



Canadian Labour Congress

Congrès du travail du Canada

**ANTI-RACISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT**  
**to the**  
**CLC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

**February 11-12, 2008**  
**OTTAWA, ONTARIO**

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The Anti-Racism and Human Rights Department has been active on the following files since the last Executive Council meeting.

**Guest Workers:**

- Developed and delivered a course at the SFL Equity conference addressing the Temporary Foreign Worker (TFW) program. The course was well received and more affiliates and members are becoming engaged in the CLC advocacy campaign on this issue.
- Hosted a meeting of the Temporary Worker Advocacy Group (TWAG), which continues to grow in numbers on January 9<sup>th</sup>, 2008. Participants contributed to refining the CLC action plan.
- Received a briefing on government proposal to create a new path to citizenship for some TFWs. Presented a critique of this initiative and encouraged TWAG group to join in our critique and demands to expand the coverage of the initiative to more occupational codes.
- Continue to engage regularly with TFW program's Director General and senior staff on numerous critical flaws with the program, including calculation of prevailing wage methodology; prevalence of unscrupulous labour brokers, absence of compliance, monitoring and enforcement mechanism, rabid expansion of the program into new job sectors/occupations.

- Continue to raise the profile of the issue in a variety of media, including Briarpatch magazine, The Economist, Toronto Star, Globe and Mail Report on Business, CBC radio, Occupational Health & Safety magazine, and ethno-cultural media outlets. Worked with affiliates and allies to host events on December 18th to mark International Migrant Rights Day.
- Worked with Libby Davis, NDP labour critic to get questions raised in the House of Commons on this file to coincide with our letters of complaint regarding the treatment of the 'Filipino 11'.
- Developing a kit for affiliates on how to respond to introduction of guest workers into the workplace and working with Tony Biddle, Perfect World Productions to produce a 4-page comic in Spanish, English and French, to be ready by the CLC Convention.
- Exploring potential to support establishment of a unique website [www.migrants.ca](http://www.migrants.ca) as a central portal for materials.

### **Security and Racial Profiling:**

- Joined with the Canadian Arab Federation and 50-some ethno-racial/cultural, union locals and civil rights groups in a public statement condemning the new Security Certificate legislation.
- Working with allies to campaign against Bill C-3 that would allow the government to continue to use such information to justify indefinite detention, house arrest and deportation to torture security certificate detainees.
- Worked with CCPA to present a paper on racial profiling and the labour movement at a conference called THROUGH THE LOOKING GLASS. A podcast of the event is at <http://www.rabble.ca/reviews/review.shtml?x=64132>. A similar event is being planned for B.C. in February of this year.
- Providing support to ILWU in their bid to challenge the Marine Security Clearance Process being applied to their membership.
- Secure Flight Initiative – Monitoring changes to all US bound flights and **for all continental flights over U.S. airspace** between Canada and Latin America / Caribbean (southbound and northbound). These changes will result in more intrusive passenger screening process, affect

privacy rights and rely on racial profiling practices. The program will come into effect in February 2008. The Canadian government failed to register any concerns before the October 2007 deadline with this US initiative. We can expect significant problems for southern air travelers flying over US airspace and potentially difficult situations for airline workers as a result of the Secure Flight program.

- Working with ICLMG to develop a research and action project with the aim to raise political and public awareness of new border control measures and surveillance policies being implemented by the Conservatives, with virtually no public debate. The project will include an examination of the impact on workers' privacy and mobility rights. The project has three main components: policy research, corporate research and campaigning and a documentation centre of individuals' experiences and human rights violations linked to security regimes in workplaces, and the broader community.
- Developed and delivered workshops that explain how racial profiling practices are becoming prevalent in more workplace and how unions can respond.

### **Aboriginal issues:**

- Advanced support with affiliates for the Jordan Principle, a child first principle – when Aboriginal children face jurisdictional disputes over what level of government will pay for medical services is moving in the House.
- Alongside the CLC International Department and affiliates, provided support to CONAIE, Indigenous people's organization from Ecuador, for a major Congress of Indigenous Peoples in their country, scheduled for four days in mid-January of 2008.
- Working with the Polaris Institute and the AFN to release a report, called Boiling point: An expose of the water crisis in 10 Aboriginal communities.

## **Changing the Canvass:**

- Website is now live and being populated with stories from racialized workers, check out [www.changingthecanvs.org](http://www.changingthecanvs.org). Recommend viewing the story featuring CUPE member Ajamu Nangwaya.
- Developed and delivering course modules to CLC schools in Alberta, B.C., as well as labour council leadership training sessions. Members are responding positively to the material and topics and are planning to incorporate the materials at the affiliates and local levels.
- Hosting a meeting of (im)migrants rights advocates in the Toronto area in March to explore future projects involving immigrant youth of colour.

## **On-going work:**

- Presented to the Senate Committee on Human Rights regarding the persistent failure for employment equity gains for visible minority workers to be realized. Presented labour movement's efforts to advance and support this group of workers.
- Continue to provide support to affiliates with training and courses addressing workplace racism and strategies for change.
- Participated in the CLC Pensions Conference in November with CUPE's Darcy Beggs, conducting a workshop on Pensions and implications for equality-seeking groups. One outcome of the session was to explore how to better communicate pensions issues to the new cohorts that will be make up the bulk of the labour force in the coming years. Discussions are underway with CUPE regarding a strategy for actions in 2008.
- The next CLC joint meeting of the Aboriginal Workers Working Group/Workers of Colour Working Group/Human Rights Committee will take place February 27-29th in Ottawa.