

# *National Health Union*

## **Report of the National President**

**For the period**

**October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007 - March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

**Presented at the National Executive Meeting**

**April 8<sup>th</sup>, 2008 - April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008**

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**Anthony Tilley**



Greetings, brothers and sisters,

It is once again both my privilege and responsibility to present my second report to you today on my activities over the past several months, and to speak to the current status of our Component. I am happy to report that through the hard work of the National Council members and cooperation of our local executives both those newly elected who have answered the call, and those loyal stalwarts who's advice has been invaluable in our rebuilding process... The National Health Union is alive and well and will head into our convention ready to finalize our rebirth and to outline our future goals over the next several years. The task had not been an easy one, but we have met every hurdle with determination and have persevered. We have rebuilt our structure, reenergized our locals, and ratified a workable set of bylaws that will allow us to operate in a more open and transparent fashion than we have had in previous years. The National Council through our accepted changes will now have a greater input and authority in the administration of our component.

### **The Rebuilding Process:**

The process has been both daunting and lengthy. We have invested a large amount of our resources and time so as to meet our commitment to have this process completed in order to initiate the convention process itself, which was also one of our commitments to the PSAC leadership made in May 2007. We have met those commitments. I have been able to get out to most of our regions and will continue to do so over the next several months. Yet work remains to insure all our locals and members are represented at our convention in August. We will endeavour to get our locals in New Brunswick, Thompson, and Whitehorse functional within the next 2 months.

#### **Locals**

The first critical piece to be put into place was the reestablishment of active executives in all our NHU locals that had been affected by the membership allocation vote the previous year. In many cases that meant election of many new representatives across the country. All but 2 of the effected locals have been re-established and at the time of this writing local 00032 Golden Horseshoe is almost ready to start a process for election of officers.

#### **Structure**

This of course required difficult decisions to be made as to how best meet the demands and needs of our members while at the same time speaking to the reality of our limitations, reduced member roster and financial resources. The council met the challenge constructively and agreed on

changes to the original proposal that in the opinion of the council was both workable and would provide equity and fairness to all regions. I would like to thank Sister Pat Todd for her preliminary work which led to a compromised adaptation of the original proposal into to our current structure. Very good work sister.

Our structure and the realignment of national council will mean that NHU can respond to needs of the members more quickly and with greater efficiency than we have been able to do in the past.

## **Bylaws**

The last piece, but by no means of lesser importance, to be put into place was a new set of bylaws that would allow us to function under our current situation and get us to convention. All changes to the old bylaws, including the incorporation of the newly agreed to structure were debated and agreed to by the National council. The changes made were to allow for greater distribution of authority and accountability to the national council, and to provide clear direction for the component, its membership and its leaders. The National Council acting upon the authority and advice of the National PSAC President John Gordon forward the bylaws to the general membership on January 15<sup>th</sup> for ratification. To date 15 locals with a combined total membership of 4700 of our 5000 members have ratified our bylaws.

A very impressive showing and statement supporting the legitimacy of the process.

## **Regional Vice Presidents**

It had been the intention to elect RVP's for the four regions that had lost them through the allocation process; however we have been advised by the PSAC President that we do not have a process to do so outside of our National Convention. It is my intention however to include those regions in all plans leading up to convention and we will insure that their regional conferences are coordinated through the National Office.

## **Bi-monthly Local Presidents Conference Calls**

In keeping with the themes of better communication and transparency, I have initiated open dialogue with all local presidents through the means of a teleconference call to be held every 2 months. This call only allows me to inform and update the presidents on breaking news and happenings in Ottawa and to get immediate feedback. More importantly it allows the local presidents the opportunity to dialogue with each other, ask questions and connect in a way that can only be informative and beneficial to all

## **Labour Management Relations:**

On the national level, I have met with the ADM's and other senior management on a continuous basis in both Health Canada and the Public Health Agency. While these meetings are both cordial and informative I nonetheless have expressed my intention to return to a more regular and formal relationship. While informal negotiation and meetings are tools to be used to accomplish desired aims and goals, I will not abandon the formal and legally required structures of the labour management relationship. LMCC's must be regularly held in all regions and locals within NHU, and management has the responsibility to insure our rights are respected. Just as nationally the department has the obligation to hold these meeting attended by the Deputy Minister, so do the regions have similar responsibilities! Should any local officer encounter resistance please let the national office know at your earliest convenience.

Based on information I have gathered on my trips to various regions, I have determined that many incidents have occurred involving our members that could have been avoided had the collective agreement been interpreted correctly. Obviously it is the responsibility of the union to insure our representatives are knowledgeable and their training current, but the department has the same obligation. I have asked that training on the collective agreement be included in the formal training programs given to new managers. A reply I am sure will be forthcoming. I am a big believer in "old school" unionism, the department and its managers have obligations they must adhere to, as do we... We will honour our obligations and will be vigilant that the department will do the same.

## **National Web Site:**

We are midway in restructuring our web site; it is our goal to make it more member friendly and to keep it as current and relevant as we can. As we proceed we will be adding more features to make it more interactive. We would welcome all comments and suggestions.

## **Office Renovation:**

The national office renovations will be completed shortly and we are scheduled to move back to our offices at Gilmore Street on May 9<sup>th</sup>. Should any member be visiting downtown Ottawa and like to come to the PSAC building we would be happy to meet you and show you around.

## **Office Modernization:**

We have completed most of the upgrades to our systems and technologies. We currently have installed electronic banking and will have direct deposit up and running by June. I am currently looking at extensive electronic filing and storage alternatives to improve all aspects of our service to the member. When

completed these long overdo changes, will make us fully functional 21<sup>st</sup> century operation.

### **Summary:**

It is hard top believe that 6 months have gone by so quickly, and I would like to personally thank the remaining members on the National Council who have contributed so much to the revitalization of the National Health Union. Sisters Pat Todd, Christine Dockman, Betsy Deaffie, and Brothers Claude Gagnon and Vaughn Williams. You have done your regions proud, while at the same time successfully representing the needs all those brothers and sisters across the country who are the members of NHU. I have asked you to step up and you have. As a team we have almost reached the end of our trek up the mountain, and hopefully everything will be much easier as time moves on.

Over the next 4 months we will be in convention mode, our local execs should be keeping an eye on the website as to upcoming committee and other relevant information that will be circulated.

The National Health Union will remain a vital and vibrant member of the PSAC family and will continue to represent our member's needs in a professional and competent manner. I look forward with enthusiasm to convention, and beyond that a productive and successful number of years of continued growth and development.

In solidarity

Tony Tilley  
President  
NHU