



Report of the Regional Executive Vice President

Introduction

With the next federal election quickly looming, our efforts are shifting to campaigns that will ensure we oust Stephen Harper's Conservatives come Election Day.

To that end, our Northern components, along with the local federations of labour are collaborating on a Common Front movement; a strategy used successfully in other provinces to unite all non-profit organizations under one banner with a set of unified messages. Our goals are all aligned on issues of poverty, hunger, workers' rights and more, and it only makes sense to pool our resources and our experience to achieve our goals in the next election.

In Yukon, the Treasury Board mobilization campaign continues to unfold, with various activities taking place on a monthly basis. In December, the focus was increasing member support by signing the PSAC online petition regarding sick leave provisions.

Education planning being a priority in the Territory, initial discussions were held with AFN and YEU. Planning for up-coming UDP

is well underway with mentors and enthusiastic participants in place.

Regional Committees throughout the territories have been busy completing year end reports, and planning their activities and budget for 2015.

Our region will be investing a lot of effort in the coming months to form the Common Front coalition, organize telephone polls to gauge the political standpoint of voters and outline the platforms of each Northern MP to give a detailed perspective to prospective voters.

**Jack Bourassa,
Regional Executive Vice President**

We Are All Affected

Much of the emphasis has been on spreading the message that We Are All Affected across the North with unified messaging and to highlight the Conservative governments' hard-hitting cuts to public services in the North.

To that end, we created custom "Wash Your Hands of Harper" hand sanitizers and handing out branded PSAC North merchandise at prominent events in cities across the North, along with irrefutable proof that the Harper government is harming valuable public services.



Green Apple Campaign

Another crucial campaign revolves around the fact that more and more Northerners are now turning to food banks to feed their families in the North, and I've worked hard to offer long-term solutions to the growing problem. PSAC North took part in two successful food drive campaigns – in Whitehorse and in Hay River – to raise thousands of dollars to restock the barren shelves with much-needed food.



I also launched the Green Apple Campaign, which means staple items like rice, soups and breakfast foods will have small labels next to the prices to show just what's needed. It's a campaign I aim to introduce across the North, and eventually to regions all across Canada, to assist food banks and community freezers restock. We're also working with grocery stores to find innovative ways to raise money for food banks every day, whether it's through lotteries or programs like the Super A's Round Up program. We first launched the program in Whitehorse, YT then subsequently in Hay River, NWT, and we're now focusing our efforts in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet.

Building Bridges

I've also made it my priority to reach out to members from communities all across the North, especially youth members who are only just getting a feel for what they can accomplish with PSAC North. By meeting with members from Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Whitehorse, Yellowknife and many more in between – from dozens of different employers with stories of their own – I've formed a better notion of what makes PSAC North thrive, and where we can work to become even better in the coming months and even years together.

The Battle over Bills 12 and 1

In October 2014, it became clear the governments of the Northwest Territories and Nunavut were moving ahead with damaging pension reform that would severely hamper the benefits and securities of thousands of PSAC North members in both territories. The legislation, the Northern Employees Benefits Services Pension Plan Act,

would alter employees' pensions from a defined benefits plan – guaranteeing their retirement benefits – to a defined contribution plan, allowing the employer to reduce their guaranteed benefits, even doing so retroactively. PSAC North launched a campaign to withdraw Bill

12 in NWT and Bill 1 in Nunavut, with a media blitz, protests outside the legislature and by lobbying Members of the Legislative Assembly with verbal and written statements. Our efforts didn't go unnoticed, with the Legislative Assembly backing off and allowing for a 120-day extension to the bills' review, and with sources now saying many of the amendments PSAC North and other labour groups asked for will be granted.

But with the Legislative Assembly resuming in February, we've further solidified our campaign, outlining the continual attacks on Canadians' retirement security in a Labour Views column featured in the Yellowknifer newspaper, as well as running radio ads and lobbying MLAs.



Tough Bargaining

It has been a difficult round of negotiations with several employers across the North, with many workplaces taking a hard line at the bargaining table, pushing for 0% wage increases and cuts to crucial worker benefits.

As it stands, our negotiators have reached an impasse in the Town of Hay River, at the Fort Smith Housing Authority, AVENS Community Living for Seniors and others, and strategy committees are working

hard to plan for job action that will pose the least harm to the communities while solidifying our position at the bargaining table and earning our workers a reasonable collective agreement for a fair, living wage.



Treasury Board Bargaining



Offering Treasury Board updates to our federal members has been an excellent opportunity to get members out in force and mobilize them as well as offering important information at the same time. Treasury Board bargaining team member Geoff Ryan was able to offer sessions in Whitehorse, YT, Yellowknife, NWT as well as Iqaluit, NT, and his presentations were well-received.

Many of the members who took part in his TB update sessions became those who spearheaded mobilizing activities and Days of Action in their workplaces on the 19th of every month.

Plans are being set to have further TB updates delivered through a Telephone Town Hall in March.



Events and Activities

October 20---24, 2014	AEC, NBoD Meetings	Presented REVP report to NBoD on activities in the North
October 24---26, 2014	YEU Convention	Attended Yukon Employees' Union convention in Whitehorse
October 27---28, 2014	Iqaluit for AGMs	Traveled to Iqaluit to attend Regional Committee AGMs and meet with NEU President Bill Fennell regarding issues at Baffin Correctional Centre
October 29---30, 2014	AEC meetings	Attended Alliance Executive Committee Meetings in Ottawa
November 1, 2014	NTFL Annual Face to Face Meeting	Met with Mary Lou Donnelly (CEIC) and Alex Furlong (CLC) along with newly elected NTFL officials
November 1, 2014	NTFL Executive Solidarity Social	Met with newly elected executive of the Northern Territories Federation of Labour
November 3, 2014	Ombudsman Town Hall meeting	Met with Standing Committee on Government Operations in NWT on possibility of introducing ombudsman's office in <u>the territory</u>



November 11, 2014	Remembrance Day Ceremony	Presented a wreath to fallen veterans on behalf of PSAC North
November 20--21, 2014	AEC Meetings in Ottawa	Attended AEC in Ottawa
November 28, 2014	CLiFF Festival	Hosted the Canadian Labour Independent Film Festival in Yellowknife
November 28, 2014	Fort Smith bargaining meeting	Discussed possible strike action in hamlet of Fort Smith after bargaining turned to conciliation
December 1--5, 2014	Attended NEU executive training in Iqaluit	Met with the full NEU executive to share strategies over the next term, taking the opportunity to spread PSAC North's Green Apple Campaign across Nunavut
December 11--12, 2014	Fort Smith Housing Authority Strike Vote	Attended strategy meetings and helped facilitate a strike vote for the Fort Smith Housing Authority
December 14--19, 2014	AEC and NBoD meetings	Traveled to Ottawa to participate in AEC and NBoD meetings
December 29, 2014	Strategy meeting with NTFL	Met with outgoing Northern Territories Federation of Labour President Mary Lou Cherway to discuss succession planning, a common front for next federal election
December 30, 2013	Strategy meeting with UNW President	Met with UNW President Todd Parsons to discuss formation of Standing Committee for Finance in the North region



January 5, 2014	Bill 12 Strategy session	Discussed the possibility of PSAC pension expert James Infantino traveling to Yellowknife to meet with NEBS board on Bill 12 legislation
January 11---13, 2015	AEC meetings in Ottawa	Attended first AEC meeting of the new year
January 14---16, 2015	Traveled to Iqaluit for AGM meetings	Coordinated AGM meetings for several defunct committees to get them back up and running.
January 17, 2015	Walking with our Sisters Opening	Attended the opening of the Walking with Our Sisters exhibit, commemorating Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women in Canada
January 22, 2015	Town of Hay River Strategy Call	Discussed potential strike actions for Town of Hay River after conciliation fails. Strike Training taking place Jan. 29---Feb. 1
January 22, 2015	AVENS Community for Seniors Strategy Call	With an overwhelming number of essential employees, strategized tactics to send clear message and secure positive public opinion without general strike
January 23, 2015	PSAC National Strike Coordinating Committee conference call	Organize tactics around national strike strategies
January 26---30	Strike votes for Qulliq Energy Corporation in Gjoa Haven, NT and Cambridge Bay, NT	Mobilize members for potential strike action and discuss political issues surrounding

2015 Federal election