



For immediate release

Tuesday, December 5, 2006

Anti-Scab Legislation: the Case for Balance and Fairness

OTTAWA – “It is simply a matter of balance and fairness,” says Ken Georgetti, president of the Canadian Labour Congress as he makes the case, today, for adoption of Bill C-257, An Act to amend the Canada Labour Code (replacement workers) in front of the House of Commons’ Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities.

The Committee is holding hearings on the bill that has already been approved in principle by an overwhelming majority of MPs (167 in favour and 101 opposed) in second reading in October. Bill C-257 would make it illegal for employers to hire replacement workers while their own employees are locked out or on strike. Such legislation is already in place in British Columbia and Quebec.

Currently, the Canada Labour Code unfortunately provides bad employers with incentives to bargain in bad faith, thus putting at risk the safety and the life of workers on lawful and legitimate picket lines.

“Much of what is being said against this legislation by certain employers, I have heard when British Columbia prohibited the use of replacement workers,” explains Georgetti who was then the president of the British Columbia Federation of Labour. “The statements are unsubstantiated; what passes for research is an endless repetition of unrelated facts and their conclusions make claims that border on hysteria. This type of legislation has been in effect for 30 years in Quebec and nearly 15 years in British Columbia: the economy, in each of these two provinces, has grown and flourished during that period. As importantly, their labour relation climate has improved.”

“Canadian working families have been waiting for this legislation for a long time. We urge the Committee to be diligent but not to delay. And we call on the House of Commons to schedule third reading approval without delay.”

The Canadian Labour Congress, the national voice of the labour movement, represents 3.2 million Canadian workers. The CLC brings together Canada’s national and international unions along with the provincial and territorial federations of labour and 135 district labour councils. Web site: www.canadianlabour.ca

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