

BULLETIN

Making up lost ground

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by JEANNE MEYERS



s we move into the third year of the Liberal regime we can begin to put wins and losses into some perspective. Faced with legislation that rolls back years of hard fought gains at the bargaining table, the union has begun the difficult process of reclaiming lost ground.

In 2002 we were successful in merging seniority lists and expanding bumping options. As well, we managed to protect some of our regional posting language.

In 2003 we can add the following victories to the list, achieved through the combined efforts of the union's labour relations and legal staff:

The ILO recommendations

The International Labour Organization was asked to review Bills 2, 15 and 29 by the union. The complaint was taken forward on our behalf by NUPGE and the CLC. The ILO committee recommended that the offending legislation be amended to protect workers against violations of their rights to engage in collective bargaining; to compensate workers for the limitations of their rights to strike; to require the government to engage in appropriate and meaningful consultations, and to review the collective bargaining issues arising from Bill 29, under the guidance of a neutral third party. This international censure should be taken seriously by the Liberal government. While the government cannot be compelled to take any specific action in response we will continue to appeal to the ILO if the government's anti-labour campaign does not abate.

Red-circling □ Article 10.04(b)

As you know, HEABC advised its member employers that Article 10.04(b) was rendered invalid where a employee was assigned to a lower-rated position after exercising bumping options in the wake of displacement.

HEABC relied on Bill 29, trying to persuade an arbitrator that the matter could only be heard by the Labour Relations Board. An arbitrator has now rejected HEABC's jurisdictional objection and we will soon be proceeding before an arbitrator to have the matter heard on its merits.

Call-backs on scheduled days off

Ever ready to put the squeeze on health care workers, HEABC advanced an interpretation of the collective agreement that prompted member facilities to begin paying straight time for call-backs on scheduled days off. Arbitrator Taylor upheld the union's grievance in the clearest possible terms.

Earned days off

Struggling to maintain the negotiated benefit of the 36-hour workweek has been a recurring theme for the union over the past seven years. We encourage all employees whose EDO schedules are being altered to

pursue the process found in Appendix 7 □ Hours of Work. We have recently had a final offer selection decision that rejected an employer's revised schedule because the employer did not present □compelling reasons□ to support an operational change. Mere employer convenience is not enough reason to alter schedules.

The year ahead

It is impossible to predict what will have transpired in health care by the time we gather for convention next year. We have confidence that our many strengths will keep the union moving forward. In the words of Rumi:

□Constant slow movement
teaches us to keep working
Like a small creek that stays clear
That doesn't stagnate, but finds a way
Through numerous details, deliberately. □

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