



November 3, 2016

Horgan delivers passionate keynote address at HEU convention

HEU delegates gave a warm and rowdy welcome to BC NDP Leader John Horgan late Thursday afternoon.

And as Horgan sketched out his party's vision to make life better for British Columbians, members reacted enthusiastically to his bold solutions and his commitment to reverse the damage done during 16 years of B.C. Liberal rule.

From a \$15 an hour minimum wage, to \$10 a day child care, Horgan made it clear he wanted to restore citizens' faith in a government that was on their side.

"Instead of dividing people and picking fights like Christy Clark and her BC Liberals, I want to lead a government that brings people together," said Horgan. "Governing is about choices, and I want to restore people's faith in the ability of government to make life better."

But it was Horgan's comments about the harm to health care that made it clear what was at stake if the BC Liberals were re-elected to a fifth term next May.

"Christy Clark is out trying to convince voters that government has no choice, but I believe it's about the choices a government makes," said Horgan. "Christy Clark doesn't choose a strong

public health care system... I'm as passionate about protecting public health care in B.C. as you are... and I want you to know that we're in this fight together... The HEU is health care in British Columbia, and I'm proud to be standing here with you today."



CUPE and HSA presidents bring messages of praise, unity and support

CUPE National president Mark Hancock thanked HEU members for the work they do for British Columbians, telling them "the work you do for your union... helps every worker in this country."

Hancock reminded delegates that when people pull together, they achieve great success. "The expansion of the Canadian Pension Plan is an example of what we can accomplish when we mobilize our members and win public support. The odds were stacked against us, but we never backed down."

And he told delegates, "We cannot ignore the dangers our members face on the job. We must be ready to use every tool we have, every article and every provision of our collective agreements, to keep our members safe on the job."

Hancock applauded the work HEU has done organizing and reorganizing health care workers in B.C., which he said is an inspiration to CUPE members across the country. *...over*



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On the political front, Hancock urged members to reach out to others and help elect a progressive government on May 9.



In closing, he quoted Pericles, a Greek philosopher who once said, “Just because

you don’t take an interest in politics doesn’t mean politics won’t take an interest in you.”

President Val Avery brought solidarity greetings from the Health Sciences Association (HSA), which represents more than 17,000 health science professionals. Avery spoke about the importance of unions working together. And she shared how HSA and HEU achieved a Supreme Court of Canada victory this spring – making compensation for work-related illness more accessible.

In reference to the BC Nurses’ raiding activity, she encouraged all union members to talk directly to individual nurses about the divisive actions of their leadership.

“It is unsettling to my core when members of our union family turn inwards and lose sight of what we stand for as a trade union movement,” said Avery.

You can find out more at www.knowanurse.ca, a B.C. Federation of Labour campaign.

Tribute to missing and murdered Indigenous women

Joanne Foote and Martin Mackenzie, co-chairs of HEU’s Indigenous Persons Standing Committee, introduced a moving video-dance performance “Honouring Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women”, created by Redline Interactive for the Canadian Labour Congress’ Fairness Works Initiative.

“We have a history of colonialism in this country that has systematically tried to erase Indigenous peoples’ identities from these lands,” said Mackenzie.

“Our union HEU, CUPE and the CLC have all worked hard to bring Indigenous issues to light,” said Foote. “But we still have much work to do.”

While performers Jade Brown and Amanda Gould danced in traditional regalia, a powerful video took us along the *Highway of Tears* – a 720-km stretch of Highway 16, between Prince Rupert and Prince George – where dozens of Indigenous women have been murdered or gone missing. Along the highway, numerous Indigenous women wearing red dresses disappeared one by one from the screen.



After the performance, several HEU sisters spoke about their own personal experiences, and urged the union to support any campaigns on missing and murdered Aboriginal women.

Delegates then passed a resolution asking HEU to support CUPE National’s Red Dress Campaign “and promote it within the HEU membership.”

And earlier in the week, delegates passed a constitutional amendment to change the name of the First Nations Standing Committee to the Indigenous Peoples Standing Committee.

On Wednesday evening, Vancouver-Point Grey NDP MLA David Eby met with the union’s young workers at an event downtown.