



Providing information by email to our members and fellow unionists

ILWU Canada Waterfront eNews

Official e-newsletter publication of the International Longshore & Warehouse Union Canada

Feb 7 , 2017

Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

The Federal Government is backtracking on its proposed plan to privatize the country's ports after pressure from many industry stakeholders.

Representatives from the ILWU attended Minister Garneau's latest visit and asked some pointed questions during the Q & A. The questions were about protecting seafaring jobs for Canadians. We hope the Minister understands that we are not going to give up our jobs without a fight.

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[Be sure to read the article "The End of Employees"](#)
- 9) Join the [Fight for \\$15.](#) Sign the petition [today.](#) Over 47,000 people have signed up already.

In solidarity

Bob Dhaliwal

Secretary Treasurer

ILWU Canada

Garneau downplays chance of port and airport privatization

Minister of Transport stresses that he is merely "exploring" options



The federal government's decision to study privatizing the country's ports and major airports is simply a matter of "exploring different possibilities" and not an attempt to rationalize a pre-made decision, Federal Transportation Minister Marc Garneau said in a question and answer session after a speech to the Greater Vancouver Board of Trade (VBOT) January 25.

"Please do not make the assumption that because you hear about it in the papers that this is a done deal," Garneau said.

"It is by no means a done deal. It is just a new government exploring different possibilities."

Garneau stressed that the decision on whether to privatize the assets would be based on whether the sale is good for air travellers and for port efficiency.

He added that the investigation stemmed from the previous Conservative government's review of the Canada Transportation Act. Privatizing airports and ports could bring in countless billions of dollars at a time when the federal government's deficit for the 2016-2017 fiscal year is projected to be around \$34 billion. During the 2015 election campaign, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised to keep budget deficits to a maximum of \$10 billion.

Last September, the Trudeau government hired Credit Suisse AG to investigate various options associated with privatizing major Canadian airports.

It then announced in November that it has also hired Morgan Stanley Canada Ltd. to study potentially privatizing 18 Canadian ports.

Vancouver Airport Authority (VAA) CEO Craig Richmond told Business in Vancouver after Garneau's comments that he believes Garneau's response was "fair."

"It's our job to put what our opinion is out there and our opinion is that it is a bad idea," Richmond said.

Just last week, on January 18, Richmond gave his own passionate plea to a VBOT audience, urging attendees to lobby their MPs to oppose privatization.

"We're not in favour of [privatization] because, quite frankly, the price of everything would go up," he said.

"If we have a private operator, two things will happen. To make their return, the prices will go up and it will no longer be a community-run airport. It will be run out of New York, London and Toronto."

Another part of the reason why prices for things, such as the airport improvement fee and retail goods, would accelerate faster than otherwise is that Canadian airports carry a total of about \$13.3 billion in debt.

If airports are sold to private companies, that debt would have to be factored into the sale price of the assets, Richmond said.

Costs for things such as the Airport Improvement Fee may rise regardless, however, given that the [VAA has a \\$5.6 billion plan to expand the airport](#) in the next 20 years.

When robots steal your job



Let's start with the good news: manufacturing is returning to North America. It is called "re-shoring" and is happening for several reasons. Chief among these is that labour costs in Canada and the United States are becoming relatively more competitive as the Chinese economy soared and wages there gradually caught up to more developed economies. But there are other factors at play here, too.

In North America, corporate tax rates have become more globally competitive, as has the cost of energy. Land is also far cheaper in North America. To find 500 acres for a large manufacturing facility in Alberta, you look out a window. In Guangzhou? Even five acres could be a challenge. When you also consider the additional cost of shipping goods from Asia to North America, the case for simply making it here becomes even stronger.

But the real driver behind re-shoring is automation. A robot in Mississauga, Ont., costs just as much as a robot in Shenzhen. And that is the bad news. Manufacturers are moving robotic jobs, not human ones, back to North American shores. The bad news doesn't end there. This rise in automation has only just begun and is going to change far more than the manufacturing sector. With the growth of machine learning and artificial intelligence, job losses will not be limited to assembly lines. The service industry, office administration, computer programming, and many other sectors are all on the cusp of automation.

For centuries, every advance in industrial technology was heralded by prophecies of doom. But the Luddites have only ever been partly right. Automation has often proved disruptive, leading to painful "creative destruction," unemployment and migration. But progress, on balance, has been positive. The internal combustion engine meant that some buggy manufacturers failed, but in their place came automobile makers and ultimately more and better jobs. Since these changes took place over periods of decades or even years, industries, companies and individuals had time to adjust. They retooled or, if necessary, relocated. This time it may be different; the changes may come almost literally overnight.

Consider the transport industry. In the 2011 Canadian census, more than 260,000 people described themselves as truck drivers, making it the second-most common job in the country for men. Now Uber has a self-driving truck startup called Otto, and the state of Nevada has already licensed autonomous transport trucks. A tipping point will soon be reached when the largest transport companies decide they can expand profits, reduce crashes and bypass the union with a simple fleet upgrade.

I spoke to Henry Siu, a professor at UBC who specializes in automation and the decline of middle-class jobs; he predicted that the trucking industry could automate within the span of one to two years. The economic changes this would spark cannot be understated. In the United States, this could mean the loss of eight to nine million jobs, and mostly from lower-income families, further exacerbating economic disparities. Worse yet, according to Siu, this shift would most likely come in the midst of

a recession, when the industry is looking for new ways to cut costs.

The question that should be on the mind of every political leader and policy-maker in the country is: how do we prepare for this evolutionary change to the global economy? Many people are talking about universal basic income—a guaranteed monthly stipend for anyone below the poverty line. There are pilot projects being launched in Canada now, and the concept appears to be a promising alternative to Employment Insurance.

Governments can delay automation, too, with new regulations, tax disincentives, and licensing constraints. But this has its limits and is only delaying the inevitable. It would be politically and economically impossible for Saskatchewan to ban driverless trucks, for example, if the Trans-Canada Highway is filled with them.

How do we prepare for the inevitable job losses? Siu has a counterintuitive suggestion: avoid education that focuses on the STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering and math). This only trains people for jobs that are the next to be automated, like programming. Instead, we need a work force to take on jobs that computers can't: to think laterally, to make subjective judgment calls an algorithm can't, and to solve problems. Not game programmers, but game animators; not payroll clerks, but career counsellors.

The great irony of the robotic revolution may be the unexpected resurgence of the long-derided bachelors of arts degree—you still can't automate creativity.

Loopholes cost workers millions in wages;

Government study shows financial impact of province's patchy worker protections

Sara Mojtehdzadeh Work and Wealth Reporter

Employees lose \$45 million in potential earnings each week because legal loopholes exclude them from basic workplace rights like overtime

pay, holiday pay, vacation pay and even minimum wage, a government-commissioned study shows.

Almost two million Ontario employees are not eligible for at least one of these entitlements, the research submitted to the Ministry of Labour found.

That is because the province's employment legislation - the main source of protection for the majority of workers - contains more than 85 special rules that exclude some jobs from minimum standards.

For example, building superintendents are not entitled to minimum wage, rest periods or overtime pay. Neither are farm workers.

Construction employees aren't entitled to time off between shifts, termination pay or severance pay.

Removing the special rules would translate on average to an 8-per-cent pay raise for workers, according to the research.

The study, written by York University professors Leah Vosko and Mark Thomas and Ryerson University sociologist Andrea Noack, shows disadvantaged workers are most likely to be exempt from basic rights.

These include low-wage and temp workers, women, aboriginals, young people and new Canadians. "It's health - physical and mental. And also another thing is you feel a constant struggle," said Beixi Liu, 53, who spent years working through temp agencies when he moved to Canada from China in 2000.

"Really it's a financial squeeze," added Liu, who is now an organizer for the Toronto-based Workers' Action Centre. "You really have to stretch every single dollar," Liu said. Ontario's Employment Standards Act was originally designed to create a basic, universal floor of rights for workers.

But existing loopholes mean that less than 40 per cent of Ontario employees are now fully covered by it, according to the latest study, which draws on Statistics Canada data.

The loopholes exist "largely in response to employer concerns over the effects of (universal minimum standards) on industry," the study says. In a statement to the Star, the Ministry of Labour said its special advisers were "thoroughly reviewing all submissions and commissioned research as part of the Changing Workplaces Review."

That process, which started in 2015, aims to update legislation to better reflect the rise of insecure work. "The ministry is committed to responding to the changing nature of work while continuing to protect workers and support business in today's economy," the statement

added.

Karl Baldauf, vice president of policy and government relations at the Ontario Chamber of Commerce - which has launched a campaign against the proposed updates called "Keep Ontario Working" - said exemptions were necessary "to recognize the distinct demands of entrepreneurial culture."

"Keep Ontario Working believes that abolishing sector exemptions would mark a significant and unacceptable change from Ontario's long-standing approach to employment standards legislation," he said. "Regulatory reform that raises thresholds only to reduce the ability of business to invest in and grow the labour force is counterproductive," he said.

But the study says there are "considerable consequences" to legal loopholes, "in the form of "both economic and social costs experienced by individual employees, their families and the province as a whole."

"The social costs of exemptions and special rules include pressures on work-life balance, which may be particularly acute for employees with dependent children and for single parents," it says.

The Star has reported extensively on the rise and impact of precarious employment; in the GTA, some 52 per cent of workers now experience some form of insecurity in their jobs, according to research by the United Way and McMaster University.

"In addition to massive lost wages, exemptions create social costs to workers' health and work-life balance," said Mary Gellatly of Parkdale Community Legal Services, which runs a workers rights division. "The Employment Standards Act must provide a universal floor that prevents employers from pushing workers below the socially acceptable minimum standards, particularly those in precarious work.

"The government's special advisers are expected to make their final recommendations on the Changing Workplaces Review in the coming weeks, with legislative reform expected to be formally introduced at Queen's Park this fall.

For Liu, the reforms are about "thriving, living, and prosperity." "That (money) translates into purchasing power," he said. "That's really good. That's good for the economy. That's good even for business."

Seafarers Left Without Pay or Warm Clothes



A group of seafarers on board a ship held at the Port of Fawley were found to be without warm clothing for days and their wages unpaid for three months.

The chemical tanker, Sea Emperor, was detained by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency on January 28, 2017, after it was found to have various equipment deficiencies. The agency also found that there was a lack of cleaning products on board.

Peter Morgan, Assistant Port Chaplain for Southern Ports from seafarers' charity Apostleship of the Sea (AoS) visited the ship to offer the crew assistance after the third engineer contacted the International Transport Workers Federation.

Morgan said: "It was 'pungent' on board, to put it politely. The crew were nervous around the marine superintendent and were reluctant to say anything at the time."

After the disconcerting conditions he witnessed, Morgan left his contact details with the crew, who texted him later to say they had not been paid their wages and that they had no warm clothing with them.

Morgan returned the next day to bring clothes, soap, cleaning materials and sim cards for the crew to contact their families, but the ship had gone out to anchorage. He returned the following day with a marine police unit, which visited the ship at anchorage and managed to successfully deliver the supplies to the seafarers.

Morgan said: "They appeared happier and more relaxed. They informed me they had finally been paid and that cleaning supplies had

been put on board."

The ship has since left for Lagos, Nigeria, and is scheduled to arrive on February 18, 2017.

AoS, via its team in Manila, have said they that intend to get into contact with the crewmembers' family to offer any support that is needed.



Finland has given a clear sign of its commitment to combat modern slavery by becoming the eleventh country to [ratify the 2014 Forced Labour Protocol](#).

On receiving the instrument of ratification at the headquarters of the International Labour Organization in Geneva, ILO Director-General, Guy Ryder, said that Finland had signalled its "determination to join the global drive to end this scourge once and for all."

Finland's Permanent Representative to the UN in Geneva, Ambassador Terhi Hakala, described forced labour as, "a severe violation of the human rights of workers."

Ambassador Hakala also underlined the importance of the Protocol in fighting forced labour, which affects nearly 21 million people worldwide.

This latest ratification is great news and we are excited by this progress, but the campaign still has some way to go. We've set a target for 50 countries to ratify the Forced Labour Protocol by the end

of 2018. You can help us achieve this by encouraging your friends, colleagues and network to [sign up](#) to show their support.



Poverty Free BC

Rally: March 4, 2017

Week of Action

Feb 25 - Mar 3

for info: <http://bit.ly/2i7GC1H>



Western Transportation Advisory Council

WESTAC 

WESTAC is a non-profit society of major transportation organizations in Western Canada represented by business, labour, and government decision-makers. The ILWU is a founding member and holds two positions on the Executive Board, one is Local 333 Grain Workers President Gerry Gault and the other through the ILWU Affiliate in Saskatchewan the Grain Services Union General Secretary Hugh Wagner.

Feb 3rd

Bulk Products

3 results

[GrainsConnect planning to build new grain terminal in Vegreville | Edmonton Journal](#)
[edmontonjournal.com](#)

[Permalink](#)

February 3rd, 2017

An international agribusiness partnership is planning to build a \$30-million high-throughput grain terminal near Vegreville.

[Fire in potash mine spurs scramble for shelter; Refuge stations held 87 workers: 'We don't take chances.' official says](#)

Calgary Herald

February 3rd, 2017

Dozens of workers had to spend the night about one kilometre underground after a fire at a potash mine in southeastern Saskatchewan. Randy Burton, spokesman for PotashCorp, said the fire broke out Wednesday ...

[Opinion: A fresh look at the role of natural resources in B.C.'s economy](#)

Vancouver Sun

January 31st, 2017

As leaders from government, industry and First Nations gather in Prince George for the 14th annual Natural Resources Forum, it's worth taking a fresh look at the important role natural resources play in B.C.'s economy, today and in the ...

Economy/Trade

2 results

[Are renegotiated trade pacts a panacea? Not really.](#)

The Washington Post

January 31st, 2017

If you call something "the worst trade deal maybe ever signed anywhere," you kind of have to get rid of it when you have the chance. So it seems like only a matter of time before President Trump begins to pull us out of the North American Free ...

[The U.S. needs Canada less than you think](#)

Financial Post

February 3rd, 2017

President Trump has thrown a wrench into TPP and has threatened to dismantle NAFTA, NATO, even the WTO. Can world leaders do business with Trump and how reliant is the U.S. reliant on international trade? FP's ...

Energy

1 result

Crude-by-rail slowdown could be long-term

The Chronicle Herald (Halifax, NS)

February 2nd, 2017

CALGARY - The rumble of crude-oil-laden rail cars through Canadian towns won't be silenced any time soon, but progress on the Line 3, Trans Mountain and Keystone XL pipelines means there could be far fewer in the ...

Environment

1 result

Cheaper renewables to halt coal and oil demand growth from 2020: research | Reuters

www.reuters.com

[*Permalink*](#)

February 3rd, 2017

The falling cost of electric vehicle and solar technology will halt demand growth for oil and coal from 2020, according to research published on Thursday, posing a threat to fossil fuel companies unprepared for the transition.

Infrastructure

1 result

Government red tape is choking our economy

winnipegsun.com

February 1st, 2017

We used to build things quickly in North America. The Empire State Building was constructed in one year and 45 days. The Pentagon was built in 16 months. The CN Tower only took 40 months. These were large, complex projects and yet we still found ...

Innovation & Technology

2 results

Getting in line with platooning

Canada.Autonews.com

[*Permalink*](#)

February 2nd, 2017

Transport trucks equipped with platooning technology -- GPS and a wireless connection coupled with their own collision avoidance systems -- circle a track in close formation. Photo credit: ROBERT BOSTELAAR BLAINVILLE...

Global companies get go-ahead for pod taxi experiments in India

MCT Regional News

January 31st, 2017

Jan. 31--NEW DELHI -- A NITI Aayog panel has cleared a government proposal to test three rapid transport systems using pod cars--futuristic, driverless vehicles that run along a pre-determined course. The approval to the ...

Workforce

1 result

The End of Employees

www.msn.com

[*Permalink*](#)

February 3rd, 2017

Never before have American companies tried so hard to employ so few people. The outsourcing wave that moved apparel-making jobs to China and call-center operations to India is now just as likely to happen inside companies across the U.S. and in ...

Marine

2 results

Can the industry return to profitability in 2017?

www.ft.lk

[*Permalink*](#)

February 3rd, 2017

As outlined by Drewry, the gradual recovery in freight markets is a much-needed and positive development for the container shipping sector, but it is likely to be partially at the expense of the weaker players, especially companies that are still ...

CoLoadX: Trump's Effects on Shipping - Port Technology International

www.porttechnology.org

[*Permalink*](#)

February 1st, 2017

The question of what the Trump administration might mean for container shipping has been explored by Fauad Shariff, Co-Founder and CEO at CoLoadX, a digital ocean freight procurement platform built by freight forwarders, non-vessel operating common ...

Trucking

2 results

Alberta truckers to get new training digs

Today's Trucking

[*Permalink*](#)

February 1st, 2017

EDMONTON--Construction of a new Alberta Motor Transport Association (AMTA) training facility and five-acre test track at the Edmonton International Airport (EIA) is set to begin this summer. "Having outgrown our current Edmonton ...

Province increasing allowable weight for semi-trailers

Brandon Sun

January 28th, 2017

Semi-trucks on Manitoba roads are now allowed to be a bit heavier, with Infrastructure Minister Blaine Pederson announcing relaxed regulations on Friday. Specifically, the new maximum allowable weight has been increased to 24,000 kg for ...

FIGHT FOR \$15 Minimum Wage



It is time to increase the minimum wage and address income inequality in BC.

At \$10.85/hr BC's minimum wage is one of the lowest in Canada. As the cost of living continues to go up, workers earning minimum wage cannot make ends meet.

BC's minimum wage leaves full-time workers living below the poverty line.

The BC Federation of Labour believes that work should lift you out of poverty. It's time for the BC government to increase the minimum wage so that nobody is left behind.

Help us fight for \$15/hr. It's only fair!

Sign the petition!

[Click the image below to visit the Fight For \\$15 website.](#)

FIGHT FOR 15



Waterfront News

Reminder

The Waterfront News is the newsletter produced by ILWU Canada and mailed to members several times per year. The Dispatcher is the newsletter produced by our International Union and is also mailed to members several times per year. ILWU Canada keeps an address database for both of these, but we only receive addresses from the Locals or the Members directly.



[Copies of past editions of the Waterfront News are available here:](#)

[Copies of past editions of the Dispatcher are available here:](#)

If you are a Member of the ILWU in Canada, or on the A or B boards in any of the Longshore Locals you are entitled to receive one or both of these. If you are not receiving it now you should contact your Local to make sure they have your current address.

You can also send us an e-mail at communicate@ilwu.ca or phone us at 604-254-8141 to update us.



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