



**REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING  
TUESDAY, JULY 18, 2017**

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

2. **CHAIRPERSON:** 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President Terry Engler

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

*MSC that the minutes of the June 21, 2017 meeting be adopted.*

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:

(\* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

**HEU GF Strong**

Tina Clemente

*MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).*

5. **GUEST SPEAKERS:**

Adrienne Smith – Sex Workers’ Rights and the Labour Movement’s role

Solidarity should include everyone, there should be no hierarchy of workers, every worker deserves safe working conditions, and everything should be done to reduce the risk of harm associated with dangerous work.

Recognizing that sex workers’ work is often dangerous, two groups of sex workers from different parts of the country came together to challenge provisions of the criminal code which made their work more dangerous. The first group from Ontario, led by an individual, and the second group from Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside, predominantly indigenous women. Once the first group got to Supreme Court, the second intervened.

There were 3 Criminal Code provisions being challenged:

1. Communicating for the purpose of prostitution: the inability to speak with a client freely is dangerous because it prevents sex workers from negotiating terms of work or assessing a situation for fear of being arrested. The Supreme Court of Canada agreed that this provision was dangerous and struck this from the Criminal Code.

2. Operating, or being found without a good account of oneself in a common bawdy house: this provision was struck down, as it has been proved that working inside a controlled environment is much safer than being on the street.

3. Living on the avails of prostitution: while this is designed to prevent the exploitation of others, what this means in practice is that one couldn’t have a roommate or tenant that’s a sex worker and landlords could be prosecuted for receiving rent from someone that earned their income as a sex worker. The Supreme Court agreed and struck this from the Criminal Code.

This seemed like a huge step for sex workers, but then Stephen Harper formed government and brought in a new bill; Bill C 36 – Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act. It brought in new provisions to the Criminal Code including: 1, preventing communicating for the purpose of procuring sex acts; 2, preventing of receiving material benefit from sex acts (i.e. living off the avails); 3, making it illegal to advertise for sex work; and 4, an asymmetrical ban on the sale and purchase of sex (i.e. it's not illegal to sell sex or be a sex worker, but it is illegal to purchase sex). Once again meaning that sex workers are putting themselves in jeopardy by having to evade police and the asymmetrical ban on sex work, infantilizes sex workers, implying that they are unable to care for their own wellbeing – it's demeaning.

It is very difficult under the law to change the law. Until there is an arrest and prosecution of a sex worker, lawyers can't bring a big Charter challenge; a frustrating facet of law.

With the election of the new Liberal government, sex workers are working with labour and other supportive organizations to determine what the position on sex work should be.

Adrienne appreciates the opportunity to speak to the labour council.

## **6. PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Joey Hartman reported on VDLC activities since the June 21, 2017 meeting.

### Political Action

On June 29, after a vote of non-confidence on the Liberal's throne speech, BC's Lieutenant Governor Judith Guichon declined Christy Clark's request to call another election, and instead confirmed NDP leader John Horgan as the Premier of BC. This is a rare moment in Canadian History. With the slimmest margin, the NDP and Green parties in combination hold just one seat more than the Liberals. The labour council and others who wish to see them succeed will need to be strategic and supportive.

The change in provincial government has also led to a municipal change. Geoff Meggs, a longtime city council member and the labour liaison for Vision Vancouver, announced his resignation to accept a position as John Horgan's chief of staff.

It is expected that a by-election to replace Meggs will be held in October and that the provincial government will probably use the opportunity to elect trustees for the Vancouver School Board, who are currently administered by a sole Liberal appointee.

### Labour Day

Volunteers are still needed to help with the VDLC booth at Labour Day 2017 at Holland Park in Surrey 11:30 am to 2:30 pm. We have hired a balloon clown and are meeting with a marketing representative to order swag. Trout Lake Park has been booked for the 2018 Labour Day in Vancouver.

### Summer Institute for Union Women and the US Labor Movement

Sister Hartman co-facilitated collective bargaining at the institute June 27 to July 1 in Honolulu and added a few vacation days. The 2018 Institute will be held July 10 to 14 at the Sonoma State University in California.

Protein for People

The community forum date is September 21 between 2:30 and 5:00 pm at Queen Alexandra School.

Just Transition

Samantha Smith, director of Just Transition for the ITUC, was in Vancouver briefly and wanted to establish contacts in BC to offer support and collaboration on how to support workers towards an economy away from fossil fuels. There is a strong chance the City of Vancouver will want to host a forum on this topic that includes unions, businesses, environmental organizations and community. The emphasis is on the maintenance of “decent” well paid jobs and appropriate training, infrastructure, economic options, and policy to create a genuine “just” transition.

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: Spending Authorizations

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL authorize the following expenditures:

- CCPA annual fundraising dinner October 19 – Table of 8 at a cost of \$1,000.00
- 411 Seniors Centre Society celebration September 28 – 4 tickets at a cost of \$200.00
- Red Cross for aid with wildfire management in BC’s Interior – Donation of \$500.00
- Solidarity in Action with CUPE Local 1816 members locked out by Pacific Blue Cross – Donation of \$200.00

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

Subject: Omar Khadr Settlement

BECAUSE the government of Canada has reportedly reached an out-of-court settlement with Omar Khadr for the violation of his constitutional rights; and

BECAUSE the settlement and its reasons have been widely misunderstood and criticized; and

BECAUSE the facts are that Mr. Khadr was held without charges in the notorious US prison Guantanamo Bay, where he was denied legal representation, and was routinely tortured; and

BECAUSE his “confession” to throwing a grenade that killed a US soldier during combat in Afghanistan when he was 15 years old was obtained under torture and runs contrary to US witness reports that the grenade was thrown by a middle aged man; and

BECAUSE the Supreme Court of Canada unanimously ruled in 2010 that the Canadian government violated Mr. Khadr’s Charter Rights by interrogating him while sleep deprived and handing over the evidence to the United States; and

BECAUSE the previous federal governments not only failed to take actions to protect Mr. Khadr as a Canadian citizen, but overtly condemned Mr. Khadr as a “terrorist” and condoned his imprisonment and conditions,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL write to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, with a copy to other federal leaders, to express support for the settlement agreement reached with Omar Khadr in consideration of the violation of his charter rights by the Canadian government.

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

Subject: Canadian Softwood Lumber

BECAUSE Canada’s forestry sector directly employs 202,000 people from every region of the country, produces \$60 Billion worth of products each year, and exports 70% of its product to the USA; and

BECAUSE the forestry sector is also a source of good-paying jobs in Canada, with wages 17% above the national average, which inject \$11.7 billion per year into the wider economy; and

BECAUSE the benefits of the forestry sector to Canada are threatened by renewed US tariffs in the ongoing softwood lumber dispute; and

BECAUSE the provincial and federal governments of Canada need a plan,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL call upon our governments to:

- Conduct thorough consultations with stakeholders, including unions that represent forest sector workers;
- Negotiate a new softwood lumber deal that benefits Canadian communities;
- Mitigate the impact of any US imposed duties, through federal loan guarantees;
- Focus federal assistance on workers and communities;
- Ensure any repayment of duties is invested back into local economies; and
- Diversify our forest industry economic base by transitioning from the export of raw logs to the development of secondary manufacturing, pulp and paper, and other spin-off industries.

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

a) HEU PHSA Amalgamated Local – Reported by Bal Sandhu

After 2 weeks of balloting, more than 4000 members of HEU who work in contracted support services, primarily as cleaners and dietary workers in Metro Vancouver, the Fraser Valley, Sunshine Coast, and Southern Vancouver Island delivered an overwhelming strike mandate of 96% to back their bid to secure fair and respectful collective agreements with their four multinational employers: Compass-Marquise, Sodexo, Aramark, and Acciona. Key issues are basic job security and fair wages

Essential services negotiations are close to conclusion. HEU and its members will soon be in a position to take job action if there is no progress made at the bargaining table.

- b) UFCW Local 1518 – Reported by Stefan Nielsen  
On July 16, members of Sunrise Poultry overwhelmingly ratified a 4 year contract with 8 to 12% wage increases and increases to Health and Welfare benefits. Sunrise members continue to be the highest paid poultry workers in North America.

In late June, Sobeys announced the impending closure of the Davie Street Safeway effective August 31. The union was told that this is temporary pending redevelopment; they are working hard to ensure that members are relocated fairly and with a minimum of disruption.

There has been an exchange of letters between the union and the company regarding Sobeys intention to conduct a quality review. The union continues to refuse to acknowledge this abuse of the quality review process and the company continues to insist that dates be set to meet. Sobeys has threatened further action if the union refuses to meet. They are in weekly contact with Sobeys' members by email and have formed a permanent committee of staff and long-time Safeway members to better handle this increasingly complex and difficult situation. Further public fight back efforts are being planned over the coming months.

- c) CUPW Vancouver Local 846 – Reported by Nathan Fralick  
The Vancouver Local has moved into the Maritime Labour Centre as of July 13. The new address is Suite 130 – 111 Victoria Drive, Vancouver, BC, V5L 4C4.
- d) ILWU Local 400 – Reported by Jason Woods  
Local 400 is in bargaining with Smit Marine in Prince Rupert, Pacific FMW in Port Alberni, and North Arm Close. The union recently ratified a collective agreement with Seaspan Oil.

Holding a rally Tuesday, July 25 in support of CUPE Local 1816 locked out by Pacific Blue Cross. Thank you to the VDLC for the donation in support.

Local 400 President Terry Engler has been lobbying in Ottawa and their campaign continues with their judicial review of the Cable Innovation in Victoria.

*MSC to adopt the reports of unions.*

#### **10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES:**

- a) Women's – Reported by Fruma Sloan  
Next meeting July 19, open to all women.

*MSC to adopt the reports of committees.*

#### **OTHER REPORTS:**

- a) CLC – Reported by Ron Stipp  
The new BC Government has been sworn in and the Cabinet announced. This government introduced the first, First Nations person in the Cabinet. The new Labour Minister is Harry Baines, and Labour is now a stand-alone ministry. The government has put an emphasis on children, family, childcare, and poverty reduction.

Labour Day theme is the National Pharmacare campaign, which is being launched. The CLC will be looking to delegates to help with lobbying when the time comes.

Municipal By-election will be very important, not just for the seat that has been vacated on Council, but for the election of the School Board.

Sears Canada situation has re-ignited the need for pension protections in place. As Sears Canadas closes its stores, workers are at risk. The workers' welfare, not the company's, needs to be the priority for government.

b) ILO Experts Meeting of Persons with Disabilities & Access to Decent Work – Reported by Sheryl Burns

May 15 and 16, 2017, Sheryl represented CUPE National and the Public Service International at the International Labour Organization (ILO) in Geneva, Switzerland. This meeting was attended by trade union activists from around the world, ILO representatives, and ACTRAC (the working bureau of the ILO representatives). This was the second meeting of its kind in the world. The focus was on the profound lack of access to decent work for persons with disabilities, ensuring a rights-based approach to lobbying for persons with disabilities right to have decent and meaningful work, the harm caused by “sheltered workshops”, the impact of civil conflict and privatization on persons with disabilities, decreased access to decent work, and the need to apply the “equal pay for work of equal value” principle to persons with disabilities who work. It was agreed that trade unions play a pivotal role in the struggle for the right to decent work for people with disabilities. It was also agreed to continue the dialogue and strategizing around ensuring persons with disabilities have access to decent work globally.

c) BC FORUM – Reported by Agnes Jackman

The latest edition of the Advocate is out. It has a pull-out of the benefit plan FORUM members are entitled to. The International Day of Older Persons, October 1, visit the Seniors' Voice website for events.

*MSC to receive the other reports.*

**11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS:** Nil

**12. NEW BUSINESS:** Nil

**13. TABLE TALK:**

The VDLC does not have a position on Sex Work. It was raised at the Women's Committee in the past and was very divisive. This isn't a women's issue, it's a societal one. This is an issue with many view points and many positions. Guest speaker Adrienne Smith, was clear as to their stance on the issue. During the table talk, delegates were encouraged to share their opinions, especially if they differs from that of the presentation, or fellow delegates. It is important for the VDLC to know the delegates' opinions. It is time to start the conversation.

**14. NOTICE OF MOTION:** Nil

**15. GOOD AND WELFARE:**

- Annual ILWU Pensioners picnic, July 20 at New Brighton Park and the ILWU Annual Golf Classic is Labour Day Weekend, it is completely sold out, proceeds are going into a trust fund for the daughter of a longshore worker who was killed on the job.
- 50/50 Proceeds to benefit Red Cross BC Wildfire relief

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

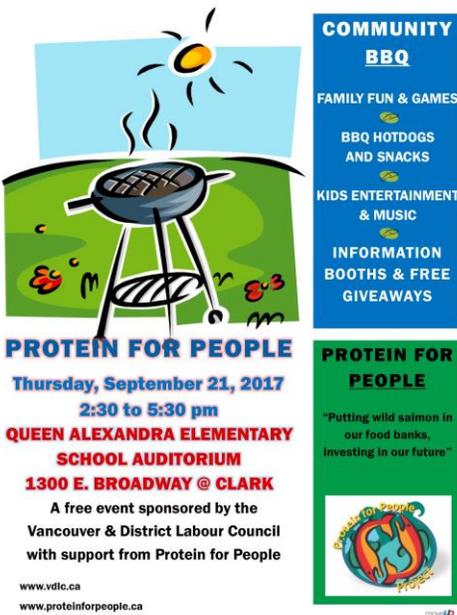
**17. NEXT MEETING:** **TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2017**, 7:30 pm,  
Maritime Labour Centre.

**Pizza Educational**  
**Tuesday, September 19, 2017**  
**6:00 pm**

**\$10 A Day Child Care**  
With Sharon Gregson

The \$10 a day child care plan for BC was part of the NDP election platform. The VDLC, BC Fed, and many others have endorsed this plan for years. Now we need to make it a reality. Sharon Gregson will help us make the case with those we talk to as we support this.

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



**COMMUNITY BBQ**

FAMILY FUN & GAMES  
BBQ HOTDOGS AND SNACKS  
KIDS ENTERTAINMENT & MUSIC  
INFORMATION BOOTHS & FREE GIVEAWAYS

**PROTEIN FOR PEOPLE**  
Thursday, September 21, 2017  
2:30 to 5:30 pm  
**QUEEN ALEXANDRA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL AUDITORIUM**  
**1300 E. BROADWAY @ CLARK**  
A free event sponsored by the Vancouver & District Labour Council with support from Protein for People

www.vdlic.ca  
www.proteinforpeople.ca

**PROTEIN FOR PEOPLE**  
"Putting wild salmon in our food banks. Investing in our future"

