REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING
TUESDAY, March 20, 2012

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

2. **CHAIRPERSON:** Terry Engler

3. **ADOPTION OF PREVIOUS MINUTES:**

MSC that the minutes of the February,21 2012 meeting be adopted with the addition of the written union report submitted by Ken Elworthy of Sheet Metal Workers Local 280.

4. **CREDENTIALS:**

The following credentials were received since the last VDLC meeting:(* = recredentialled, A = alternate)

COPE Local 378
Caitlyn Gilroy
Elaine Piper

ILWU Local 500
Jim Galvins

MSC to obligate/seat the delegate(s).

5. **GUEST SPEAKER(S): NIL**

6. **PRESIDENT'S REPORT:**

Joey Hartman reported on activities since the February 21st meeting.

Job Action and Bargaining Support:
There continues to be significant need for demonstrations of VDLC solidarity.

- **Teamsters Local 31 locked-out by Rocky Mountaineers** – The VDLC participated in a rally on March 5th that included a call for an end to scab labour

- **BCTF strike** – teachers were on full strike action March 5, 6 and 7. The VDLC visited several lines and attended rallies in Victoria on March 6 and Vancouver March 7. The government subsequently passed Bill 22, the so-called "*Education Improvement Act*" on March 15th with all Liberals voting for and all NDP voting against.

In a clearly pre-emptive move, the legislation also embodies extremely steep fines in case of defiance:

- Each individual teacher – max $475.00 per day
- Each union officer – min $2,500.00 per day
- BCTF – min $1.3 million per day

In accumulation, the BCTF calculates this as a potential of $20 million per day in fines if teachers defy.

Teachers are meeting in Vancouver and have re-elected Susan Lambert as BCTF president, and approved a dues increase. The debate on further actions has not concluded.

- **Air Canada Pilots** – Having been denied the right to strike, many pilots are calling in sick. These kinds of actions are inevitable when rights are stripped.

- **250,000 public sector workers** will have their collective agreements expire on March 31st. Net zero bargaining is not an option.

In summary, there is a mood of protest developing; union workers, the occupy movement, social service providers etc. are deciding to take action. We will likely see actions ramp up over the next several months.

Queen Alexandra School Fundraiser:
We expect 300 people at the March 23 fundraising dinner with keynote speaker Elaine Bernard from the Labor and Worklife Program at Harvard Law. The event is for QA School and funds will be matched by the Vancouver Sun Children's fund this year.

April 28 Day of Mourning:
The 2012 ceremony will take place starting at 11:00 am at the New Westminster Quay on Saturday, April 28. Tug boats on the river will sound their horns at 11 am to commence the ceremony.

May Day:
The next May Day Planning meeting is Wednesday March 21 at 7pm. Current plans are for an event on Saturday May 5th between 1:00 and 3:00 pm. We will march from Library Square to the Art Gallery where there will be a short rally.

Protein for People
Bonnie Hammond, a young worker and VDLC delegate from CAW, has accepted our offer to coordinate a public forum in Vancouver with the VDLC as the sponsor. Protein for People organizes union caught and processed salmon, with a union label, into food banks. They also organize community forums to profile labour in the community.

Saturday June 16 has been set as a tentative date for a kid-friendly event near the main Vancouver Food Bank on Raymur Avenue.

MSC to adopt the report

7. CORRESPONDENCE:

a) **From Our Times "Canada's Independent Labour Magazine",** inviting the VDLC to make a donation towards their 2012 fundraising drive, noting that all labour councils that donate over $150.00 will receive a signed copy of "The Spirit of Our Movement", the Toronto & York Region Labour Council's book of photographs by John Maclennan.

MSC that the correspondence be received and filed for the information of the delegates and that the Vancouver and District Labour Council donate $150.00 to Our Times Magazine's 2012 fundraising drive.

b) **From The People's Voice Newspaper** requesting sustaining donations to assist with the costs of producing the newspaper which is distributed for free.

MSC that the correspondence be received and filed for the information of the delegates and that the Vancouver and District Labour Council donate $100.00 to the People's Voice Newspaper.

8. EXECUTIVE RECOMMENDATIONS:

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

SUBJECT: Minimum Age Campaign

BECAUSE First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, has embarked on a advocacy project aimed at addressing the weakening of child labour protections and lowering of the work start age in BC resulting from changes to the Employment Standards Act in 2003; and

BECAUSE First Call is working with several unions on a "minimum age" project, which is currently gathering data and information about work force experiences of children and youth aged 12 to 18 in relation to:

- Health and safety in the workplace
- Economic exploitation
- The impacts of work on their education; and
- Enforcement of, and compliance with, existing child labour-specific regulations;

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL support the work of First Call and the Minimum Age campaign by circulating information as it becomes available, by donating $200.00 to assist with the focus groups honoraria at $50 per youth, and;

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL encourage its affiliates to also engage in this important project and donate to First Call.

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

SUBJECT: Support for Auckland Wharfies

BECAUSE the members of the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) who work at the Port of Auckland have been terminated after 18 months of negotiations, as the Ports of Auckland have contracted out all their work to casuals through manipulation of labour laws in that country,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL add our voice of solidarity to those around the world who call upon the Ports of Auckland to respect their workforce, reinstate the workforce and conclude a fair collective agreement renewal.

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

SUBJECT: Privatization of BC Liquor Distribution

BECAUSE the BC Government included an announced intention to privatize the BC Liquor Distribution Branch as part of the budget speech; and

BECAUSE the people of BC understand that the Liquor Distribution Branch is an important revenue generator that helps to fund other public services; and

BECAUSE the privatization of this or any other public asset represents an irreversible sell-off of our common property to the corporate friends of the Liberal Party of BC,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL condemn and work against any actions by the provincial government to privatize the BC Liquor Distribution Branch or other public assets or services.

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

SUBJECT: Bills 377 and M 210-2011

BECAUSE there are two pending private members bills, one provincial and one federal, that use the pretense of transparency to impede unions and labour councils from fully representing the interests of their memberships; and

BECAUSE the claim is made that, since union dues are tax deductible that every expenditure by labour organizations – including those that would expose negotiating strategy - must be both public and scrutinized by government overseers; and

BECAUSE businesses enjoy significant tax deductions for everything from political and charitable donations to golf fees, yet no such parallel legislation has been proposed for them,

THE VANCOUVER AND DISTRICT LABOUR COUNCIL WILL oppose Bills 377 and M 210-2011 and will work with the CLC in their efforts to ensure that neither these, nor similar, legislation passes in any jurisdiction.

9. REPORT OF UNIONS:

a) **BCGEU Local 306** - Reported by Mike Clarke

The main focus in the union for the last month has been bargaining. About 85-90% of the 60,000 members have their collective agreements expired or expiring in the near future. While specific monetary issues have not been discussed, the general attitude of employers is Net Zero. The members are opposed to this

b) **CAW Local 2002** – Reported by Tim Cheung

It has been a sad couple of days at Air Canada/Aveos as the local is forced to stand by and watch the events that are unfolding. The events that are occurring at Air Canada are a direct result of corporate greed and the interference and enabling of the Conservative Government.

Air Canada has sold off its parts and extracted the values to a holding company (ACE) and have siphoned off over a billion dollars to shareholders and investors. This is not about bankruptcy, it is about corporate greed.

The CAW stands behind its brothers and sisters at the IAMAW and will support them when needed.

c) **CUPE Local 116 – UBC** – Reported by Harry Easton

On March 15, 2012, our local held a strike vote to back our bargaining committee after two years without a contract. We received a heavy turnout and a 89% YES vote. A sister CUPE local at UBC will he holding their strike vote this Thursday. Our goal is to bargain a respectful collective agreement with UBC.

d) **CUPE Local 391** – Reported by Gary Jarvis

I did a presentation to the Library Board last month. The presentation can be viewed at www.cupe391.ca. Our local's president has made presentations to the library board, and city council with regard to budget cuts. We are going to be losing 7 staff at the central branch due to recent cuts.

e) **CUPE Local 1936** – Reported by Michael Lanier
Community Social Services is back in bargaining. The Employers Association have told us that they cannot address the monetary issues without written permission from Victoria. March is Community Social Services moth. Please join us in both a postcard and online message campaign to Christy Clark and a walk for CSS in Victoria on Saturday March 31, 2012 at Centennial Square.

www.communitysocialservicesmatter.ca

f) **CUPW – Vancouver Local** – Reported by Fruma Louise Sloan

As you know, CUPW members in the Urban Operations bargaining unit were ordered back to work. The government appointed a unilingual arbitrator with little or no labour experience. CUPW challenged this in court, and the arbitrator resigned. After a period of over 4 months, Lisa Raitt appointed a new "final selection" arbitrator. The good news is that he is bilingual and has labour relations experience. The bad news is that he is a member of the Federal Conservatives, was a Tory candidate in a recent federal election and represented Canada Post in their fight against pay equity. Despite internal challenges, CUPW is going to court to try and get this appointment overturned. CUPW is also bargaining for over 7,000-strong Rural and Suburban Mail Carrier's bargaining unit. Canada Post has tabled their first global offer. One of the low-lights of this was a proposal to have all new hires covered by a "defined contribution" pension plan instead of the current "defined benefit" pension plan. We will keep you updated.

g) **HEU North Shore Community** – Reported by Graham O'Neill

Bad news!. First, there have been a significant number of LPNs signing cards of another union than the one which currently represents them, and will now require a Labour Board vote. The two primary unions being raided, HEU and BCGEU, have several accounts of very intense harassment of LPNs to the extent that we believe many of these cards were signed under duress. HEU is confident that the vote will fail and this organization that is choosing to raid LPNs in other unions will again be unsuccessful as they were in 2009. It's pretty despicable to do this, especially in a bargaining year, when we should all be united together. In regards to bargaining, at Facilities and Community Health, things are going slowly with few monetary issues being resolved.

MSC to adopt the reports of unions.

10. REPORT OF COMMITTEES:

1. **Strike Solidarity**: - Reported by Stephen Von Sychowski
   The VDLC is continuing our support for Teamsters Local 31 and attended their rally. Our next meeting is on March 21, 2012.

2. **Education** – Reported by Joey Hartman
   The next labour educational will be presented by Leo McGrady on the BC Labour Code May 12 & 13, 2012.

3. **Young Worker's** - Reported by Bonnie Hammond
   Young Workers will be having a fundraiser for the Che Guevara Brigade on March 30, 2012 to assist 6 young workers with the cost of the trip to Cuba. Please encourage your union to buy a table of 10 for $240.00 which will include food and entertainment.

4. **Women=s** - Reported by Ingrid Kolsteren
   International Women's Day was very successful. Judy Rebick was a great speaker.

   Other Reports:

   Employment Insurance Referees – Reported by Russ St. Eloi
   Appeals of EI decisions are heard by a board of referees. Brother St. Eloi serves as a labour appointed referee and offered suggestions to claimants. He emphasised the importance of going in person to appeal hearings and taking an advocate. He also noted that EI recipients are allowed to leave town for periods of time but must notify EI and have their claim suspended for the period of absence. Information from flight records and border crossings are shared with the EI administration and lack of advance notice can result in loss of benefits or penalties.

MSC to adopt the reports of Committees.

11. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: NIL

12. NEW BUSINESS: NIL

13. NOTICE OF MOTION: NIL

14. GOOD AND WELFARE:

- March 31, 2012 is International Day Against Racism
- Kassandra Cordero – encourages everyone to become a member of CoDev Canada and then can enter a draw for a seat on a delegation to Latin America
- 50/50 winnings were donated back and donated to Young Worker's Committee for the Che Guevara Brigade

15. MEETING ADJOURNED: *MSC to adjourn at 8:55 pm.*

167. NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, **April 17, 2012**, 7:30 pm, Maritime Labour Centre