



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

NEWS RELEASE

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HEU re-issues Campbell interview on tenth anniversary of publication

For the record: In a now infamous interview with the union's newspaper published in November 2000, Gordon Campbell promised he wouldn't rip up contracts, privatize seniors' care or put pay equity at risk

Ten years ago, the Hospital Employees' Union newspaper *The Guardian* published a wide-ranging interview with premier-in-waiting Gordon Campbell on his views about health care and other issues.

It was in this interview that the premier made his now infamous vow not to rip up collective agreements – a vow broken just over a year later when the B.C. Liberals passed *Bill 29* in January 2002.

But it's not the only health care promise broken by Campbell and the B.C. Liberals. And on the tenth anniversary of its publication, HEU is re-issuing the interview in digital format.

HEU secretary-business manager Judy Darcy says that like many other British Columbians, HEU members are reflecting on Campbell and his government's record over the last ten years.

“And for many of them, they will remember Gordon Campbell and his government first and foremost for their broken promises to them including a vow to respect their collective agreements,” says Darcy.

Here is a summary of the commitments made and later broken.

*“I am not tearing up any agreements.”
-Gordon Campbell, November 2000*

In January 2002, the Campbell government passed *Bill 29*, voiding collective agreement provisions that led to the contracting out of thousands of health care workers jobs. In 2007, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that the B.C. Liberals had violated the constitutionally-

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protected rights of union members. Eventually, the province would pay out more than \$80 million in restitution and retraining monies as a result of the ruling.

“I favour not-for-profit (long-term care...”

-Gordon Campbell, November 2000, on whether he favoured development of not-for-profit long-term care beds, or beds provided through public-private partnerships.

In fact, the funding of new long-term care beds under the B.C. Liberals has occurred almost exclusively in the private sector using public-private partnerships (P3s). These facilities have been characterized by sub-standard wages and working conditions and chronic contract-flipping as owners act to avoid unionization. That's created high staff turnover and disrupted the continuity of care for seniors in residential care facilities.

The premier also told *The Guardian* that he would maintain or increase the percentage of not-for-profit beds in the system which sat at about 70 per cent. Today, that percentage has fallen to about 50 per cent of all beds.

“...I'm for pay equity as a principle.”

- Gordon Campbell, November 2000

For the mostly female workforce represented by HEU, pay equity gains negotiated in the 90s were largely erased by the 15 per cent pay cut unilaterally imposed by the Campbell Liberals in 2004.

“I say no.”

-Gordon Campbell, November 2000, on whether a 48-year old female health care worker needed to worry about privatization from a Gordon Campbell government.

By the end of his first term, more than 8,000 HEU members had been laid off to make way for the privatization of health services.

“Our job is to make (private clinics) redundant because the public clinics are doing so well.”

-Gordon Campbell, November 2000, on the role that private clinics should play in the health care system.

In fact, the number of private clinics has exploded under the B.C. Liberals and many of them receive public funding. The B.C. Liberal government has indicated that they do not have a problem with them playing an even bigger role.

Download the interview as it originally appeared in the November/December 2000 edition of *The Guardian*: <~/~DOCUMENTS/2010_NewsReleases/campbell-interview-2000.pdf>