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CANADA EMPLOYMENT AND IMMIGRATION UNION

BULLETIN

SYNDICAT DE L'EMPLOI ET DE L'IMMIGRATION DU CANADA

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SAVE OUR C.E.C.

On Wednesday, March 27, members of the community occupied the Halifax North CEC, on Gottingen Street to stop the closure -- they are still there. Their demands are:

1. *Finding an interim alternative location for the CEC -- other than the Community YMCA. We are prepared to work with CEC to find a location that is suitable to both parties, and made the commitment today that we would immediately begin this process, in hopes that we would find such a location. This position was an acceptance on our part, of a proposal put forth by HRDC reps in negotiations.*
2. *The establishment of a process whereby both partners could do a joint Community Needs Assessment, with the purpose of determining the exact needs of the community with respect to services and programs. While both parties agreed to establishing the Community Needs Assessment process, our negotiations broke down over what issues would be included in the Assessment. Specifically, our difference lies in whether or not the need for a free-standing, independent CEC location is assessed in the Community Needs Assessment. We are willing to allow the community, to determine, by means of this assessment, whether or not an independent, free-standing site is necessary to satisfy its needs.*

They have written to the Minister, Doug Young, but received minimal response. They also have had meetings with Joanne Toews, Director-General for Nova Scotia. However, results have been minimal and there are no new formal meetings planned.

What are the issues?

In the department and government's minds, the closing of the Halifax North CEC is part of the new service delivery model -- consolidate wherever possible. This vision involves the closure of 115 CEC's across Canada and the gutting of 200 more. Technology and partnerships will deliver the services. Community services will be run by community partners not federal workers. KIOSKS will replace person to person contact.

The Gottingen Street office serves the Black Community in Halifax. It has one of the highest unemployment levels in the country. It's where a CEC should be -- in the community. The office has helped clients for almost thirty years.

Why should the Union be concerned?

In public statements, the department has indicated that there are no lay-offs and Union members involved. They have been re-deployed to the main Halifax CEC.

Yes that is true. However, the consolidation of HRD services is meant to do more with less. The use of "partners" is to offer service delivery through volunteer organizations, not federal workers. The transferring of service to alternate jurisdictions will mean the loss of jobs. Are user fees far behind?

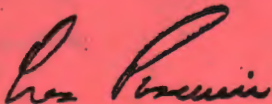
What can we do?

- *Call in messages of support to the Save our Community CEC Committee at telephone: (902) 422-3169 or fax a message of solidarity to the Save our Community CEC Committee c/o Oxfam at: (902) 425-7778.*
- *Write to the Minister of Human Resources Development Canada, Doug Young, at fax: (819) 994-0448 (Please send a copy to the Save our Community CEC Committee at fax: (902) 425-7778); Urge the Minister to instruct HRDC representatives to return to negotiations with a mandate that is respectful of a true government community partnership, and one that respects the community's right to determine a service delivery model through a Community Needs Assessment.*
- *Call, drop in or fax your MP and HRDC Minister, Doug Young
Mary Claney (902) 426-4411 (tel); 426-3026 (fax)
Geoff Regan (902) 426-2600 (tel); 426-7426 (fax)
Ron MacDonald (902) 426-3400 (tel); 426-7151 (fax)
Doug Young (613) 984-2482 (tel); (819) 994-0448 (fax)*

Maintaining public services can be done by resisting contracting out and the devolution of services to the private sector and to "partners". A strong public sector will only exist if we support those in the community that are fighting for a permanent workforce providing essential services for their community.

HRDC officially closed the CEC on March 29 but the occupation continues and requires our help!

In solidarity,



Cres Pascucci,
National President

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