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uniforum



Unifor National President Jerry Dias waits for a television interview to start on Ontario election night, June 12, shortly after a Liberal majority government was announced.

Hudak defeated in Ontario

Months of work by Unifor and allied groups to defend workers rights and Ontario communities from Tim Hudak's Conservatives, paid off June 12 when Hudak's anti-labour policies were soundly rejected by voters.

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Unifor at Pride across Canada

Unifor will be represented in Pride parades, picnics and rallies across Canada this year - including putting a float in the World Pride Parade to be held in Toronto.

"Pride events are a chance for us to participate

alongside the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans community, support our LGBT members and allies and reaffirm our commitment to be a union for everyone - with pride," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said.

"Pride is a celebration, but we cannot forget that homophobia is still a reality in many of our workplaces," he said.

Dias will be participating in the World Pride Parade in Toronto on Sunday, June 29.

"I encourage staff, local
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Unifor and UAW share same goals

Unifor National President Jerry Dias became the first Canadian labour leader to speak at a UAW convention in 18 years recently, and used the occasion to call for the two unions to work together toward common goals.

"There is no reason
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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@jdcoles : #unifor activist Kellie Scanlon launches the Unifor World Pride float build. #topoli #onpoli. pic.twitter.com/f7EtIhYu5I


@JimboStanford : #Unifor strikers at Cascade Aerospace win their right to picket digitaljournal.com/pr/1987489 Neither employers nor Tories can take our rights away

In brief

Local helps unemployed

Unifor Local 1996-O in Toronto has joined efforts with the Toronto and York Region Labour Council 's Labour Education Center to help unemployed people in the community fill openings at Bell Technical Solutions.

The local has gone as far as to help screen the candidates in conjunction with LEC – and introduced them to Unifor and what the union is all about.

The local provided the list of 150 candidates to the employer, which may place close to 50 candidates into jobs. 

Armoured car safety

Representatives of Unifor, the union representing armoured car workers, met with Director General of Policing Policy Mark Potter, from the office of the Minister of Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, recently.


The union repeated its call for a taskforce to examine the lack of regulations in the industry and make a series of recommendations to improve safety for both workers and the public. 

Photo spotlight

SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS TO COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG



JOSH COLES

Delegates and families enjoyed all that Port Elgin has to offer during a recent CPP/EI conference.



STUART LAIDLAW

At a recent IndustriALL meeting, Turkish union leaders read one of Unifor's founding documents, which they translated to Turkish to inspire their members.

We're starting a conversation on good jobs


Unifor is going to spark a national conversation on how we create good jobs in Canada. We know there are solutions to the stagnating economy, growing precariousness and few opportunities for young people.

Unifor has partnered with Ryerson University, the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and the

Canadian Federation of Students to host a multi-stakeholder dialogue on how together, we can create good jobs – now and in the future. The Summit will take place from October 3-5 at Maple Leaf Gardens in Toronto.

Check out the new website goodjobssummit.ca, and watch the video. When

you're done, share it with your co-workers, friends and family. Be sure to sign up for updates.

Be part of this national conversation – online and in your community. Stay tuned for our interactive calendar of events later this month and to learn how you can host a conversation where you live. 

Cascade workers strike over two-tier

More than 400 skilled workers at Cascade Aerospace began a legal strike June 4 after talks with the employer broke down, with workers rolling their tool benches out of the workplace by the hundreds.


"We have reached a standstill. Our members won't accept concessions from a company as profitable as Cascade," said Gavin McGarrigle, Unifor's BC area director.

Cascade Aerospace, owned by the Halifax-based IMP group, is demanding a

two-tiered contract.

Unifor is concerned that other workers will be rushed in to do the work normally done by its members.

"Customers and military personnel who will ultimately be using and flying in these aircraft have a right to know that the people doing the repairs have the necessary skill and experience," said McGarrigle.

In Halifax, Unifor members and supporters from across the labour movement held a rally June 11 in support of the strikers. 



Striking Cascade workers took their tools with them.


UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS - KATIE ARNUP, SARAH BLACKSTOCK, IAN BOYKO, SHELLEY BURGOYNE, SHANNON DEVINE, MARIE-ANDRÉE L'HEUREUX, STUART LAIDLAW, AND ANNE MARIE VINCENT

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union leaders and activists to get out to Pride events in their area," he said.

To find Pride events near you, go to: www.unifor.org/pride.

"The right of our LGBT members and their families to respect, dignity and full equality is profoundly tied to our advocacy on all issues of workers' rights," Dias said.

Unifor has elected LGBT committees across Canada. 



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anymore to ask for concessions," Dias said. "We gave and we gave and we gave and that is over."

Dias said outgoing UAW President Bob King worked to ease relations between the two unions.

"Bob King is responsible for knocking down the walls," Dias said. "We are absolutely committed that we are not only going to continue that relationship, we are going to expand on it."

The CAW, one of Unifor's founding unions, split from the UAW in 1985.


"We have global challenges and we need global solutions," Dias said, adding the two unions are stronger when they work together.



Unifor National President recently became the first Canadian labour leader to address the UAW in 18 years.

Dias attended the convention with his father.

To see Dias's speech to

the UAW, go to: youtube.com/watch?v=lkyMASFMMJY 

Women's Conference

Unifor represents more than 86,000 women. The Unifor Women's Conference will be held August 10-13 at the Family Education Centre in Port Elgin. For more information, go to: unifor.org/women

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Ontario"
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"Ontario voters sent a clear message tonight that they want an Ontario with good jobs, strong public services and healthy communities," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said on election night.

"Ontario has clearly rejected Mr. Hudak's offer to race Ontario to the bottom."

Kathleen Wynne's Liberals formed a majority government in the election.

"These results show that Ontario voters want leadership that will help build a prosperous Ontario – not Hudak style leadership that would have destroyed jobs, public services and communities," Dias said.


Unifor, working with other unions and progressive

groups, is proud to have been part of the movement that prevented Hudak from forming a government.

Hudak had tried to make his party more appealing by saying he would not pursue killing the Rand Formula if elected, but voters still knew he would push an anti-labour agenda and so rejected his party, Dias said.

"Voters quickly figured out that firing 100,000 people would be bad for the province, and that Hudak's million jobs plan was just bad math," Dias said.

Noting that there were some significant losses for the NDP, Dias said, "We lost some of those important leaders tonight."

Unifor's Rights at Work campaign, begun in the winter, identified Hudak as the first threat to Canadian labour rights. 

Alberta told to shelve pension bills


Unifor advised the government to shelve Bills 9 and 10 during recent testimony before the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future.

"Bills 9 and 10 are a serious blow to the dignity and independence of Alberta's seniors," said Joie Warnock, Unifor's Western Director June 5. "This legislation is a crass attempt to have companies profit from taking away seniors' retirement income."

Bill 9 (Public Sector Pension Plans Amendment Act) and Bill 10 (Employment Pension (Private Sector Plans Amendment Act) were

introduced in the spring with no notice or public consultation. Public backlash forced the government to refer them to the Standing Committee on Alberta's Economic Future.

On top of addressing the major concerns with both bills, Unifor's submission addressed the problem of the lack of pension coverage in Alberta, stressed the need to broaden the economic outlook when considering pension sustainability, and provided recommendations to the committee on how to improve retirement security for Albertans.

"We are calling on the government to take a more balanced approach and consider the interests of workers and pensioners for an adequate and secure pension today and into the future," Warnock told the committee. 

Canada urgently needs a national forestry policy

This column by Unifor National President Jerry Dias appeared in the Thunder Bay Chronicle-Journal.



With new collective agreements covering 2,000 workers at Resolute Forestry Products' eleven locations across Quebec and Ontario – a deal that will set the pattern for negotiations with 8,000 other workers east of the Manitoba border – this vital industry is on renewed footing and ready for a long-overdue national dialogue on the future of forestry.

Canada is a nation rich in natural resources, which provide immense opportunities, but also bring serious responsibilities. We must always consider how to harness our resources to serve the interests of the whole country, generate good jobs, support communities, lead to innovation, and meet the highest standards for environmental stewardship.

Addressing these issues remains central to shaping our whole economy, and is key to building the kind of society we want. This is nowhere more true than in forestry.

As one of the industries upon which our country was built, forestry can too often evoke a nostalgia for the past. And the industry can be seen as far from our

increasingly urban society – out of sight and mind of political leaders.

But it is critical that we see forestry for what it truly is today: an integral part of our modern economy, an important source of good jobs, a leading-edge innovator, and a renewable natural resource that can have a stronger future.

Logging, pulp and paper, and wood products manufacturing employ 190,000 people across the country, and most of these are good jobs with decent wages and working conditions. Canada is the world's largest forestry exporter: we ship more than half of our \$57 billion annual output. And the industry and its workers make important contributions to the public purse to pay for essential services such as health care, education, and infrastructure.

But the forestry sector is in transition. The past decade delivered incredible challenges, including rapidly changing markets, a shift in consumer demand away from newsprint and other papers in the digital age, the devastation of an over-valued Canadian dollar that hit all exporters, and the global financial crisis and recession. Over the last decade, the industry shed a third of its jobs.

After painful restructuring that drew on the dedication and sacrifices of forestry workers, and was supported by some solid government policies, the industry is now on a

rebound and, most importantly, could now be poised for a much brighter future.

What could lie ahead? New, innovative products; the development of biopathways and nano-cellulose technologies that put forestry resources to consumer and energy uses never previously imagined; and a sustained transition toward higher-value growth products and markets could be in our future. And a coming wave of retirements means the industry could need upwards of 60,000 new workers by 2020. All of this change is possible, but none of it will happen automatically.

Around the world, wherever there is a successful forestry industry, we find smart and innovative policies to manage the public resources, harness the opportunities, and address the responsibilities. And Canada must do exactly these things as well: We need comprehensive policies designed to ensure that forestry is an increasingly value-added industry.

Policies are needed to support investments that transition toward growing markets, which means that the federal Forest Industry Transformation program needs to be significantly expanded, hand-in-hand with complementary provincial initiatives.

We also need sustainable rules for wood harvesting that secure investments and jobs while meeting the highest environmental standards.

There must be stable and appropriately priced hydro-electricity; as well, transportation infrastructure, pricing and access need to be modernized. Trade policies need to support high-value forestry exports, while ensuring we are not the target of unfair trade measures. And we need to control the export of unprocessed raw logs.

To develop a successful national forestry policy, the federal government must bring together business, government, labour, and community leaders in a re-instated National Forestry Council.

This Council needs to be more than a "talk shop." It must have a specific mandate to investigate and make public recommendations for a strengthened high-value forestry industry. It must have a wide enough scope to investigate all issues. It must seek the full participation of provincial governments. And it must have adequate resources to engage with stakeholders and report out on its recommendations within a set timeframe.

Workers have done their part to put the industry on a renewed footing. And in the course of our negotiations, Resolute Forestry Products has joined our call for a re-instated Council.

Canada's vital forestry industry is now at a crossroads. We have the opportunity for a bright future, but only if we are responsible and make the right choices. 