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June 20, 2023

BY E-MAIL

Bea Bruske
President
Canadian Labour Congress
president-office@clcctc.ca

Dear Bea:

Re: Raiding Activity by the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA)

Thank you for our recent conversation in which you confirmed that Linda Silas, President of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU), would be providing you with correspondence explaining the activities of their Alberta affiliate, the Union of Alberta Nurses.

I have now had the opportunity to read CFNU's letter stating their position on the matter. CUPE's concerns remain, and I am writing to request the application of Article 4.8.c. of the Constitution.

On April 27, 2023, five licensed practical nurses (LPNs) filed an application with the Alberta Labour Relations Board (ALRB) which essentially requests that they be moved from their existing bargaining unit to one represented by the UNA. There are two aspects to the application, which is attached:

- A determination request on behalf of the five workers seeking to themselves be reclassified, which practically speaking would be applied to thousands of LPNs working at Alberta Health Services; and
- a reference application asking the ALRB to revisit its interpretation and approach on appropriate bargaining units for LPNs across the healthcare sector in Alberta.

The immediate impact to CUPE of the determination application is the potential loss of at least 14 LPNs in our Covenant Health bargaining unit. Should the reference question be decided in favour of the applicants, it could easily result in the loss of more than 350 CUPE members working in continuing care, and hundreds more members of other CLC affiliates.

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MARK HANCOCK

National President/Président national

CANDACE RENNICK

National Secretary-Treasurer/Secrétaire-trésorière nationale

PATRICK GLOUTNEY, FRED HAHN, JUDY HENLEY, SHERRY HILLIER, LEE-ANN KALEN

General Vice-Presidents/Vice-présidences générales

On June 12, 2023, the UNA submitted the attached reply to the ALRB in clear support of that application. The following day, the UNA communicated this support on their website and social media feeds in a way that reads very much like an organizing campaign. The web page is attached. It is difficult to see how these actions are anything other than raiding and a clear violation of Article 4.

In 2018, a similar application was made by the Health Sciences Association of Alberta (HSAA) on behalf of workers classified as therapy assistants who were (and are) represented by CUPE. CUPE and the National Union of Public and General Employees sought a ruling from the CLC President at the time, and it was determined that the action of filing the application was a violation of Article 4. HSAA withdrew their application.

On April 21, 2023, some of those same workers filed a determination application with the ALRB, which was followed by correspondence from the Board to affected unions with an invitation to apply. Based on the 2018 ruling of the CLC President, HSAA chose not to provide any response to the application.

I sincerely want to find a resolve to the conflict between our unions. The time, energy, resources, and emotion that have been spent on this over the last 20+ years could have been far better spent bringing new members into our respective organizations. But the current actions of the UNA have created a new barrier to any resolution. If they do not immediately withdraw their reply to the ALRB application on the classification of LPNs, our August meeting to address the outstanding issues between our unions in British Columbia cannot succeed and in fact may not even proceed.

As always, I am available for further conversation or a meeting on this matter.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'MH' followed by a stylized flourish.

MARK HANCOCK
National President

:sg/ceu

Encl.

cc: C. Rennick; R. Gill; T. Jarzebiak; A. Desjardins; A. Lennarson