



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, JUNE 20, 2017**

1. **LOCATION:** Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC

2. **CHAIRPERSON:** 1st Vice President Terry Engler

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

MSC that the minutes of the May 16, 2017 meeting be adopted.

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:

(* = recredentialed, A = alternate)

CUPE Local 454

Nick Angrignon

Nicole Dodd

Craig Phillips

UFCW Local 1518

Jiaxin (Betty) Bi

Laura Cipolato *

Wenjie (Aaron) Du

Abby Leung

Ryan Milligan

Remmy Mpitasrusuma

Stefan Nielsen *

ILWU Local 517

Sarah Pilgrim

Move UP

Bilbeer Sandhu

5. **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

a) Joulene Parent and Dave Lomas, ILWU, Battle of Ballentyne Pier

Brother Lomas is a retired member of ILWU Local 500. On Sunday, June 18, ILWU commemorated the 82nd Anniversary of the Battle of Ballentyne. A monument was erected in 2010 where they gather every year to honour those involved. On June 18, 1935 a march of between 1500 and 5000 (depending on the report) striking longshore workers and their supporters (other unions, including other waterfront workers' unions and building trades unions) started from the longshore hall on East Hastings. Marchers were met by police at Alexandria Street, at the western end of Ballentyne Pier. When longshore strikers tried to march onto the pier, the police showed full force. Police on horseback stormed through the crowds at full gallop, tear gas was deployed by the RCMP, and police on foot put to use their 4 foot long batons. Boxcars adjacent to crowds were full of police units and machine guns, which thankfully were not put to use. It proved to be the bloodiest hours of waterfront history; 100 longshore and supporters and 44 police were treated for injuries; 2 longshore workers were shot in the back with buckshot. From June 24 to October 25, over 500 criminal cases were prosecuted with 148 convictions. By December when the strike was called off, 18 longshoremen were in Oakalla (a maximum security prison in Burnaby, closed in 1980). There are a few different theories about how and why the events at Ballentyne Pier came about. One theory is that marchers were set up by the Shipping Federation of BC (now the BC Maritime Employers' Association, BCMEA), their allies in Vancouver business, and

the politicians and police force of the City of Vancouver. There is nothing that the longshore workers could have done to prevent what happened. The entire story was never told and can only be found in bits and pieces in the archives. The Shipping Federation had always had their way with the waterfront unions and had effectively broken the unions in 1919 and 1923; although there was a different twist in 1935, they used the same tactics that had worked before. One tactic used was the formation of citizen leagues and the financing of police specials (privately paid and trained thugs loaned to the police for “special” situations). Another tactic was employers would refuse to hire longshore union members and would form their own company unions and hire from them, which is how they would break unions on strike. In 1934, the impact of the US longshore strike and threats of a general strike, combined with a new longshore union that was flexing their muscles and challenging the power of the Shipping Federation, led the employers to put the machinery in motion to destroy the union once again. In April 1935, the Mayor of Vancouver, the Vancouver Chief of Police, and a group of Vancouver industrialists met with the Shipping Federation and formed an organization with the express purpose of combatting unions with the aid of a number of paramilitary organizations. The Citizens League put together over 700 police specials; they were given badges, some were given guns, and they were trained and paid by the Shipping Federation. These “specials” were the scabs employed on the waterfront. On June 15, 1935, the longshore union went on strike. The other waterfront unions around BC followed suit; every other local was broken. In December 1935, the strike was called off, those dedicated trade unionists who managed to escape the blacklist later infiltrated company unions and turned them into the strong, militant union we have today.

The Battle of Ballentyne saw a lot of people hurt, but they came back stronger than ever and stand as ILWU Canada as it is now.

Sister Joulene Parent, ILWU Local 500 Executive, shared photos of the event from the archives. When looking at media archives and reading what they said happened at the time versus what actually took place are very different accounts. One just needs to look at the photos of the march and those participating. The headlines alone tell a story of the media’s spin at the time; it is referred to as the Powell Street Riot, which has a very different connotation than the attack on workers that it really was – an attack on labour and community. Labour’s expression “an injury to one, is an injury to all” can really be seen here.

b) James Richardson, CUPE Local 1816 National Representative - Pacific Blue Cross

CUPE Local 1816 members at Pacific Blue Cross (PBC) are on strike. The employer is attacking benefits for retirees. Money is budgeted every year for those benefits, but the employer wants to eliminate their contributions and add this money to their profit margin – PBC is a not-for-profit society. In bargaining, the union refused the employer’s concessionary proposals. PBC then applied for mediation but the only change in mediation was withdrawal of the employer’s illegal proposal to remove vested funds from already retired employees. The Local 1816 membership was unanimous in their stance that the union not return to the table until all concessionary demands were gone; Instead, PBC keeps returning with new “creative solutions”, which simply repackage the concessions. On May 10, strike notice was served. While they have not been picketing, there have been rotating walkouts and overtime bans starting May 13. The employer has now stopped paying their portion of benefits. The union was prepared to begin picketing Friday, June 16, but agreed instead to an exploratory meeting with Vince Ready. CUPE wanted PBC CEO Jan Grude to attend since he had been absent from bargaining. Mr. Grude refused. CUPE is considering

options but notes that PBC's AGM on September 7; any primary benefits holder from PBC can vote. The AGM includes elections for 7 of their board of directors. There are 5 board members who are from labour: Mark Olson, Labourers (Board President); John Fitzpatrick, (former VDLC Secretary Treasurer), MWBIU; Colleen Jordan, CUPE; Mary LaPlante, HEU; and Jerry Smith, IWA and USW. It would be very helpful to write to these board members to encourage the board to exert some pressure to resolve the dispute. Delegates and guests were also encouraged to continue with the campaign of contacting PBC CEO Jan Gruber to express concern and call for fair bargaining.

6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the May 16, 2017 meeting.

Political Action

It's now over a month since the May 9th provincial election and still in limbo. The absentee ballot count confirmed the outcomes. The NDP and Green party worked out a "Confidence and Supply" agreement to support each other on key issues and votes, which gives them a combined 44 MLAs compared to the Liberal's 43.

But the Liberals are still the government and proceeding to schedule a session in June with a Throne Speech that will almost certainly result in a non-confidence vote. The NDP will then ask the Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon to declare them as the new government. However, it is still possible that another election will be called.

CLC Convention

The four new seats for labour council representatives to the CLC's Canada Council were filled on the Thursday of convention; Sister DJ Pohl (Fraser Valley LC) was elected as the Pacific Region representative.

Labour Day 2017

The VDLC booth at Labour Day 2017 will have a clown and face painter, some new VDLC swag and materials. We need volunteers to assist with set-up, tear-down, and to talk to attendees about labour council and our activities.

We have tentatively booked Trout Lake Park for the 2018 Labour Day.

VDLC Education Program

Courses are still registering well and evaluations are very positive. In the past month we offered the very popular pensions course, plus two new courses: Promotions and WCB Psychological Injury.

United Way Labour Appreciation Dinner

David Fairey will be the recipient of the VDLC's Syd Thompson Community Service Award at the Labour Appreciation Dinner on November 30.

PNE Board

Anita Zaenker has been appointed to the PNE board as the community representative on behalf of labour. She was nominated by the VDLC along with three other recommendations with the understanding that one of the four would be selected.

Protein for People

The 2017 Protein for People community forum will be held at Queen Alexandra Elementary School again. The tentative date is September 21 between 3 and 6 pm.

Metro Vancouver Alliance

The MVA AGM was held June 12. Sister Hartman was re-elected to one of the 3 labour seats.

Living Wage

A press conference was held at Vancouver City Hall on June 8 to formally present a plaque from the Living Wage for Families Campaign to the City, Police and Park Boards in recognition of becoming a living wage employer. This is the culmination of years of work by the campaign and supported by MVA.

7. **CORRESPONDENCE:** Correspondence list circulated at meeting
MSC to accept the correspondence as circulated.

8. **EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- a) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: BC Government and a Progressive Agenda

BECAUSE the BC Liberals led by Christy Clark did not secure a majority government in the May 9, 2017 provincial election, with 43 elected Liberal MLA's compared to 41 NDP and 3 Green; and

BECAUSE the BC NDP and the BC Green Party have signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement, which commits to supporting each other on confidence votes and specified key issues; and

BECAUSE this agreement means that the NDP and Green parties will vote together to defeat the government on its throne speech, after which the NDP will ask the Lieutenant Governor to declare the NDP as government; and

BECAUSE it is likely that the NDP will become government by July, and will soon recall the legislature; and

BECAUSE the work to implement a progressive platform that won't be vulnerable to a change in government will require significant and disciplined support from the labour movement, NGOs, community coalitions and the broader public,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL continue its significant efforts to support and elect the NDP and keep working class and labour issues a priority in our political action work; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER advocate for a strategic planning and action process that encourages progressive organizations throughout BC to collaborate on a long-term agenda for change that will be unifying and mutually supportive; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FINALLY encourage affiliates and partners to demonstrate broad-based support for the progressive legislation and

policy changes by government, and establish that any efforts to ignore commitments or reverse progressive change carries a political risk.

b) *MSC that the following recommendation be adopted:*

Subject: Campaign for a National Prescription Drug Plan

BECAUSE Canada's unions have fought hard to win health insurance coverage for our members; and

BECAUSE 3.5 million Canadians don't have the prescription drug coverage they need; and

BECAUSE the less someone earns at work, the less likely they are to have a drug plan; and

BECAUSE no Canadian should have to choose between paying for groceries and paying for the medication they need,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL recommend that the theme for the 2017 Labour Day be "Pharmacare: The Campaign for a Universal Prescription Drug Plan"; and

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL FURTHER adopt this campaign as a priority campaign until everyone living in Canada is covered by a universal prescription drug plan.

9. REPORT OF UNIONS: *(in order reported)*

a) CUPW Vancouver – Reported by Fruma Sloan

The Parliamentary Committee examining the future of Canada Post said they would have the report in spring, it still has not been written. They are now saying that this important report will be submitted sometime in 2017. What this means, for some communities, is that their door-to-door delivery still has not been restored. There is still no progress on postal banking.

In past months, there has been an unprecedented number of mail thefts from community mail boxes. CUPW has been asking Canada Post and the federal government to reveal the true number of community mailbox thefts; they are refusing to tell the union and Canadians about the numbers and locations of the thefts.

Parliament is still waiting for Bill 27's second reading; Bill C27 will allow government Defined Benefit Plans to be changed to Target Benefit Plans. The pressure being put on by labour to abandon this change is working and needs to continue.

Parcels from outside Canada may be delayed at the parcel delivery plant due to a lack of staff at both Canada Post and Canada Customs. On June 20, two Canada Customs officers who work alongside CUPW members in the Richmond parcel plant were hospitalized after a hazmat incident. The two workers came into contact with a substance that leaked out of a package, early tests conclude that it's not fentanyl.

b) UFCW Local 1518 – Reported by Stefan Nielsen

On June 13, Sobeys sent a letter to the union of their intent to put 20 Safeway stores under quarterly review. (The Quarterly Review process was established to improve the performance of stores that are unprofitable and losing significant money. It is intended to be a joint dialogue between the union and the company in order to avoid store closures and save

jobs.) On June 14, the union replied rejecting this. The union regards this as unlawful and an abuse of the quarterly review process to attack wages and benefits of the members in these stores, as well as an attempt to bully the membership as a whole, as they go into bargaining early next year. This will be opposed with every means possible.

- c) HEU VGH Local – Reported by Lisa Kreut
Contract support services employees are currently holding strike votes. The bargaining unit covers: Compass, Aramark, and Sodexo employees working in housekeeping, food service, and laundry. This encompasses 4000 members across BC. Bargaining issues include job security and equal pay.
- d) CUPE Local 391 – Reported by Gary Jarvis
The union may have completed their last day of bargaining on June 9. They will meet to sign a Memorandum of Agreement in a week. On July 9, Local 391 will hold a ratification meeting. Details of the new collective agreement will be forthcoming.
- e) BCGEU Local 2003 – Reported by Jackie Pierre
BCGEU held their 2017 Convention and elected their new leadership: President Stephanie Smith, Treasurer Paul Finch, Executive Vice Presidents Sussanne Skidmore (re-elected), James Cocolle, Keri Michaels, and Doug Kinne. VDLC Delegates Jackie Pierre and Jason Singh were elected as Worker of Colour representatives with the BCGEU Provincial Executive. Component 20 member Cheryl Gilbert from Kitimat has been elected as Indigenous Workers' representative. A resolution to support members to attend VDLC meetings was referred back to the Provincial Executive.
- f) Unifor Local 111 – Reported by Robynn Bunch
Some bus service was lost to West Vancouver, will pick up some service including some routes in New Westminister and Tsawwassen First Nation. The “214” route was cut, but the Union Executive went to the Coast Mountain Bus Company and won the “214” run back. Also may pick up some other shuttle service in the future.

The following reports were made but not submitted for the minutes

- a) HEU PHSA Local – Reported by Bal Sandhu
- b) BCGEU Local 503 – Reported by Keith Stone

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

- a) Women's – Reported by Fruma Sloan
Next committee meeting, July 19, 6 pm at the VDLC office – all women welcome.

MSC to adopt the reports of committees.

OTHER REPORTS:

- a) BC FORUM – Reported by Agnes Jackman
The BC FORUM AGM is June 21. October 21 is the International Day of Older Persons, please visit the website, seniorsvoice.org to see upcoming activities. Everyone encouraged participate in some way.

MSC to receive the other reports.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: Nil

13. NEW BUSINESS:

MSC that the following be adopted:

Subject: Pacific Blue Cross Bargaining with CUPE 1816

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to the board members of Pacific Blue Cross and call upon them to direct their employer representatives at bargaining to withdraw concessions and come to a fair settlement with CUPE local 1816, with additional encouragement to those board members who are from the labour movement.

15. NOTICE OF MOTION: Nil

16. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- Sunday, June 25 forum with Stephen Gowans, author of *Washington's Long War on Syria*. The Event is sponsored by StopWar.ca
- Pride Season is here – there are number of events taking place around the Lower Mainland – a recent event was held on sex worker rights that received a lot of media coverage and support, it was a very positive event – anyone interest in lending support to that issue you are welcome to speak with delegate Lisa Kreut.
- July's guest speaker will be Adrienne Smith who will be speaking on the issue of sex worker rights and the labour movement's role.
- Congratulations to VDLC's Stephen Von Sychowski and Erin Searle on the birth of their new baby girl.
- Aboriginal Day events at Trout Lake, Friday, June 21

17. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 9:00 pm.*

18. NEXT MEETING: **TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017**, 7:30 pm,
Maritime Labour Centre.

Pizza Educational
Tuesday, July 18, 2017
6:00 pm

Guantanamo's Child: Omar Khadr
Discussion of the film and issue with Kathy Copps

[For lists of happenings please see our website events page – www.vdvc.ca/events/](http://www.vdvc.ca/events/)