

AGENDA ITEM # 9

REPORT OF THE NATIONAL PRESIDENT TO THE APRIL 2019 NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Sisters, Brothers and Friends,

The end of my second year as your National President arrived on April 3rd and the 2020 CEIU Convention is only 17 months away. We still have plenty of work ahead of us in the months to come, but together with a strong National Executive and great leaders at the local level we will succeed and push through.

I want to thank all of you on the National Executive for your devotion to our members and to both Crystal Warner, the National Executive Vice-President and myself. The past two (2) years have not been easy ones, but we are building allies and getting more members involved in our fights. Time away from our families and friends is often, as elected officers, but we must remember that they are our strength and the ones that keep us doing what we love the most – fighting for our members. But do remember, everyone needs to sometime stop and catch their breath.

We have succeeded in doing a lot of work since CEIU came out of Trusteeship. We are rebuilding this Union one day at a time. The members are counting on all of us – the National Executive, the local leaders and the CEIU staff.

I will start off with A WIN FOR CEIU! We have had success with the SMSM-1102 grievance.

SMSM-1102 GRIEVANCE UPDATE

This is a win! A big win for some of our members! But CEIU continues to fight for the others to get a win for them also!

A big thank you to Brother Sylvain Archambault, the National Union Representative (NUR) in the Quebec Region who has worked tirelessly for a number of years on this specific file, determine to bring it to an end.

CEIU has been working closely with the Employer to resolve the job content grievance, filed in 2008, for the Program Support Delivery Clerk (PSDC) position in Pensions and Integrity Operations at Service Canada.

Following a third level grievance hearing held in 2012, the Employer finally agreed in March 2013 to develop a new job description for these positions. This new job description was signed on September 13, 2018 and now accurately reflects the functions performed by PSDCs in Pensions and Integrity Operations. The Report of the Classification Committee was finally submitted to the Employer on January 31st, 2019 and the new job

description is called Program Services Officer and has been classified at the PM-01 level – it had previously been classified as a CR-4 level.

The CEIU members that are being reclassified to this new PM-01 level are happy as they will be eligible for retroactive pay for the time in which they performed the duties of the position. We are happy for these members. They deserve what is due and has been due for some, since way back in 2006.

However, in the Classification Committee's Report, the Committee also noted that there were a number of PSDC positions in Pensions and Integrity Operations which did not perform decision-making activities as to eligibility and entitlement of benefits to the general public. And, with this, the Employer created a second job description to reflect the work undertaken by these employees. This second job description is called Program Support Clerk and has been classified at the CR-04 level. These employees will remain CR-04 and will not be eligible for retroactive pay as their level has not changed.

The Employer also advised that any employees who permanently left their substantive position before September 13th, 2018 would not be eligible for retroactive pay, except those that filed a grievance on the PSDC job description. The reason for the none eligibility: **the cost of retroactive pay**. The Employer estimated at 50 million dollars the cost of retroactive pay for present incumbents and those who filed grievances. They are not willing to give out more money for those who left. The other rational: the interpretation of the word 'incumbent' in the MOU between CEIU/Service Canada signed in 2006. The Employer defines this as being able to exclude certain groups from this. REALLY!

CEIU totally disagrees with this decision and I expressed my disappointment at a meeting on February 20th, 2019 with the Deputy Minister and the Assistant Deputy Minister of ESDC. CEIU is already working both politically, through the National Executive, and with the PSAC Representation Section to make the Employer reconsider its decision of excluding certain employees from receiving retro pay.

CEIU is fighting for this last group of members that Service Canada wants to exclude. We continue to repeat to the Employer that they are obligated to provide retro pay to all affected employees: incumbent who occupied the position and performed the duties, at any point between September 14th, 2006 and now. I will continue to fight for those members, for what is rightfully owed to them! The Employer has no right to exclude some of our members in their decision. We will fight the Employer on this decision.

CEIU and Service Canada have agreed to meet every two (2) weeks, which started the week of March 25th, to discuss this file. CEIU will be providing regular updates on the CEIU website on this very issue.

Essential Services

CEIU has negotiated an Agreement in Principle with the three (3) departments. I was joined by Brother Guy Boulanger, the Director of Representation and Labour, as well as Luc Pomerleau, the National Resource Officer, in these negotiations. Their support with the numerous files/positions that we reviewed in order to reach this Agreement in Principle was greatly appreciated and for that I wish to thank them both. I also wish to thank those on the National Executive that provided feedback when we reached out to them.

We started back in late 2018 and more than fifteen (15) meetings were held, some lasting the whole day. There were also numerous telephone and email exchanges during this time. The objective with the three (3) departments was to finish the process and to have an Agreement in Principle signed before March 30th. We succeeded! The PSAC and the Employer will now review the Agreement reached.

As a Union, we needed to ensure that the health and safety of all Canadians, and that of our members was not and is not compromised should there be a potential 'strike'. Canadians need to be confident that their CPP, OAS, EI and other payments continue to be processed and received. Immigration, border security, etc., cannot be compromised during a potential 'strike'. But, the Employer must understand and realize that the work that are members do on a daily basis is indeed important and needed, but it is our members rights to walk a picket line, when, and if needed.

The main issue with some managers was the lack of understanding the process of determining essential services. Even 'vacant' positions were deemed to be essential. The Union's argument that we kept repeating was 'how many employees are at work during the summer or Christmas holidays?'

The three (3) departments were aware that any Agreement in Principle that we concluded had to be approved by the PSAC and Treasury Board after this process. Any unjustified requests would have been rejected by the PSAC and/or Treasury Board.

In the end, the Employer worked with CEIU and gave us reasonable numbers of jobs that are to be considered essential services.

Phoenix

Wow! Another 523,3 million dollars to be invested in the next five years to try and fix the Phoenix disaster. This pay system has been a nightmare for our members for the last three (3) years.

I continue to receive emails from members affected by Phoenix on a weekly basis. How long will this last? This government is allocating millions but let's hope that some of these millions are earmarked for our very own members. The stress that these members have

and continue to be under is unspeakable. Members can't keep up. Phoenix pay issues needs to be fixed. Not in a year or two, but NOW!

I don't think any amount of money invested in Phoenix will ever be enough for the heartaches that our members endure with each and every paycheque, not knowing the amount they will be receiving or if there will be some monies deposited that week for their hard work.

PSAC and its components continue to fight for our members. This battle is not over and won't be over until Phoenix pay issues are fixed and until we get this government to compensate its employees, our members, with a decent compensation package.

I am sure that the Employer was not impressed with both the NEVP and myself walking up the Parliament's stairs and releasing, along with some coal, a number of Phoenix grievances just a few days before the 2018 holiday season. We also advised the Employer that CEIU will no longer be waiving levels for Phoenix grievances. These grievances will be heard at all levels of the grievance process.

Federal Budget 2019

What does some of the 2019 Federal Budget mean for CEIU members? Additional funding for IRB to increase its capacity to process refugee claims and appeals; 42.9 million for the next two years for IRCC to increase the number of agents in their call centres; millions being invested at ESDC for the next five years to modernize their systems and hire more people at Service Canada to assess and process old age security claims. Over 523,3 million dollars dedicated, for the next five years, for resources to address payroll errors created by Phoenix.

These are some of the highlights that affects the three (3) Departments that CEIU members work for.

Front End Committee

Members of CEIU did a 30-minute presentation on security concerns in the front-end at a National Labour Management Consultation Committee (NLMCC) meeting with Service Canada. Following that very meeting, the Deputy Minister instructed Senior Management to form a Joint Committee with CEIU/UNE for the purpose of collaborating on this issue. Sister Warner will be participating on this committee on behalf of CEIU.

There has been a number of incidents lately in some Service Canada offices and some of our members working the front-end are feeling quite fragile with the security issues and working alone. There is under staffing in Client Services Operations (CSO) which, that in itself creates unnecessary stress and anxiety for our members.

Having a Joint Committee created to collaborate on these issues will bring some peace of mind to our members, and to us, as their Union. Working in collaboration with the Employer to raise and discuss concerns is a start.

I want to take a minute to thank the Front-End/Outreach Committee in the Ontario Region. The Committee had presented a play at the 2018 Ontario Presidents' Conference in Toronto which had many of the members in attendance realizing what our members in the front-end go through day after day. The Committee will be making a presentation at our National Executive meeting this weekend and I am sure that you will all appreciate the work of the Committee in raising the issues in the front-end.

National Joint Council - Joint Employment Equity Committee

I am happy to announce that the PSAC National President has appointed me, in early February, as the Bargaining Agent Side Co-Chair of the National Joint Council (NJC) Joint Employment Equity Committee (JEEC). My fellow co-chair is Erika Henley from the Canada School of Public Service, who herself was appointed only in November 2018.

This Committee (JEEC) provides a national forum that includes Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS), the Public Service Commission (PSC), Bargaining Agents and Departmental Representatives. The JEEC acts as the NJC's vehicle for Employment Equity and diversity analysis and provides the NJC with Employment Equity and diversity related input, as well as, advice and recommendations related to emerging policies and practices in the federal public service.

My first meeting as co-chair was held on February 22nd, 2019. The Committee has begun work on developing its 2019-2020 Work Plan and has elected to focus on a few very specific action items so as to provide a report on the findings obtained by the end of the upcoming fiscal year. This Committee wants to be seen as Employment Equity and Diversity and Inclusion experts within the Federal Public Service; one that can provide analysis, input, advice and recommendations to parties on ongoing EE and diversity issues. The Committee will continue to increase its outreach by engaging with Departments on ongoing consultations.

I look forward to the work that we, as a Committee want to accomplish and wish to thank Brother Aylward for putting his trust in my abilities and appointing me to this Committee.

Joint CEIU Advisory Committees' meeting/training

CEIU is happy to have the members of the following National Advisory Committees come together for a joint meeting in April:

- Human Rights/Race Relations (HRRR) Committee
- National Women's Committee
- National Young Workers' Committee

The sharing of information between these Committees is important and these joint committees' meetings should be appreciated by everyone. Members of each of these Committees are looking forward to holding a joint meeting and talking amongst themselves.

The Committees will each have their own day of meeting on the 1st day and then come together with the Sisters and Brothers of the other committees to discuss their views, their concerns and to provide the sharing amongst these three (3) Committees.

Both myself and Sister Warner are eager to participate in this Joint CEIU Advisory Committees meeting and training and outreaching with our sisters and brothers.

Some of my other activities

A number of meetings with the Employer, Regional Presidents' Conferences, PSAC National Board of Directors meetings and conference calls are just some of the activities that have kept me, your National President, busy since the last National Executive in October 2018. An activity sheet is attached to my report which provides more detailed information on my activities since our last National Executive meeting in October 2018.

Closing

I cannot thank you, the National Executive, enough. Your dedication is truly appreciated.

To all the Local Executives from coast to coast to coast, thank you. We need people like you out in the field helping your members, CEIU members, with their workplace issues, etc.,

To the CEIU staff at the National Office and in the Regional Union Offices, I want to remind you all that without each and every one of you, CEIU would not be the same. Thank you for all that you do for CEIU members, and for CEIU as a whole. Each and everyone's expertise is invaluable to this Union.

To Crystal, our NEVP, who, on a daily basis, I can count on. Thank you. I do see everything that you do and the long hours that you give to this organization. So again, thank you for all that you do.

To all the CEIU members, I am proud to serve as your National President and I am always open to receiving your emails and/or telephone calls. Your National Executive and I are here for each of you, all 18,000+ CEIU members from coast to coast to coast.

In Solidarity,

Eddy Bourque
National President