

Labour Victories



Alberta Labour History Institute 2008 Calendar



LABOUR'S POLITICAL AND COURT STRUGGLES

On June 8, 2007, the Supreme Court of Canada gave its strongest recognition to date that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which forms part of the Constitution Act 1982, protects the right of workers to bargain collectively and limits employers' rights in unionized environments to introduce changes that affect workers without consulting the unions. It was labour's continuous pressure since the 1980s that led to this victory and a demonstration of the fact that labour activists need to look at the long term as they struggle for changes on the job, in elected bodies, and in the courts.

In light of this recent court victory for labour, this edition of the ALHI Calendar celebrates not only labour's victories in the workplace but also in the public arena. The two are linked. While workers struggle to improve their working conditions and wages and to have a say in how their employers operate their workplaces, much of their success depends on the legislative and legal environment. Pro-labour legislation, such as the anti-scab laws in Quebec and British Columbia, have helped workers in those provinces to win just settlements in strikes. Similarly, anti-labour legislation, such as the laws in Alberta which ban strikes throughout most of the public service, have placed a damper on unionists even though they have often defied such legislation. Meanwhile, labour's struggle with employers for better wages and social benefits has been extended to the legislative arena where labour has, for a century or more, pushed for a larger "social wage," that is a guarantee of health services, pensions, and other social programs of benefit to all workers and indeed all residents of Canada. None of these victories has been achieved without long-term campaigns of trade unions and mobilization of members. It was to improve labour's ability to push for legislation of benefit to workers that the trade union movement participated in the founding of the New Democratic Party in 1961.

On the union legislation front, an early victory for labour was the proclamation by the federal government on February 17, 1944, of PC 1003 (Privy Council Order 1003), a federal Cabinet order that provided recognition of labour's right to bargain collectively and provided machinery to insure that employers respected the rights of unions to represent their members and reach collective agreements. This legislation was no gift of the government to workers. It was a recognition that the government's wartime efforts to limit unionization and support employers were coming apart at the seams because of worker militancy at a time of no unemployment. PC 1003 was an effort to insure that the unions did not go too far in questioning employers' rights to run industry and earn profits. But it was nonetheless a concession to the fact that unions were here to stay, at least in heavy industry and some other economic sectors. After the war, provincial governments passed legislation that paralleled PC 1003 though some of this legislation, in Alberta for example, seemed intended more to restrict the rights of unions than to protect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively.

When the Charter was proclaimed in 1982, trade unions hoped to benefit from the guarantee it provided to Canadians of the right to association. Labour challenged anti-union behaviour by employers via Court challenges, three of which reached the Supreme Court between 1987 and 1990. One involved the Alberta government's restrictions on the rights of public servants to organize and to strike. But the Court during those years rejected the notion that the Charter's guarantee of the right of association applied in the world of work. Unions persisted however, both by lobbying politicians and by presenting new cases to the courts. The first breakthrough came in 2001 when the Court struck down an Ontario statute that denied farm workers the right to organize.

The 2007 ruling involved a case brought by British Columbia trade unions affected by the British Columbia government's Health and Services Delivery Improvement Act of 2002, which nullified existing collective bargaining contracts and contracted out work previously done by government employees. The legislation had been passed quickly and without consultation with unions by a Liberal government which had defeated the NDP government a year earlier and was unwilling to respect contracts that the former government had signed with its employees. While the Court did not protect all activities associated with collective bargaining, it did emphasize the right of workers to associate and the responsibility of employers to meet and discuss with unions before taking actions that affect either the continuation of workers' jobs or the conditions of their employment.

Labour's legislative victories in the social sphere, won in alliance with other progressive groups, are many. Here are some of the key ones:

--Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act--proclaimed by the federal government on May 1, 1957. This Act provided federal matching grants for provincial hospitalization plans that provided free hospital care for all provincial residents. Alberta's hospitalization plan came into effect July 1, 1958.

--Canada Pension Plan--began operations on January 1, 1966. The CPP provides earnings-related pensions to all Canadian workers who have worked the requisite number of years in Canada.

--Medical Care Act--proclaimed by the federal government on December 19, 1966 and put into force on July 1, 1968. This was the second stage of government medical care coverage for Canadians, adding physician visits and related costs to hospitalization as prepaid services for all Canadians. Alberta waited a full year before passing legislation to bring the province under this federal-provincial cost-sharing program that required provinces to establish medical care programs that bore the principles of universality, accessibility, comprehensiveness, portability among provinces, and public administration.

--Canada Health Act--This law, proclaimed on April 17, 1984, provided penalties for provinces whose medical care policies did not conform to the principles of the Medical Care Act of 1966. For every dollar in user fees that a province allowed doctors to collect, the province would be denied a dollar of their federal medicare monies.



Non-pensioned retiree works second job,
Edmonton, 1969.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

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New Year's Day

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1966 The Canadian Pension Plan
went into force on this date

1905 Conference of industrial
unionists in Chicago leads to the
formation of the Industrial Work-
ers of the World

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1963 The 1,000,000th
claim for compensation by
an injured worker is filed
with the Alberta Workmen's
Compensation Board in its
45th year of operation

1973 Negotiations for a first
contract at Wardair fail.
A two-month strike starts

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1929 Martin Luther King
born in Atlanta, Georgia

1906 Founding meeting of
the Edmonton Trades and
Labour Council

1915 Industrial Workers
of the World (IWW) poet
Ralph Chaplin writes *Soli-
darity Forever*

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1962 Alberta New
Democrats founding
provincial convention

1975 Canadian Air Line Flight
Attendants (CALFAA) lobbying
campaign defeats proposal by
Transport Canada prohibiting
female flight attendants from
working beyond 13th week of
pregnancy

1850 Samuel Gompers, first
president of American Federa-
tion of Labor, born in London,
England

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1954 Workers at Fort
Saskatchewan's first chemi-
cal refinery are chartered as
ICWU Local 530. Now
known as Communications,
Energy and Paperworkers
Local 530A

1946 Supreme Court Justice
Ivan Rand, dealing with an
autoworkers'
dispute in Ontario, rules that
unions have the legal right to
collect dues from all members of
a recognized bargaining
unit, when the majority votes to
create a union local



Canada Pension Plan

Canada's first national pension scheme came into effect in 1927 thanks to Labour MPs J.S. Woodsworth and Abraham Heaps who agreed to support Mackenzie King's minority government in exchange for the government passing the Old Age Pensions Act. Under the new plan, both benefits and eligibility were quite limited so unions and like-minded groups fought for a universal, employment-based pension plan. The Canada Pension Plan (CPP) came into force on January 1, 1966 resulting in a significant reduction in the poverty rate among seniors. Since then, improvements to the CPP have been made, the most recent being the extension of benefits to same-sex, common law relationships.

January



Banquet photo of members of Alberta's first
union local, the Brotherhood of Locomotive
Engineers, Medicine Hat, 1886.
Glenbow Archives.

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Chinese New Year Year

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1965 The closing of the Standard Mine at Shaughnessy, Alberta ends the coal-mining era in southern Alberta
2002 Alberta's largest teachers' strike begins; receives strong public support

1906 Lethbridge Trades and Labour Council granted charter

1974 General strike in Grenada leads to independence; US invades 10 years later

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Valentine's Day

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1947 The gush of Leduc #1 oil well marks the beginning of a new stage of petroleum development for Alberta

1949 5,000 workers begin a four-month, illegal strike in Asbestos, Québec, a strike that marked the beginnings of militancy and secularism for the "Catholic" union federation in Quebec

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Family Day

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1944, PC 1003, a federal order-in-council, provides federal government recognition of collective bargaining rights for Canadian workers

2001 Calgary's longest transit strike begins, ending 49 days later

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1848 Revolution begins in France, inspiring revolts across Europe
1965 District 1199 Health Care Workers becomes first U.S. labour union to oppose Vietnam War

Collective bargaining rights

The first act to recognize Canadian workers' right to form unions was the Trade Unions Act, which received royal assent on June 14, 1872. However, the Act did little more than remove the threat of criminal prosecution for union organizing. Workers had to wait until 1944 for legislation that provided them with substantive rights to bargain collectively. On February 17th, Order-in-Council PC 1003 was passed. It provided recognition of labour's right to bargain collectively and the machinery to ensure employers respected the rights of unions to represent their members and reach collective agreements. This recognition was recently strengthened with the Supreme Court of Canada ruling on June 8, 2007, which stated that workers' collective bargaining rights are protected under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

February



Winners of the Alberta Workers Compensation Board mine safety competition, 1936.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



						1 1978 Canadian Human Rights Act takes effect, outlawing discrimination on the grounds of age or marital status 1908 First International Women's Day started in New York City by garment workers
2 1906 Seven-month United Mine Workers strike in Leithbridge begins, resulting in anti-labour Industrial Disputes Investigation Act being passed by federal government in 1907	3	4	5	6	7 International Women's Day	8 1917 Calgary establishes Labour Representation League to nominate candidates in elections to all levels of government
Daylight Savings 9	10	11	12 1919 Delegates from most union locals in western Canada meet at the Western Labour Conference in Calgary and form One Big Union	13	14 1913 First convention of the Provincial Council of Carpenters	15 1951 Local 630 of Oil Workers International Union certified in Edmonton, the first local in the oil industry to last for some time 1918 Government of Alberta passes province's first worker's compensation legislation
16 1918 Canadian women win the right to vote in federal elections 1977 Members of CUPE begin lengthy strike at Parkland nursing home	St. Patrick's Day 17	18 1911 New York Triangle Shirtwaist Fire - 147 workers, the vast majority women, perish after being locked in the factory by the employer	19 1919 Civil Service Association of Alberta (CSA), precursor to AUPE, formed	1'st Day of Spring 20	Good Friday 21	22
Easter Sunday 23	Easter Monday 24	25	26	27	28	29
30 1927 Cesar Chavez born near Yuma, Arizona	31					

Workers' compensation

An historical and ongoing concern of organized labour is the health, safety and welfare of all workers. One of the earliest victories for Alberta workers came on March 15, 1918 when the government passed the province's first workers' compensation act. Prior to this, injured workers who wanted compensation had to bring a civil suit seeking damages from their employers, something few workers could afford to do. Under pressure from trade unions and others, the government established a Workmen's Compensation Board in 1917, which recommended that a compulsory, publicly-run compensation system be created to provide financial assistance for injured workers and their families.

March



Women assembly line workers at Medalta Potteries in Medicine Hat, 1946. Provincial Archives of Alberta

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



April Fool's Day 1 2 3 4 5

1966, The Canada Assistance Plan provides federal cost-sharing to provinces for social services

1902 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners granted charter for Local 1055 in Calgary

1917 Strike by 7,500 Crow's Nest Pass miners belonging to the United Mine Workers of America

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1983 Bill 44 introduced: re-moves the legal right to strike for all hospital workers

1919 The Edmonton Free Press, journal of the Edmonton Trades and Labour Council, begins publication

2001 Amalgamated Transit Union Local 583 ends Calgary transit strike

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1907 Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers International Alliance Local 371 formed in Edmonton
1982 The Constitution Act is proclaimed, along with the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

1980 United Nurses of Alberta begin legal strike at 79 hospitals

1984 The Canada Health Act penalizes provinces that violate the provisions of the Medical Care Act

Passover 20 21 *Earth Day* 22 23 24 25 26

1980 Nurses defy back-to-work order, winning a negotiated settlement six days later

1951 Civic, school board, and healthcare employees form the Federation of Public Employees, forerunner of the National Union of Public Employees

1956 Canadian Labour Congress is formed as a merger of two competing trade union federations

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1933 Fourteen leaders of a Calgary relief strike are arrested

1903 76 people are killed in Frank, Alberta when Turtle Mountain, weakened by mining, collapses

1900 First Alberta local of the International Association of Machinists (IAM 357) formed in Calgary

Industrial unionism

In 1935 industrial unions within the American Federation of Labor formed the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) in an effort to organize workers in mass production. One of the CIO's first major victories in Canada came in April 1937 when workers at the Oshawa General Motors plant won a two-week strike. Efforts to organize workers in mass-production industries resulted in a vast increase in unionization rates on both sides of the border and the formation of new unions representing garment, packinghouse, steel and many other workers. On April 23, 1956 the Canadian Congress of Labour (CCL) and the Trades and Labour Congress (TLC) united to form the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC).

April



Edmonton railroaders on strike
in support of 40 hour week, 1949.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



International Workers Day

1830 Mary Harris Jones (Mother Jones) born
1917 Civic Employees Federal Union No. 30 granted charter

1923 Edmonton workers rally to support striking Edmonton coal miners
1957 Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act proclaimed by federal government (federal matching grants for provincial hospitalization programs without user fees)

2002 Edmonton United Food and Commercial Workers Local 401 strike begins

Fight for the 8-hour day

May 1st, seen by many as the original workers' holiday, is inextricably linked with labour's struggle for a shorter workday that was waged for decades in North America. The campaign for the eight-hour day was eventually successful but not without sacrifice and tragedy, the most well-known of which is the 'Haymarket Disaster.' On May 4, 1886 in Chicago several workers on strike for an eight-hour day were killed and wounded along with eight police. Five labour activists were eventually executed. Unions supported struggles for the eight-hour day not only for the well-being and safety of workers, but because they saw the importance of workers having time for their families, unions and communities: 'eight hours for work, eight hours for rest, eight hours for what we will.'

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1886 Workers demonstrating in Chicago for the eight-hour day are attacked by police on Haymarket Square

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1818 Karl Marx born in Trier, Germany
1903 First issue of Alberta's labour newspaper, *Bond of Brotherhood*, appears in Calgary

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1968 French students and workers revolt in Paris

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Mother's Day 11

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1771 Labour reformer Robert Owen born in Newton, Wales

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1903 International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen grants charter to Local 1 in Edmonton
1919 Winnipeg General Strike begins

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Victoria Day

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1919 Drumheller coalminers begin strike, demanding recognition of the One Big Union as their bargaining agent

1921 Trial of Italian-American anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti begins

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1905 Calgary Trades and Labour Council granted charter

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1919 Workers in Edmonton and Calgary begin general strikes in show of solidarity with Winnipeg General Strike

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1871 Paris Commune crushed with 25,000 killed
1919 Eight thousand miners in District 18 join sympathy strike with Winnipeg workers

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May



Alberta Federation of Labour rally to change
Alberta labour laws. Edmonton, 1986.

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Formation of the AFL

Most of labour's key victories would not have been won without unions acting in solidarity with each other and with like-minded groups. Early trade unions saw the advantage of forming organizations through which workers could pursue their collective interest and advance a labour agenda. Local labour councils were formed in Calgary in 1901, in Medicine Hat in 1905, and in Edmonton and Lethbridge in 1906. The founding convention of the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) took place in Lethbridge in June 1912. The goal was to provide a unified voice for labour in the province. Plans for the AFL centenary in 2012 are already underway. (See the ALHI website at www.labourhistory.ca for more information.)

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1986 "The Battle of 66th Street"
United Food and Commercial
Workers (UFCW) Local 280P
begin six-month strike at Gain-
ers meatpacking plant
1986 UFCW workers at Fletch-
ers in Red Deer begin strike

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1902 United Brotherhood
of Carpenters and Joiners
granted charter for Local
1055 in Calgary

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1935 The On-to-Ottawa
Trek reaches Calgary from
Vancouver

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1872 Trade unions provided
first recognition in Canadian
law but severe restrictions
force most of them to forego
registering

1912 First convention
of newly-formed Alberta
Federation of Labour begins
in Lethbridge

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Father's Day

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1914 Hillcrest mining disaster
leaves 189 dead, the worst
mining disaster in Alberta's
history
2002 Alberta Teachers
Association reaches deal that
ends dispute with the
Conservative government

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*1st Day of
Summer*

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1919 "Bloody Saturday" —
police repression of workers in
Winnipeg General Strike
results in two deaths

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*St. Jean
Baptiste Day*

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1869 Emma Goldman,
famous anarchist-feminist,
born in Kovno (now Kaunas),
Lithuania

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1926 Six Labour members
win seats in Alberta provincial
election

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1919 Government raids
unions across Canada, enforc-
ing new "sedition" legislation
meant to restrict unionism and
fend off socialism

June



Tommy Douglas speaks to New Democratic Party
supporters at election rally, Edmonton, 1970.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



Canada Day 1 2 3 4 5

1919 A mass arrest of One Big Union members is coordinated by federal government
1935 On to Ottawa Trek violently repressed by RCMP in Regina
1958 Alberta proclaims its Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act

1968 Federal Medical Care Act comes into force but Alberta does not yet participate
1969 Alberta agrees to provide a provincial program that meets requirements of the federal Medical Care Act

1968 Canadian Union of Public Employees 474 in Edmonton is granted a charter
1980 AUPE "wildcat strike" at Alberta Liquor Control Board

1977 2,500 Alberta nurses begin legal strike at seven Alberta hospitals
2000 After eight months of a bitter first contract fight, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 115A strikers lose fight for a union contract at the Calgary Herald

Medicare

The seeds for a universal, public health care system were sowed by Tommy Douglas and the Cooperative Commonwealth Federation (CCF), a party labour helped form at a meeting in Calgary in 1932. Under pressure from unions and others, Parliament proclaimed a national Medicare program in 1966. The federal Medical Care Act came into force on July 1, 1968 but it was not until a year later that Alberta agreed to provide a provincial program that met the requirements of the Act. Since then, organized labour has been at the forefront in opposing cutbacks to Medicare and attempts to privatize parts of the system. Medicare is an example of what organized labour can achieve when it acts in solidarity with other social justice groups, as well as an example of a victory we must continue to fight to protect and expand.

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1949 International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers Local 720 charter issued

1918 Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union organizes two hotels and six restaurants after Calgary Trades and Labour Council threatens strike
1953 Sheet Metal Workers Local 558 formed in Lethbridge

1997 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1118, meatpackers at the High River, Alberta plant go on strike

1961 Amalgamated Association of Street Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America Local 583 strike Calgary Transit July 11 to August 22

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1912 Woody Guthrie born in Okemah, Oklahoma

1936 Spanish Civil War begins

1921 United Farmers of Alberta government is elected; four Labour members are also elected

1933 The first national convention of the CCF adopts the Regina Manifesto, pledging a socialist transformation of Canada

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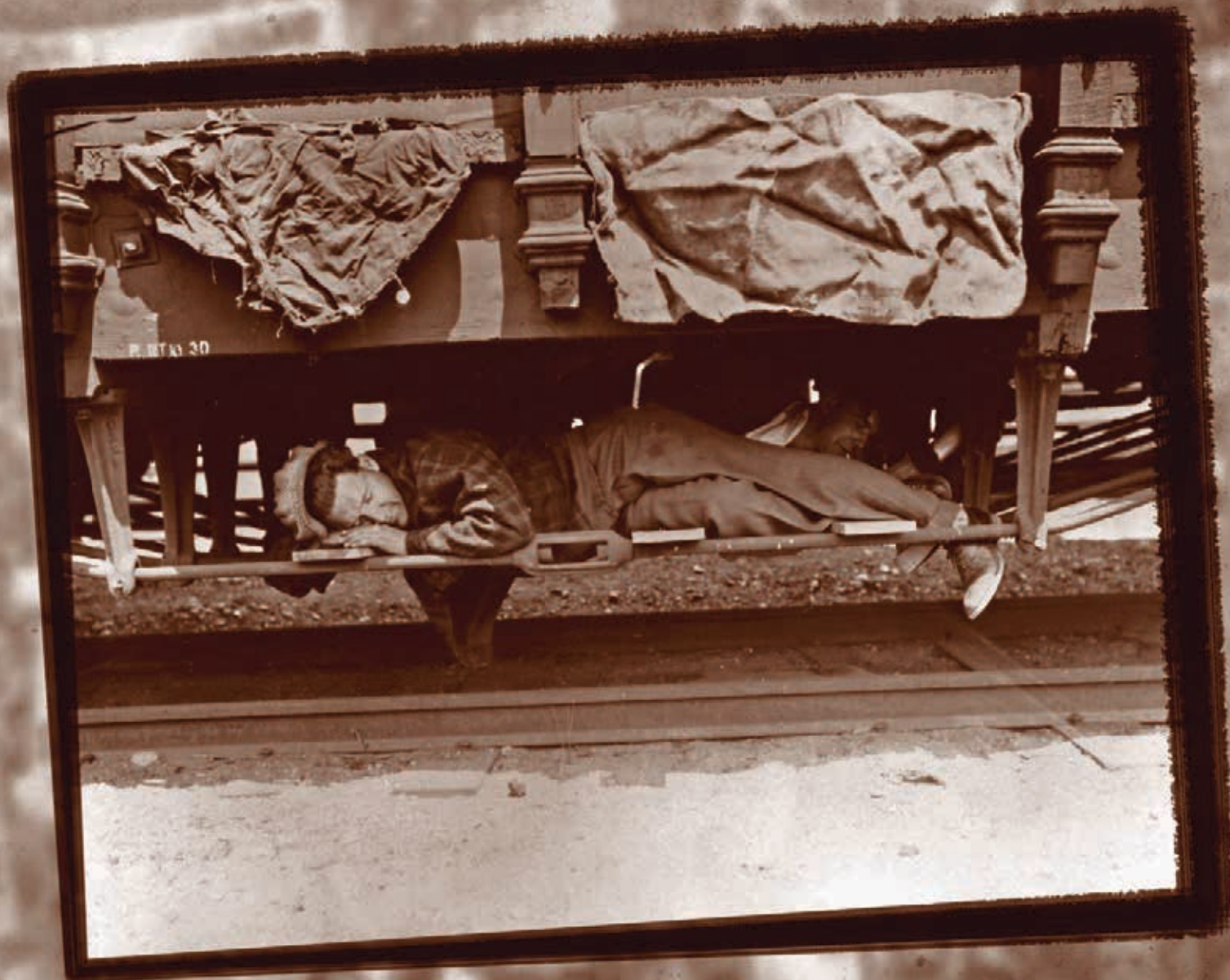
1966 Canada Packers strike by United Packinghouse Workers of America

1948 Canadian Air Line Flight Attendants Association (CALFAA) is certified

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1997 Canadian Auto Workers Local 4050 go on strike against Marriott Food Services, Michener Center, Red Deer

July



Unemployed workers sleep beneath railcar, 1934.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



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1906 Edmonton Trades and Labour Council granted charter
1918 Workmen's Compensation Act becomes effective for the coal mining industry. Trade union pressure led to passage of the Act and later its extension to most other industries

1932 The CCF is founded in Calgary by labour, farmer and socialist parties, along with one union, the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees
1944 A federal bill establishing family allowances passes in the House of Commons

1997 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1118 settles strike

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Civic Holiday

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1908 Two-month national rail strike of CPR shop and yard workers begins

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1981 Wardair locks out its 700 flight attendants for 13 weeks, with the company using scabs and a strikebreaking security firm

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1940 The Unemployment Insurance Act receives royal assent. Labour had fought a long battle for a federal program of UI

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1905 Formation of the first Medicine Hat Trades and Labour Council

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2005 Alberta Federation of Labour declares August 20 Farmworker Day in memory of Terry Rash and in solidarity with the struggle of farmworkers to achieve dignity and respect

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1911 Amalgamated Transit Union 569 granted charter
1961 Amalgamated Association of Street Electric Railway and Motor Coach Employees of America Local 583 Calgary Transit strike ends

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1980 Solidarnosc founded in Gdansk, Poland

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Unemployment insurance

Unemployment insurance was a demand of the trade union movement throughout the interwar period. The Unemployment Insurance Act received royal assent on August 7, 1940. Eligibility under the new plan was quite limited, however, covering only 42% of the workforce. The trade union movement joined with others, such as the women's movement, in a fight to extend the plan to more workers. The plan was overhauled in 1971 resulting in coverage for about 95% of the workforce. Since then, however, gains in this area have been clawed back. Attacks by business and neo-liberal governments on social programs like unemployment insurance serve as a reminder to working people that the struggle for social justice and equality is ongoing.

August



Woman file clerk at the Provincial Office of Vital
Statistics, Edmonton, 1951.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

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Labour Day 1

1905 Alberta becomes a province

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1907 More than half of Calgary's population attends Labour Day parade organized by the Calgary Trades and Labour Council

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2004 First IWW World North American General Assembly in Alberta begins in Edmonton

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1920 Edmonton Free Press becomes Alberta Labour News; serves as official paper for AFL

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1946 Alberta Farmers Union begins 30-day strike demanding minimum fixed price for wheat

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1886 Alberta's first union, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, is founded in Medicine Hat

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1904 Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 488 receives first charter: largest plumbers and pipefitters local in Canada and one of the largest in North America

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1956 Convention begins in Edmonton leading to the merger of the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Industrial Federation of Labour of Alberta
2003 CEP Local 1900 walk out in Edmonton in effort to ratify first contract with A-Channel

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1st. Day of Autumn

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1963 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is formed by a merger of National Union of Public Employees and National Union of Public Service Employees

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1918 Borden government outlaws publications and meetings in 14 languages. Canada's radical and labour press are key targets
2003 Levi Strauss announces closure of Edmonton's GWG plant founded in 1911

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1912 IWW organizes a strike of 250 Edmonton sewer construction workers

1918 Borden government bans 14 organizations, including IWW, Social Democratic Party, Chinese Labour Association and Ukrainian Social Democratic Party

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Public sector organizing

While workers in the private sector gained full recognition of their collective bargaining rights immediately after WWII, this was not the case for public sector workers. There was however a dramatic increase in public sector organizing. On September 24, 1963 two national unions representing public sector workers merged to form the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), the largest union in Canada today. In 1967, federal government workers won full collective bargaining rights and unionized in record numbers. In 1976 the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees (AUPE), successor to the Civil Service Association, was formed, and 1977 saw the formation of the United Nurses of Alberta (UNA). One of the results of public sector organizing was a vast increase in the number of unionized women workers.

September



Woman at metal lathe in Edmonton
machine shop, ca1975.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

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1920 One Big Union miners begin province-wide strike. Government passes Order-in-Council for miners to accept UMWA as their official representative
1948 International Union of Operating Engineers Local 955 granted charter

1918 Amalgamated Meatcutters Union formed in Edmonton



Pay equity

On October 28, 1995 federal government workers and members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) won a major victory, due in large part to the sustained pressure they put on the federal government to honour their own legislation. They had been waiting almost 16 years for their pay equity complaint to be resolved. In response to an excessively slow legal process, PSAC members began targeting their members of Parliament and even the Prime Minister, going everywhere he went. The settlement the union was able to negotiate totalled approximately \$3.5 billion, with individual payouts averaging \$15,000. Historically and currently, women earn less than men and equal pay for work of equal value is an important principle for which labour has advocated and continues to advocate.

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1958 Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 379 chartered in Calgary

1919 Alberta Teachers Alliance holds province's first teachers' strike

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Thanksgiving Day

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1918 Unionists in Calgary stage sympathy strike with Calgary freight handlers
1975 Grace Hartman becomes CUPE president, the first woman president of a major union in North America

1976 Canadian Labour Congress holds national day of protest against the Trudeau government's wage-control policy

1919 Alberta Teachers Alliance strike resolved

1865 Delegates meet and form the National Bricklayers Union

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1999 Founding meeting of Alberta Labour History Institute at southside Rosie's, Edmonton

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Halloween

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1995 Federal Government workers win major pay equity claim after 16 years of struggle

1737 Thomas Paine, Anglo-American revolutionary writer, born in Thetford in Norfolk, England

October



CUPE members form conga-line on during the successful 1995 Calgary laundry workers strike.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT



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1934 Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers International Alliance Local 371 re-chartered to become Local 271, Edmonton

Daylight Saving's Ends

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1999 Members of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers of Canada Local 115A and the Graphic Communications International Union Local 34M at the Calgary Herald walk off their jobs after seeking a first contract for more than a year

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Remembrance Day

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1902 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America granted charter as Local 1325 Edmonton, the oldest construction union still operating under its original charter in Alberta

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1995 CUPE Local 8 laundry workers in Calgary engage in illegal strike to stop contracting out. Strike spreads to all major hospitals; members from other unions, including Alberta Union of Public Employees, walk out

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1997 Maple Leaf pork plant (formerly Gainers) workers strike despite company threat to close plant if workers strike

2002 Edmonton Shaw Conference Centre workers UFCW Local 401 strike ends with workers winning first contract

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1995 CUPE Local 8 and AUPE Local 55 hospital laundry workers' illegal strike in Calgary ends with moratorium on contracting out

1992 Canadian Paperworkers Union, Communications Workers of Canada, and the Energy and Chemical Workers Union merge to create Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP)

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Local victories

Many of the victories presented on the previous pages of this calendar represent major gains for all working people across Canada. Alberta's labour history is also ripe with examples of smaller local victories. One such example is the ten-day illegal strike by laundry workers at two Calgary hospitals, which began on November 14, 1995. Workers effectively walked off the job after the Calgary Regional Health Authority announced it was contracting out their jobs to private industry. The strikers received such strong public support that the Klein government strayed for the first time from their 'no blink' policy by providing the Health Authority with enough funding to allow them to agree to an 18-month ban on contracting out and severance pay for workers.

November



Engineer tends locomotive boiler, 1922.
Provincial Archives of Alberta.

SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT

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1921 William Irvine of Calgary wins first federal labour seat in Alberta for Canadian Labour Party



The struggle continues

The fight for the rights of workers and for a just and democratic society in which all people, regardless of their employment status and income, can live with dignity is never over. History gives us plenty of reason to believe that workers' organizations will continue to provide the vehicles for community and democracy. Every generation must organize anew because employers and government will always try to find ways to turn back our victories. Every generation must educate itself and learn the conditions of their work and the larger socio-economic and political forces at work in society. In order to improve the lives of all people, the struggle must continue...

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1896 International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers is issued a charter by the American Federation of Labor

1869 Knights of Labor founded
1910 Bellevue Mine disaster, resulting from poor maintenance of the mine, claims lives of 31 miners in explosion

1886 American Federation of Labor founded

1883 Railway engineers and firemen in Calgary strike against wage cuts

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1944 Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1374 chartered in Calgary

1966 Proclamation of federal Medical Care Act

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1st. Day of Winter

1932 Edmonton Hunger March is ended by police violence with over 100 arrested

1904 United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 496, Calgary granted charter

Christmas Day

Boxing Day

28 29 30 31

New Year's Eve

1886 Knights of Labor establish first Alberta base with an assembly in Calgary

December



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