

October, 2012

SFL 2012 Convention Delegates

Sisters and Brothers,

The Saskatchewan Federation of Labour Convention being held October 31 to November 3, 2012 in Regina marks the 57<sup>th</sup> annual general meeting and policy convention for our rank and file members. That is a truly significant accomplishment and a testament to our collective commitment of being the democratic voice of working people in our province.

Each year we gather at our Annual Convention to share experiences, to discuss and debate important issues, to pass resolutions and to chart a progressive course for the labour movement for the upcoming year.

The purpose of this letter is to let you that I am seeking re-election to the position of SFL President at this year's convention. I am truly honoured to have been able to serve as your President for the past 10 years.

Over my past terms, I have done my level best to represent all unions affiliated to the SFL with fairness, dignity, professionalism and commitment. Together, we have continued our steadfast dedication to union education and to a society based on the principles of fairness, equality and justice.

Working with the Executive Council, affiliate leadership and the federation staff, we have been able to help advance issues important to labour.

The relentless attack by corporations and right wing lobby groups (and the political parties they control) against all of those things a compassionate and caring society believes in continues unabated. At the same time obscene levels of executive compensation and the gap between rich and poor all continue to persist.

It is in front of this backdrop, that we continue to work hard at building relationships and coalitions with other more compassionate and progressive groups in our community. We need to continue reaching out into our community. We need to remain focused on building a progressive and inclusive labour movement with education as a key component. We must do this with equal participation of the Aboriginal community and Aboriginal workers, women, new Canadians, workers of colour, youth, differently abled workers and within the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered community.

In our province, the past several years have been extremely challenging for workers and their democratic organizations. In spite of almost unprecedented prosperity for Saskatchewan, many workers and their families continue to struggle to make ends meet. And never before in Saskatchewan, has a provincial government been so aggressive in their complete disregard for the fundamental constitutional rights of its citizens.

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The Saskatchewan government has such contempt for unions and everything that we stand for that they are prepared to violate the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as they attempt to decimate workers' democratic organizations.

But, in March of 2010, we scored a tremendous victory when the United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) ruled that the current Saskatchewan government's signature legislation (Bills 5 and 6) violate our International Human Rights. This was followed on February 6, 2012 by a decision from Saskatchewan Court of Queen's Bench Justice Dennis Ball that said the government's Public Services Essential Services Act violates the constitutional rights of thousands of workers in our province. That law has been struck down in its entirety. Justice Ball declared that the "right-to-strike" is a charter protected right within the meaning of Section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

What we have demonstrated by these tremendous legal victories is that we will not stand idly by while our own government attempts to destroy us.

And if that wasn't enough, now the Saskatchewan government has embarked on an unprecedented and aggressive campaign to re-write 15 different pieces of labour law in one fell swoop. Through a totally inadequate consultation process the government has raised questions about Saskatchewan's suite of labour laws, that if acted upon would turn the clock back 100 hundred years on worker's rights. We need to continue to defend and protect decent workplace standards and worker rights. It's a matter of fairness. Our children are depending on us.

As in past years, I choose to be part of a leadership that stands first and foremost on the side of the worker. In spite of the obstacles in front of us, we will continue to move forward in our defense of the right to join a union, the right to free collective bargaining, the right to strike and the right to a decent standard of living for all.

I know that our future holds much promise, but I also know our struggle will not be an easy one.

Now more than ever – workers need unions! And now more than ever – unions need a strong and united Federation! I will work tirelessly to defend working people and I am asking for your support to continue in the role as your Federation's President.

I give you this commitment, **I will continue to stand up FOR you, and I will continue to stand up WITH you.**

I look forward to meeting with you and your caucus at the upcoming convention, and invite you to contact or approach me at any time in this regard.

In Solidarity,



Larry W. Hubich  
SFL President