

**REPORT OF THE GENERAL RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE**  
**TO THE**  
**2008 BC REGIONAL CONVENTION**

Subject to ratification by the delegates to the PSAC BC 2008 Regional Convention, the following delegates to the Convention were named to the General Resolutions Committee by BC Regional Executive Vice President Kay Sinclair.

**Committee Co-Chairs:**

Megan Adam  
Sheila Pearce

**Committee Members:**

Sharon Brine  
Phil Carriere  
Patt Holmes  
Steve Houston  
Paul Jones  
Terri Lee  
Alberta Moreau

**Staff**

Janelle Ho-Shing

The committee met via conference call on March 12, 2008, April 3, 2008 and April 5, 2008 and debated 19 Resolutions. The committee established its priorities as follows:

Resolution G-4	Security and Prosperity Partnership
Resolution G-2	Colombia and Human Rights
Resolution G-7	Cuts to Women's Programs
Resolution G-1a	Temporary Foreign Worker Program
Resolution G-6	Environment/Climate Change
Resolution G-16	Equity Conferences
Resolution G-11	EI Funding for Program Delivery
Resolution G-13	Classification
Resolution G-18	National Network for Racially Visible Members
Resolution G-3	May Day

Respectfully submitted by the General Resolutions Committee.

## **RESOLUTION # G-1 Temporary Foreign Worker Program**

The Committee divided the resolution into G1 a and G1 b

The Committee recommends **concurrence** on the Resolution G1 (a) which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Public Service Alliance of Canada will work through the Canadian Labour Congress to demand that the Federal Government overhaul its current temporary foreign worker programs by ensuring that these workers have access to full rights of citizenship, not just temporary access to jobs; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC will call through the CLC for a full review of Canada's immigration programs, including the role of Ministerial exemptions, the use of spot-checks and the addition of penalties for employers violating regulations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC will continue to work with CLC member unions and progressive organizations to ensure that temporary foreign workers rights are protected.

### **Rationale:**

The Temporary Foreign Workers Program, the Live-In Caregiver Program, and the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program exploit migrant workers and benefit employers, especially unscrupulous employers. These programs do not recognize the credentials and education of migrant workers, they often require maintaining employment with one employer, and they do not provide for a way of settling permanently in Canada.

The Committee recommended **non-concurrence** in G1 (b) which reads as follows:

PSAC will work through the CLC to demand that the Federal Government stop deportations of undocumented workers.

### **Rationale:**

The issues that affect our members are many and complex and our resources are limited. The PSAC should therefore put its resources into ensuring our members' rights are protected. Undocumented workers should not be given preference over other immigrants who have gone through the necessary channels. However, the Committee recognizes that it is often difficult for workers to get proper documentation from their governments.

## **RESOLUTION # G-2 Colombia and Human Rights**

The committee recommends **concurrence** on Resolution G-2 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the Public Service Alliance of Canada will, through the Canadian Labour Congress, call on Prime Minister Harper to stop negotiations of the free trade deal with Colombia.

### **Rationale:**

The Government of Colombia has one of the worst records on Human Rights in the world. The US Congress has refused to approve a similar free trade agreement with the Colombian Government. The Canadian Government should not enter into any trade agreements with the Colombian Government until the Colombian Government has addressed its many outstanding Human Rights violations including the 3.8 million internally displaced people.

## **RESOLUTION # G-3 May Day**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** on Resolution G-3 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the locals/branches of the Public Service Alliance of Canada in British Columbia work with or support local activist/community organizations presently involved in organizing May Day actions to include as many workers and workers' organizations as possible on May First 2008 and subsequent May Days; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the locals/branches/Area Councils of PSAC in B.C. be encouraged to join or endorse the May Day Organizing Committee; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the locals/branches of PSAC in B.C. participate with local activist/community organizations presently involved in organizing May Day actions to include as many workers and workers' organizations as possible on May First 2008 and subsequent May Days; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC-BC region send a resolution to the BC Federation of Labour Convention for November 2008 calling on the BC Fed to assist the labour movement to fully participate in every community in B.C. to reclaim the fighting tradition of May Day on May First of each year with demonstrations, rallies and meetings to highlight the workers' movement in Canada as part of the international May Day actions which take place around the world.

### **Rationale:**

May Day or International Workers' Day is a historic commemoration and international celebration of workers' rights around world and should be recognized in Canada. This would bring more awareness to workers' rights and the Labour Movement's contributions to these rights.

## **RESOLUTION # G-4 Security and Prosperity Partnership**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** on Resolution G-4 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** The Public Service Alliance of Canada will, through the Canadian Labour Congress, continue to oppose the Security and Prosperity Partnership (SPP) of North America and call on all of our affiliates to take similar action; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** PSAC will support NDP trade critic Peter Julian's motion calling for public consultations and full Parliamentary oversight of the SPP; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** PSAC will lobby the Federal Government to immediately cease SPP talks until the process becomes democratic and guarantees protection of Canadian sovereignty; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** PSAC will work with affiliates to mobilize the membership to put Canadian sovereignty front and centre in the lead-up to the forthcoming election.

### **Rationale:**

The Security and Prosperity Partnership is an agreement drafted in secret, between Canada, Mexico, and the United States of America. This agreement seeks to address issues of security and economics in a unified manner which in turn undermines public services, public control and access to water, aboriginal rights to territorial and cultural protection, and Canadian sovereignty by creating a single regulatory regime that weakens existing Canadian systems.

## **RESOLUTION # G-5 District Labour Councils**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-5 which reads as follows:

**BE IF RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC B.C. will join with District Labour Councils to lobby municipalities and school boards to buy locally grown and produced food, to plant fruit trees on public and private property, to support farmers' markets, and to support community gardens; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC B.C. will join with District Labour Councils to lobby municipalities and school boards to increase recycling and composting programs and put in place other green initiatives.

### **Rationale:**

Supporting local farmers and socially responsible food businesses lessens our reliance on imported foods and also lessens our impact on the environment by reducing the distance foods are transported. This also leads to greater food security and safety.

Increasing municipal and school board recycling, composting, and other green programs, will significantly reduce the amount of garbage going into landfills and also reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

## **RESOLUTION # G-6 Environment/Climate Change**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-6 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC will work with environmental, community, and labour groups to pressure the federal government to fund Environment Canada, Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and other federal environmental programs, including those falling under OurFish.ca ; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** we pressure the federal government to bring in a national climate change plan which would cap and reduce green house gas emissions and that part of this plan include federal and other governmental funding for public transit; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** we pressure the federal government to implement the Kyoto Protocol targets and support future international agreements to substantially decrease green house gas emissions.

### **Rationale:**

As the Harper Conservative Government has cut or not funded environmental protection programs and has joined with the Bush Administration to thwart international efforts to cut green house gas emissions, it is important that we lobby the government to come up with a plan that would cut green house gas emissions by 90% by 2050 in order to reverse the global warming process.

The future viability of fish stocks, habitat, and eco-systems is dependent on the Federal Government increasing funding and staffing in the Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Environment Canada. The PSAC needs to work with like-minded groups to pressure the Government to this end.

## **RESOLUTION # G-7 Cuts to Women's Programs**

The committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-7 (which covers G-8) which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC will work with Provincial and Territorial Federations of Labour, the Canadian Labour Congress, and Women's groups to pressure the federal government to reverse the cuts and changes made to the Status of Women Canada,

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** we call for a Status of Women Canada with a strong mandate to advance women's equality, with the resources to lead the way when it comes to research and policy development on women's equality issues within government; a federal presence for women's equality across the country; and a Women's program that funds not-for-profit Women's groups that support feminist principles and research and advocate for change, and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC will work with Provincial and Territorial Federations of Labour, the CLC, and Women's and community groups to put pressure on the federal government to reinstate and properly fund the Court Challenges Program.

### **Rationale:**

The Conservative Government has slashed 40% of Status of Women Canada's (SWC) administrative budget, closed 12 of 16 Status of Women Canada regional offices and eliminated the Court Challenges Program. These cuts have effectively been an attack on Women's groups' ability to challenge equality test cases on behalf of women and other marginalized people and greatly diminished the ability of Women's groups that do advocacy and lobbying on Women's issues.

## **RESOLUTION # G-9**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-9 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC BC and PSAC Nationally will lobby and put pressure on the federal government to significantly increase the number of passport offices and workers in B.C. to serve the needs of B.C. residents and to address the workload and working conditions of the Passport and Service Canada workers.

### **Rationale:**

The U.S. Government's requirement for Canadians to have passports when entering the U.S., has resulted in Passport workers working long hours under difficult and stressful circumstances. These workload issues would be adequately resolved with increased staffing levels. Although Foreign Affairs recently announced the opening of a Passport office in Kelowna within the next two years, more Passport workers and offices are required due to B.C.'s increasing population, the amount of international travel by B.C. residents, and to address Passport workers' working conditions.

## **RESOLUTION # G-10**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-10 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC put pressure on Air Canada to update their Electronic technology in order to provide both English and French subtitles on their television/movie screens.

### **Rationale:**

PSAC uses Air Canada as its airline of choice however Air Canada does not provide subtitles in its movies which can be very frustrating for members with disabilities including those members who are deaf or hard of hearing or from being able to access these movies.

## **RESOLUTION # G-11 EI Funding for Program Delivery**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-11 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** PSAC B.C. will lobby Members of Parliament, and work with community and labour groups, to put pressure on the Federal Government to reverse these regressive measures, and increase funding for EI program delivery and benefit entitlements; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** PSAC B.C. will work with community and labour groups to raise public awareness and gain public support for these issues.

### **Rationale:**

Successive Liberal and Conservative federal governments have reduced Unemployment Insurance (UI) and subsequently Employment Insurance (EI) benefits resulting in far fewer unemployed workers qualifying for benefits. At the same time the Federal Government has used surplus monies from the EI Fund for purposes other than insurance. Educating the public and our membership including using our Think Public Campaign would help us better advocate for increases to EI benefits and other public services.

The committee strongly supports the need for the PSAC to work with other unions and community groups to address the cuts to EI offices. These cuts will result in three sites in BC to process claims which will greatly reduce the quality and access of this service to the public.

## **RESOLUTION # G-12**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-12 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC BC shall lobby the PSAC National Board of Directors to consult with all PSAC members (by survey, focus group or other means) with the objective of reviewing and revising Policy paper #12 (superannuation) so that it is responsive to the needs of members in today's society.

### **Rationale:**

The PSAC Superannuation policy was developed in 1989 and the realities with respect to pensions and members' needs may have changed. An assessment of our members' needs can provide us with a pension policy paper that reflects current needs as we head into the largest retirement in the public service.

## **RESOLUTION # G-13 Classification**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-13 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC BC will lobby with the PSAC National Board of Directors to develop a national campaign using all means at its disposal (even court challenges) with the objective of forcing the employer to consult with them and to jointly develop a classification system that meets the needs of all PSAC members.

### **Rationale:**

The current classification system is outdated and overloaded and the Generic Model Work Description does not meet the needs of our members. This issue has been initiated by the membership through bargaining demands but still remains unresolved. This campaign will provide us with a different avenue to bring about a resolution on this issue. Furthermore, the recent Supreme Court decision (Health Services and Support vs. British Columbia, June 8, 2007) has established the rights of unions to consult with government on matters important to their members.

The committee recognizes that this matter affects our members from Treasury Board.

## **RESOLUTION # G-14 Staffing**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** on Resolution G-14 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC BC will lobby the PSAC National Board of Directors and express the membership's desire that the PSAC use all means at its disposal (even court challenges) with the objective of jointly developing with the employer a responsive mechanism for changing staffing rules on an ongoing basis.

### **Rationale:**

The current staffing process is defined by an act of parliament (Public Service Employment Act) but there are problems/concerns with staffing rules that must be dealt with on a regular basis and currently are not. The recent Supreme Court decision (Health Services and support vs. British Columbia June 8, 2007) has established the right of unions to consult with government on matters important to their members.

The committee also recognizes that this issue speaks to members of Treasury Board.

## **RESOLUTION # G-15**

The committee recommends **non-concurrence** on Resolution #G-15 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the PSAC BC will consult with the PSAC National Board of Directors and express the membership's desire that the PSAC develop a campaign using all means at its disposal (even court challenges) with the objective of changing the law and allowing bargaining related to superannuation.

### **Rationale:**

PSAC has put bargaining demands regarding pension issues on the bargaining table and has done so in this round of negotiations also. Our demands relate to pension entitlements, rather than changes to the plan itself, as it is legislation with multiple employers and multiple participants. While the recent Supreme Court decision (Health Services and Support vs. B.C. June 8, 2007) has established the constitutional right of unions to consult with government on matters important to their members, this decision provides a right to a process and not an outcome. As a Union, we believe that we can negotiate any benefits for our members.

## **RESOLUTION # G-16 Equity Conferences**

The Committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-16 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** each PSAC region hold one Regional Equity conference for all equity group members in the next convention cycle; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC Regional Equity Conferences for all equity group members be funded by the PSAC on a model such as the Regional Women's Conferences.

### **Rationale:**

Providing resources for PSAC recognized equity groups to have a regional conference allows equity members to come together to network, discuss common issues and develop regional strategies which ultimately will contribute to building a more effective approach to advance equity issues within the union and in society.

## **RESOLUTION # G-17**

The committee recommends **concurrence** on Resolution G 17 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC establish a National Vice-President that will represent all PSAC equity seeking members and will sit with full voice and vote on the AEC; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT** prospective candidates for the National Vice-President position come from the PSAC's equity-seeking members and that voting for eligible candidates be by delegates to PSAC Convention who have self identified as being from an equity group.

### **Rationale:**

Creating an additional full time elected position on the AEC, specifically designated to represent members from the four equity groups; members with disabilities, GBTL, racially visible or NAIM would reflect the union's acknowledgement and commitment in addressing under-representation in its leadership as well as the issues and concerns of these groups.

## **RESOLUTION G-18 National Network for Racially Visible Members**

The committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-18 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC establish a national network of Racially Visible members from coast to coast to coast; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the National Network of Racially Visible members be structured and funded in a similar way as the National Aboriginal, Inuit and Métis Network.

### **Rationale:**

A National Network of Racially Visible members would allow racialized PSAC members to have a united voice and would provide opportunities to more effectively organize and mobilize. The creation of this Network would further support the union's efforts to fight racism and discrimination within the workplace, the union and broader society. This type of network has strengthened our union and has proven to be beneficial in our growth as is seen with the NAIM network.

## **RESOLUTION # G-19**

The committee recommends **concurrence** in Resolution G-19 which reads as follows:

**BE IT RESOLVED THAT** the PSAC nationally increase the funding for Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees.

### **Rationale:**

PSAC Regional Human Rights and Equity Committees need increased resources for committee members to fully encourage and engage members to participate in Union activities. An increase in funding will support this work and increase membership participation within our union.