

across this country will support these 7 until a fair deal is achieved," Kitt said.

The strikers are members of the Canadian Media Guild. Workers at other MBS stations are members of Unifor.

To listen to an online radio station set up by the strikers, or to make a donation, go to www.radiofreesaintjohn.fm. 



Want to keep getting Uniforum?

Uniforum is going green.


That means that we will soon stop mailing out copies of Uniforum to those who do not tell us they want to keep receiving the print version of the newsletter by mail.

So, if you like the printed version and would like to continue receiving Uniforum by mail, you need to let us know.


Those who don't let us know will soon be dropped from the mailing list.

To keep receiving the newsletter by mail, simply email the Unifor Communications department at

communications@unifor.org. You can also call us at 1-800-268-5763, ext 3771, or send us a note to Unifor Communications, 205 Placer Court, Toronto, ON M2H 3H9.

To receive Uniforum by email go to <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/subscribe> 

Correction


The caption for a photo in the previous edition of Uniforum said that Local 444 in Windsor had installed a new Unifor sign at its union hall. In fact, Local 444 shares the hall with Local 200, and the two locals changed the sign together. Uniforum regrets the error. 

New members

Telcom Canada Ltd, Scarborough, ON -32 members.

Hoito Restaurant, Thunder Bay, ON -59 members.

Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital, Pharmacy Staff, Windsor, ON -22 members.

Hotel Dieu Grace Hospital, Occupational and Physio-Therapists, Windsor, ON -25 members. 

New appointments

Servicing

Fred Bond, currently a service representative working in Brockville, will be transferred to Sudbury effective Sunday, December 1, 2013.

Sandi McManus, former Local 2002 member and currently member of Unifor Local 888 has been appointed a service representative working out of our New Westminster

office, effective Sunday, November 17, 2013.

Mario Santos, Vice President of Local 114, has been appointed as a service representative working out of Prince George, effective Sunday, October 27, 2013.

Frank Wright, Chairperson, University of Manitoba, Local 3007, has been appointed a service representative working out

of our Winnipeg office, effective Sunday, October 27, 2013.

Kelly-Anne Orr, Chairperson at Woodingford Lodge, Local 636 has been appointed a service representative for health care, working out of our Toronto office, effective Sunday, November 3, 2013. 

Support for fight back in Nova Scotia

More than 200 Nova Scotia Federation of Labour delegates, including over 50 proud Unifor members, passionately debated worker and union rights and called for a massive fightback campaign against the Harper government's attack on a fairer, more equal Canada.

Delegates also condemned plans by the newly elected provincial Liberal government to contract out union work as

well as the move to eliminate regional health authorities and create one large super board.

Keynote speaker Unifor Atlantic Director Lana Payne said instead of fighting with health care unions, including Unifor which represents more than 4,000 health care workers in Nova Scotia, the new premier should be working with us to save Medicare from Harper's neglect.


Payne slammed the federal government's attacks on worker and union rights.

"We live in a time when the legitimacy of our cause for social and economic justice is being challenged like never before," said Payne. "This requires an unprecedented response from the labour movement. The creation of Unifor is our response to this assault." She noted, however that working people and their unions can



Unifor Atlantic Director Lana Payne says labour needs to push back.

Photo by Trevor Beckerson, CFU Unifor 2040

triumph as long as we ensure "our solidarity is greater than their greed." 

Navistar pension ruling upheld

The Ontario Financial Services Tribunal has dismissed Navistar's appeal of a ruling in favour of former workers at the now-closed Chatham, Ont. truck plant.

"This is an important decision in a long battle," said Bob Chernecki, retired assistant to the president, who has been leading the Navistar discussions.

The deputy superintendent of pensions

had earlier ruled that workers who left the plant between 2009 and the plant's closure in 2011 were eligible for a pension.

Navistar appealed, saying the superintendent did not have jurisdiction. On Oct. 10, The Financial Services Tribunal denied the appeal, upholding the original ruling.

The Tribunal can now move ahead on all the outstanding issues

regarding the pending partial wind-up on the plan. Decisions made on these issues, including the banked credited service issue that was in dispute, may affect all unionized plan members.

The Tribunal upheld the submissions of counsel that the deputy superintendent's ruling earlier this year was fair and unimpeachable.

Hearings on all the

outstanding issues will resume on December 9, 2013, and continue on December 11-12 and 16, 2013 in Toronto.

"Unifor will continue to fight on behalf of the Navistar workers, Chernecki said. 