



Bargaining Bulletin

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

THE HEART OF HEALTH CARE

Labour meets Bruce as protest expands

AS PROTESTS mount against the Campbell Liberals' punitive and arbitrary Bill 37, union leaders have met with labour minister Graham Bruce to address the issues that have led to today's massive labour walkouts.

And despite an overnight ruling of the labour board ordering protesting workers back on-the-job, Hospital Employees' Union members continued to maintain and respect lines outside B.C. health facilities and were joined today by tens of thousands of other workers who also stayed off the job in solidarity with health care workers.

"There is tremendous energy, commitment and discipline among HEU members on protest lines," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "And to be joined today by members of the CUPE family and other trade unionists and community members was truly inspiring.

"This protest is about defending public health care and the fundamental rights of working people – both badly trampled by

Bill 37," adds Allnutt. "Our priorities are to prevent privatization by stopping the contracting out of health care work and to prevent unfair gouging of workers' pay and benefits.

"It's critical that we keep up the pressure."

In a two-hour meeting Friday afternoon, HEU leaders and officers of the B.C. Federation of Labour had a frank exchange with Bruce about the day-old Bill 37.

The legislation gives free rein to health employers to continue to privatize services and contract out decent jobs while imposing a retroactive 15 per cent wage rollback on 43,000 health care workers.

Allnutt – together with HEU president Fred Muzin, financial secretary Mary LaPlante and assistant secretary-business manager Zorica Bosancic – says that while those issues weren't resolved at the meeting, we will continue to press for fair treatment for health care workers.

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HOTLINE – 24-HOUR BARGAINING INFORMATION
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