

## Wind Generation Begins to Turn on Vancouver Island

Constructed on top of a boggy plateau 40 kilometers of logging road North West of Port Hardy, owner GDF Suez Energy looked to electrical contractor Black & McDonald to install the electrical infrastructure for the estimated \$300 million Wind Farm project. The Wind farm will have Fifty-five (55) V100 1.8 MW Vestas turbines which will generate 99 Megawatts for the Vancouver Island electrical grid. The total footprint for the massive project was 350 Hectares.

Before our membership could even

MLA John Horgan for a drive up to the jobsite, where “A” Foreman Brother Keith Copping took them for a tour of the site and substation, which was a major portion of the job. Brother Copping reports that; *“...everyone was really excited to be part of this project as it was the first WindFarm on the Island and a great example of the new green energy that we need to expand. The joint partnership of Black and MacDonald / Amec are one of the major players out east in alternative energy production and we all wanted to show them what Local 230 could do.*

*I was really proud of how the crew came together under some pretty adverse conditions in terms of location, terrain and weather to complete the project successfully and on time, in spite of all the challenges. We all learned a lot about wind generation and hopefully this is just the first of many projects like this on Vancouver Island. I was also glad to have all the help we got from the Black and Mac team that came out from Ontario to provide expertise and*

*assistance. We also had some great traveling members from Local 773 Windsor who came out for a month or so to help work on the Sub-Station when our Local was unable to fill the calls for the final push.”* We are awaiting the possibility of another 25 turbine expansion to this project, and with luck everyone involved will continue to believe that the Island’s Generation shortfalls “answer my friend, is blowing in the wind”.



Brother Keith Copping talks technical with NDP Energy Critic John Horgan.

get up to the jobsite GDF had to punch through 33 kilometres of northwest forest to build the road, including 27 bridges, and over 500 culverts. Every day for almost a year our members made the trip from Port Hardy up to the remote wind farm site. The job topped out at 27 members.

In the middle of August Business Manager Phil Venoit had the opportunity to take BC Energy Critic and south Island

## Autumn 2013

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## News & Notes

Office Christmas Closure  
December 24th at 3:00 PM  
Re-opens January 2nd

#### Upcoming Courses:

##### Victoria

Arc Flash January 8th  
FSR March 8th

##### Nanaimo

FSR January 11th

##### Code of Excellence

Early Spring 2014  
Admin@IBEW230.org

The International Dues portion goes up in 2014 non-working goes to \$43.00 per month



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# Business Manager's Report



Philip M. Venoit  
Business Manager/Financial Secretary

Over the past three months we saw the last remaining construction unions conclude their arbitrated settlements, and the ballots for the construction ratification vote were counted on November 8th, and a double majority was the result. As the Chief Negotiator for the IBEW in BC I was happy to see a majority of the membership come to realization a NO VOTE would have resulted in an immediate wage decrease back to \$32.58. I am also happy to be going back to the Bargaining Table next year with proposals going forward, instead of re-hashing what we attempted over three years ago. I am asking our membership to submit proposals via my email at [BMFS@IBEW230.org](mailto:BMFS@IBEW230.org) so I can reply to you if there is any confusion around the intent of the proposal, however keep in mind all proposals are vetted by the IBEW Provincial Construction Negotiating Team.

We met with Jessica MacDonald, who has been hired by Premier Clark to review the Industry Training Authority (ITA). We highly recommended a move away from sectoral oversight back to a craft driven program with Labour's direct involvement. The IBEW is the single largest sponsor of apprenticeships in British Columbia so this was a refreshing meeting, just to be asked what the IBEW thought, was over a decade late but we made the best of the meeting and I look forward to Ms. MacDonald's Report. Together with our Local 230 business staff and Executive Board members, Vice-President Gyorf and Marine unit Chairman Takhar, attended the Canadian Labour Congress's **Together Fairness Works** campaign. The Together Fairness Works initiative is in response to Anti-union employer paid for think tanks like; labour watch, Merit Shop, and the Fraser Institute, who are

methodically mounting strategic campaigns against the union movement in Canada. They are actively lobbying right of centre governments on how to weaken unions. Two years ago Finance Minister Jim Flaherty met with some CEO's in a meeting costing tax payers over \$43 thousand (for the meeting expenses), and this is some of the points they would like to see changed as obtained by a leaked document to the CBC;

They want to:

*"Change Retirement age to 70*

*A Two-tier Medical system*

*Right to Work Legislation should be pondered as it creates inequities in productivity"*

They go on to say that;

*"Labor is getting too expensive*

*Need to reduce labor costs*

*Reduce public sector wages"*

And of course the obvious; *"Reduce Corporate Taxes to create jobs"*.

Trickle-down economics is a practice of the past, today it is simply used to increase profits and jobs off-shore, and should be renamed trickle-on economics, as it diverts tax revenues away from supporting infrastructure and jobs, overstuffs Cayman Island accounts. They get the Gold Mine and we get the Shaft. Without unions in Canada to collectively take on these banksters like we did at the RBC over their use of the Temporary Foreign Worker Program only months ago to offshore IT jobs, (jobs that could and should be IBEW). Unions made some great gains in the 1940's- through to 1980 creating the Canadian Middle Class, and we've been losing ground ever since.

A decade ago they only thought this way, now they're on mainstream media spreading this sort of anti-union sentiments, on July 28th Fox News Business Anchor Tracy Byrnes reported; *"This notion that we're going to keep raising (minimum wage) just to share the wealth ... well we're almost socialists at this point anyway. It's just ridiculous!"*

Two years earlier on October 18, 2010 she reported; Annual income *"at \$250,000 is not rich for a family of four sending kids to college, it's actually close to poverty."*

Okay Tracy, which is it? Because, it can't be both.

I'm asking you to please test what you hear and read in the mainstream media these days as they are in many cases owned by the very groups, who think WE are overpaid, under-

worked, and don't believe WE should retire with dignity or apparently deserve to have the same health care.

*I would encourage you to consider your non-union counterparts and begin a conversation around your lunch room tables, of what value your union brings to you, your family and your workplace.*

The differences in safety, health benefits, retirement benefits, respect, and so much more, this conversation is paramount to remember what we have before they take it away from us.

At the All Canada Progress Meeting held in Alberta this year, we received a first run of IBEW Canada TV Commercials and roll out of website versions by Idea Lab from Toronto, an update on NETCO, (the National Electrical Training Committee), NALCOR gave us a presentation on the 2 million man-hour Muskrat Falls generating project, in Newfoundland Labrador. Bob Blakely gave us a Federal Legislative Update on several Bills coming in the Fall sitting of Parliament, some positive such as C-201 (which we have been lobbying for 7 or 8 years now), which will finally allow construction workers to legitimately file T-2200 Forms to claim accrued expenses such as ferries, fuel, meals and accommodation for initial (and terminal if you're are returning home to work or begin work after a short duration as well) travel to start a job. You cannot quit a job and claim, you must be out of work to receive the write off, or at the very least receive a lay-off thereby saving someone else's job.

We received the BC Safety Authority's Decision on October 29th announcing they have agreed to the development of the Electrical Work Practitioner as proposed by the ASTT, the Applied Sciences Technicians and Technologists of BC. We have requested the Decision and as yet have not received it, however we will be filing for a review of the Decision once we have had a chance to read through it and pick it apart. If the Safety Manager does not change her mind, the IBEW Provincial Council has agreed to pick up the costs of a Judicial Review in the Supreme Court as we believe they have erred in their decision in the ability to even make the decision, circumventing the Industry Training Authority. This will continue to evolve as we head into our second year fighting back this attempt to water down and fracture our trade and make the world we work in less safe. We have also opened a Pay Pal account on our [ProtectRedSealTrades.ca](http://ProtectRedSealTrades.ca) Website.

# The Importance of Unions to Shared Prosperity

Rick Smith

Executive Director, Broadbent Institute

Careful observers of Canadian politics will be forgiven a certain déjà vu feeling at the most recent target of Conservative ire, i.e. trade unions.

Fresh from their mean-spirited campaign against the charitable sector (recall the claims that environmental groups are “radicals”, “terrorists” and “eco-vandals” from federal Cabinet Ministers and Senators), the muzzling of federal government scientists, and various closings of important institutions with the nerve to speak their mind, trade unions are clearly next in the Tory cross-hairs.

In Toronto, Leader of the Opposition Tim Hudak has proposed legislation to make payment of union dues voluntary – even though non-dues paying free riders would still receive the wages and benefits negotiated by their union, and would still have a legal right to union representation if they were fired or disciplined.

In Ottawa, Conservatives in the House of Commons passed legislation that would require unions to publicly disclose in minute detail virtually all aspects of their spending, no matter how irrelevant. They propose no such requirements for business and professional associations that similarly represent their members. [Mercifully, this legislation has - for now - died at the Senate.]

And in Regina, the Wall government’s Bill 85 interferes with the rights of employees to belong to the union of their choosing.

In every case, these anti-union measures are a solution in search of a problem. They are a transparent attempt to damage the financial viability of trade unions and they lay bare the hypocrisy of Conservative parties and governments who, while professing a commitment to streamline useless red tape for Canadian businesses, are ideologically driven to create a choking amount of red tape for trade unions.

Why should Canadians care, particularly the majority of us who don’t belong to trade unions? The reason is simple. As the Broadbent Institute outlined in a recent report, unions have made and continue to make a much more equal and democratic society than would otherwise be the case. Because of all this, the sort of radical US-style anti-union legislation being proposed by conservatives is a threat to not just unionized workers, but to all Canadians.

International human rights laws ratified by Canada and Supreme Court decisions have stressed that unions are democratic institutions that should be accountable to their members, and have a legitimate role to play in our society above and beyond workplace activities such as collective bargaining. Unions have a record to be proud of in terms of fighting for government policies that benefit all people, union members, and non-members alike. Public pensions, Medicare, Unemployment Insurance, and affordable and accessible post secondary educations were all promoted by the labour movement working with other movements for social reform.

To take one recent example, the labour movement has recently

worked with seniors and anti-poverty organizations to greatly increase benefits provided by the Canada Pension Plan so that all workers, not just union workers, can have a decent pension in retirement.

Unions have also promoted laws and regulations that protect the rights of all workers in the workplace: health and safety laws, minimum wages and other minimum employment standards that help protect low paid workers in insecure jobs, and pay and employment equity laws that protect women and racial minorities from discrimination.

Numerous studies by experts with no ideological axe to grind show that, when unions are strong, the gains that they make for their members in terms of decent wages and benefits spill over into non-union workplaces. In the face of Canadian conservatives trying to portray unions as some kind of impediment to economic growth and productivity, actually examining this empirical evidence is instructive.

Economists agree that the rapidly rising share of all income going to the top 1% in the US and Canada since the early 1980s is explained in significant part by declining unionization. US-style de-unionization would clearly make Canada a much more unequal society than is already the case.

And calculations by respected international organizations such as the OECD and the World Bank also show that countries with strong labour movements are more equal and inclusive,

and often have very successful economies. Unions

recognize that high productivity is the key to decent wages and good jobs, and many successful companies recognize that good labour relations benefit both parties to the agreement.

Since 1980, the total Canadian economic pie (real GDP per person) has grown by 50 per cent, but the real wage of an average worker has increased by just 10 per cent, and union workers have done no better than non-union workers. Over the entire period from 2000 to 2011, the wages of unionized workers rose just 5 per cent on top of inflation.

Canada’s real economic and social problem is stagnant living standards for the broad middle class as a whole, a steady increase in very low and insecure jobs, and rapidly growing inequality of income and wealth as the gains from economic growth go to top income earners.

Seen from this perspective, a strong labour movement is not the problem, but rather an important part of the solution. Unions helped create the Canadian middle class, and we need strong unions to help us return us to broadly-shared prosperity.

*Rick Smith is the Executive Director of the Broadbent Institute. Read the Institute’s report on unions and shared prosperity, “Union Communities, Healthy Communities” at [www.broadbentinstitute.ca/unions](http://www.broadbentinstitute.ca/unions). An earlier version of this article appeared on The Huffington Post Canada.*



# The Industrial Marine Training & Applied Research Centre (IMTARC)

The Resource Training Organization (RTO) of BC has showed great support for the marine industry by building IMTARC. This new training centre located in Esquimalt, to help provide the educational backbone for growth, productivity and competitiveness of the shipbuilding and repair sector by coordinating and facilitating workforce development and applied research.

Over the next decade the marine industry looks to be in a position for strong growth. With the winning of the federal NSPS contract to build and supply the non-combat, coast guard, ocean sciences, and arctic patrol vessels which will provide for some Island spin-off work, along with continued maintenance on the Victoria Class Submarines, and knowledge that BC Ferries needs to replace 26 vessels over the next 15 years this type of sectorial training will definitely help in making Esquimalt the preferred choice in shipbuilding excellence.



Our Fall Code of Excellence Courses were held in Victoria and Nanaimo, by International Education Instructor Jim Watson. Raffle Winner was Tyler Broughton (second from left), presenting Tyler his new 51" television is (from left to right) Executive Board members; Marine Unit Chairman Raj Takhar, Vice-President Greg Gyorfi and Recording Secretary Charles Gilbert. We would like to thank both Island Branches of Houle Electric for donating this "excellent" gift.



## Jeneece Place Light Up Crew

From left to right: Dave Brown, Nathan Gurry, Local 230 Business Representative Adrien Livingstone, Martin Brus, Nicola Peffers, Chris Olsen, and of course Jeneece Edroff in centre front.



Shop Stewards Bob Laquement and Heng Phosy, swear in new members primarily from the electronics shops at HMCS Dockyard in Esquimalt.