A History of Grassroots Labour and Social Movements

Uniting from below

2014

January

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Alberta Labour History Institute 2014 Calendar

The theme of our 2014 labour history calendar is "Uniting From Below: Labour and Social Movements." The calendar is an attempt to highlight and honour the partnership and solidarity between labour and social movements. While this survey is certainly incomplete, its intention is to recognize the important work of generations of rank-and-file unionists and activists from various social movements. The calendar describes the institutional and political support the formal labour movement has provided to struggles such as the fight for Medicare and LGBTQ rights. But perhaps more importantly we are compelled to highlight and remember the informal person to person connections between union and social justice activists in such struggles as anti-apartheid and Latin American solidarity movements. The cross-pollination between labour and social justice movements has had far reaching impacts during the last several decades.

These relationships have helped inform the current labour movement in its attempt to develop broader, more inclusive community organizing strategies, and has helped show the potential and power of social unionism. The labour movement would do well to remember these struggles which have helped them extend their influence and have also helped make them a much more relevant and representative movement.

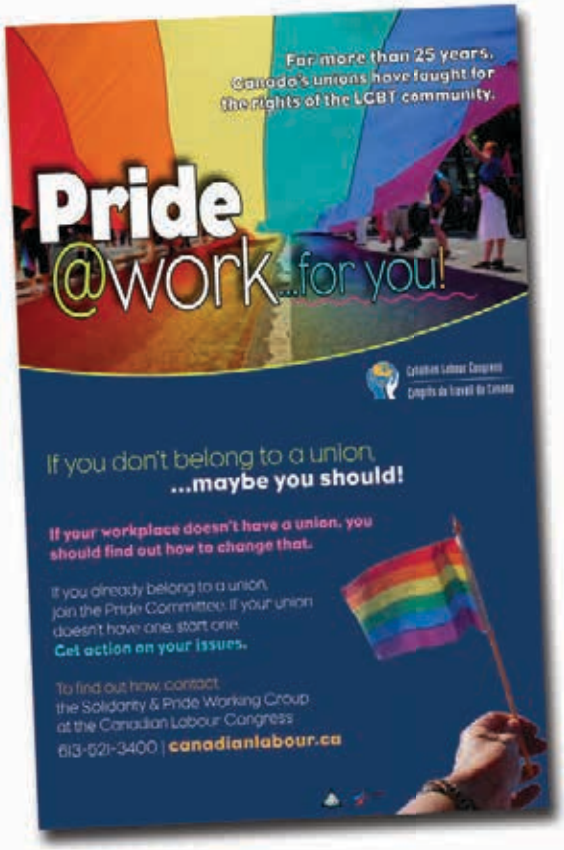
2014 Alberta Labour History Institute Conference

Uniting in the Struggle: Labour and Social Movements

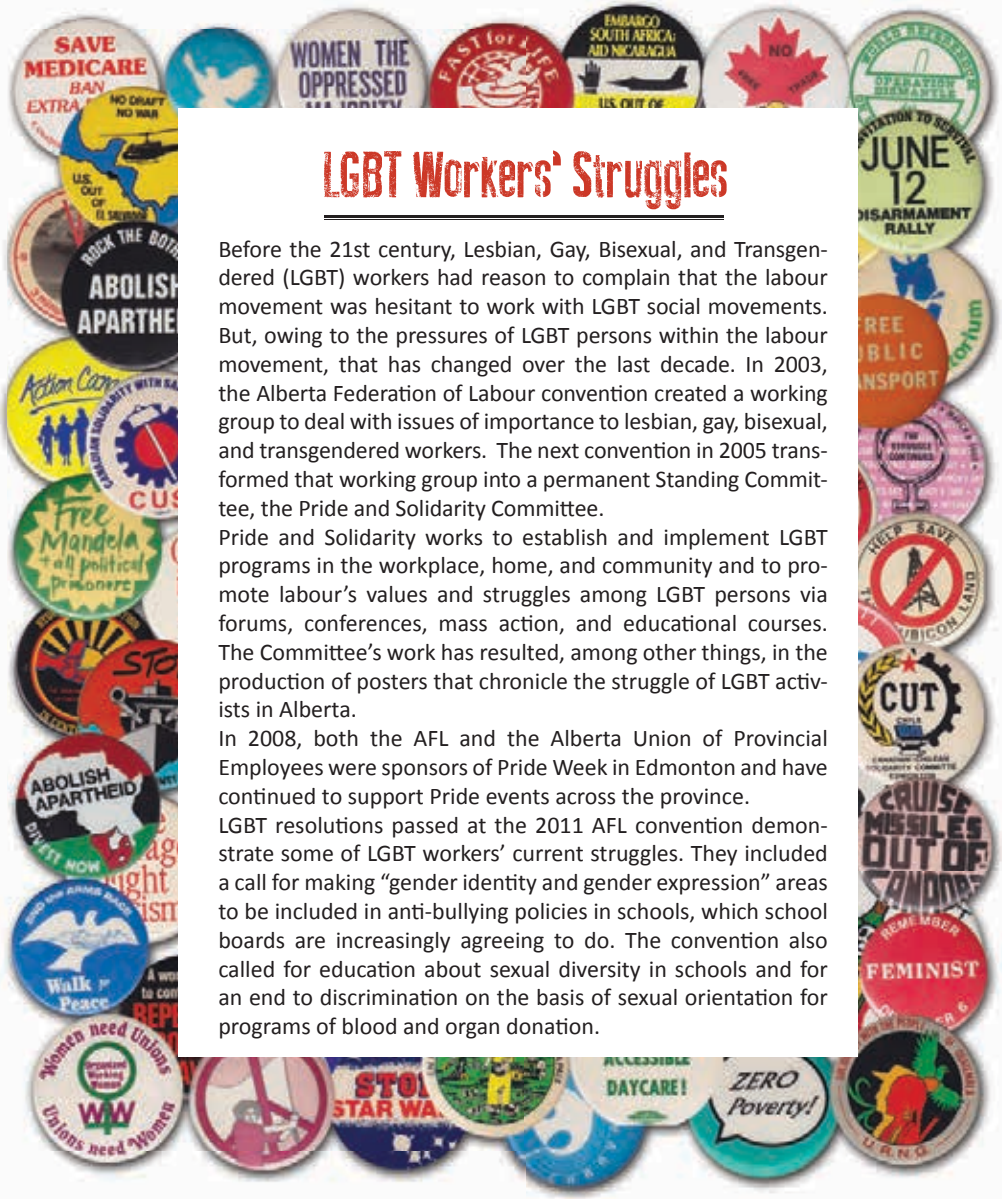
Exploring the history and potential between labour and social justice movements

- **National and international research presentations**
- **Worker to worker oral history panels**
- **Labour films**
- **Troublemakers Speaker Series:**
  Featuring Canadian Trade Union Activist and Academic - Sam Gindin

Visit: WWW.ALHICONFERENCE.CA



Candian Labour Congress poster in support of LGBT workers.



LGBT Workers' Struggles

Before the 21st century, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered (LGBT) workers had reason to complain that the labour movement was hesitant to work with LGBT social movements. But, owing to the pressures of LGBT persons within the labour movement, that has changed over the last decade. In 2003, the Alberta Federation of Labour convention created a working group to deal with issues of importance to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered workers. The next convention in 2005 transformed that working group into a permanent Standing Committee, the Pride and Solidarity Committee.

Pride and Solidarity works to establish and implement LGBT programs in the workplace, home, and community and to promote labour's values and struggles among LGBT persons via forums, conferences, mass action, and educational courses. The Committee's work has resulted, among other things, in the production of posters that chronicle the struggle of LGBT activists in Alberta.

In 2008, both the AFL and the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees were sponsors of Pride Week in Edmonton and have continued to support Pride events across the province.

LGBT resolutions passed at the 2011 AFL convention demonstrate some of LGBT workers' current struggles. They included a call for making "gender identity and gender expression" areas to be included in anti-bullying policies in schools, which school boards are increasingly agreeing to do. The convention also called for education about sexual diversity in schools and for an end to discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation for programs of blood and organ donation.

JANUARY

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FEBRUARY 2014

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This Month In Labour History

Jan 1, 1966 The Canada Pension Plan went into force on this date

Jan 2, 1905 Conference of industrial unionists in Chicago leads to the formation of the Industrial Workers of the World

Jan 6, 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

Jan 12, 1973 Negotiations for a first contract at Wardair fail. A two-month strike starts

Jan 15, 1929 Martin Luther King born in Atlanta, Georgia

Jan 16, 1906 Founding meeting of the Edmonton Trades and Labour Council

Jan 17, 1915 Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) poet Ralph Chaplin writes Solidarity Forever

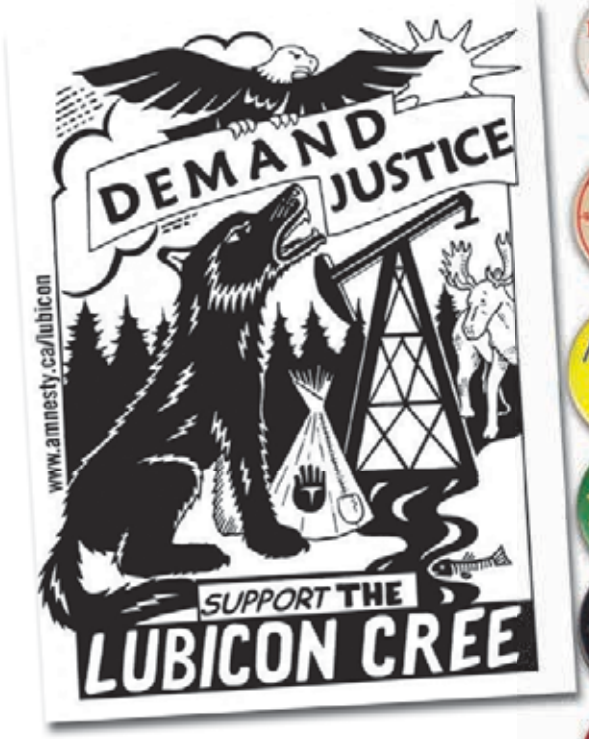
Jan 21, 1962 Alberta New Democrats' founding provincial convention

Jan 24, 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

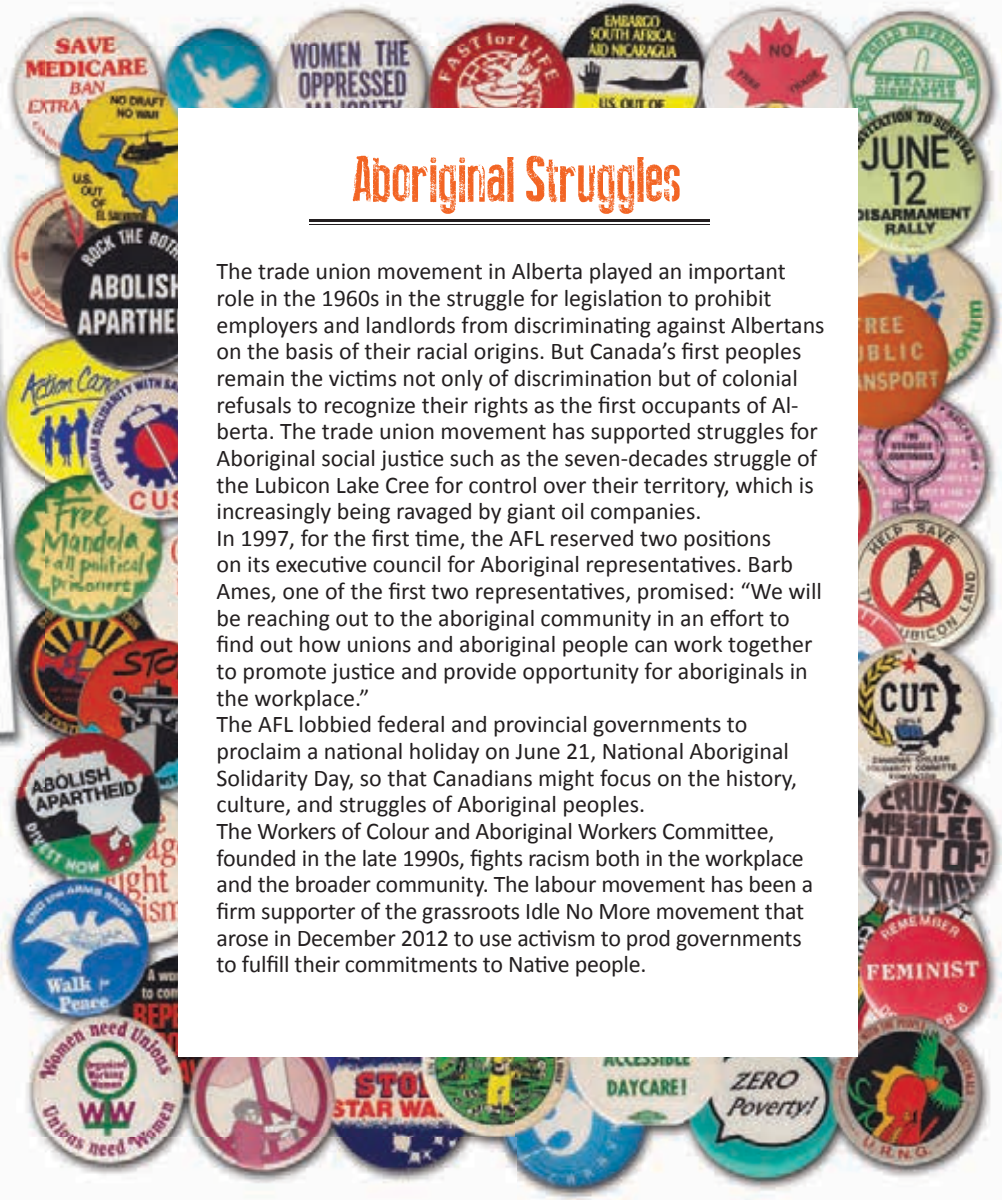
Jan 26, 1850 S. Gompers, first president of American Federation of Labor, born

Jan 27, 1954 Workers at Fort Saskatchewan's first chemical refinery are chartered as ICWU Local 530. Now known as Unifor Local 530A

Jan 29, 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



Amnesty International poster in support of Alberta Lubicon land claims, 2013.



Aboriginal Struggles

The trade union movement in Alberta played an important role in the 1960s in the struggle for legislation to prohibit employers and landlords from discriminating against Albertans on the basis of their racial origins. But Canada's first peoples remain the victims not only of discrimination but of colonial refusals to recognize their rights as the first occupants of Alberta. The trade union movement has supported struggles for Aboriginal social justice such as the seven-decades struggle of the Lubicon Lake Cree for control over their territory, which is increasingly being ravaged by giant oil companies.

In 1997, for the first time, the AFL reserved two positions on its executive council for Aboriginal representatives. Barb Ames, one of the first two representatives, promised: "We will be reaching out to the aboriginal community in an effort to find out how unions and aboriginal people can work together to promote justice and provide opportunity for aboriginals in the workplace."

The AFL lobbied federal and provincial governments to proclaim a national holiday on June 21, National Aboriginal Solidarity Day, so that Canadians might focus on the history, culture, and struggles of Aboriginal peoples.

The Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Workers Committee, founded in the late 1990s, fights racism both in the workplace and the broader community. The labour movement has been a firm supporter of the grassroots Idle No More movement that arose in December 2012 to use activism to prod governments to fulfill their commitments to Native people.

FEBRUARY

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JANUARY 2014

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This Month In Labour History

Feb 2, 1990 African National Congress allowed to operate legally in South Africa after 30-year ban

Feb 4, 1965 The closing of the Standard Mine at Shaughnessy, Alberta ends the coal-mining era in southern Alberta

Feb 4, 2002 Alberta's largest teachers' strike begins; receives strong public support

Feb 6, 1906 Lethbridge Trades and Labour Council granted charter

Feb 6, 1974 General strike in Grenada leads to independence; US invades 10 years later

Feb 13, 1947 The gush of Leduc #1 oil well marks the beginning of a new stage of petroleum development for Alberta

Feb 14, 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

Feb 17, 1944 PC 1003, a federal order-in-council, provides federal government recognition of collective bargaining rights for Canadian workers

Feb 22, 2001 Calgary's longest transit strike begins, ending 49 days later

Feb 24, 1848 Revolution begins in France, inspiring revolts across Europe

Feb 24, 1965 District 1199 Health Care Workers becomes first U.S. labour union to oppose the Vietnam War

Feb 24, 1942 Canada forcibly removes all Japanese from the West Coast

Anti-apartheid poster, 1992. Artist: Sarah Hodgson, Africa Fund.

Anti-apartheid Struggle

Dutch and British colonialism in southern Africa dispossessed the Native peoples of the region. In 1948, South Africa elected a National Party government that was committed to hardline policies of residential and occupational segregation of the "races" in the country, subordinating non-whites to whites and depriving them of civil rights while subjecting them to extreme exploitation by white employers. These policies were called "apartheid."

The exploited masses of South Africa resisted apartheid, and the government cracked down on protesters, massacring 69 demonstrators in Sharpeville in 1960. The Sharpeville Massacre inspired a world-wide anti-apartheid movement that included civil rights advocates, including the trade union movement in Canada. Initially the trade unions however only supported a boycott of goods made in South Africa, balking at a policy of Canada divesting itself of South African capital because a number of unionized firms, such as Carling Brewery, were controlled by South African investors.

In the 1980s, Alberta unions joined the Canadian Labour Congress in supporting the illegal unions that sprang up in South Africa to defend non-white workers from exploitation and to demand equal civil rights for all South Africans. Apartheid finally ended in the 1990s when an international campaign of economic sanctions against South Africa forced the National Party to concede civil rights for all South Africans.

MARCH

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9 Daylight Savings	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 St. Patrick's Day	18	19	20 Spring Equinox	21	22
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APRIL 2014

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This Month In Labour History

March 1, 1978 The Canadian Human Rights Act takes effect, providing a broad range of protections against discrimination for workers whose jobs are under federal jurisdiction.

March 1, 1906 Seven-month United Mine Workers strike in Lethbridge begins, resulting in anti-labour Industrial Disputes Investigation Act being passed by federal government in 1907

March 8, 1908 First International Women's Day started in New York City by garment workers

March 19, 1917 Calgary establishes Labour Representation League to nominate candidates in elections to all levels of government

March 13, 1919 Delegates from most union locals in western Canada meet at the Western Labour Conference in Calgary and form One Big Union

March 14, 1913 First convention of the Provincial Council of Carpenters

March 15, 1951 Local 630 of Oil Workers International Union certified in Edmonton, the first local in the oil industry to last for some time

March 17, 1977 Members of CUPE begin lengthy strike at Parkland nursing home

March 18, 1918 Government of Alberta passes province's first workers' compensation legislation

March 18, 1911 New York Triangle Shirtwaist Fire 147 workers, the vast majority women, perish after being locked in the factory by the employer

March 19, 1919 Civil Service Association of Alberta (CSA), precursor to AUPE, formed

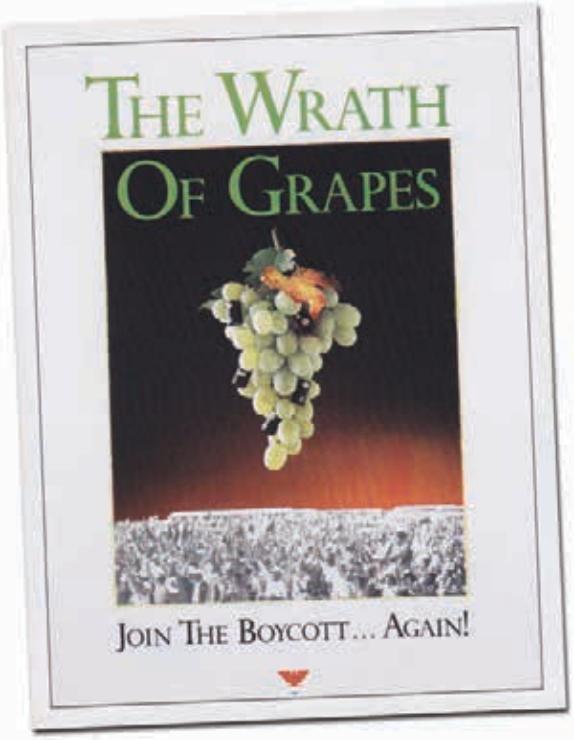
March 20, 1980 United Nurses of Alberta organize program of action to publicize nurses' low wages

March 24, 1918 Women win vote in Canadian federal elections

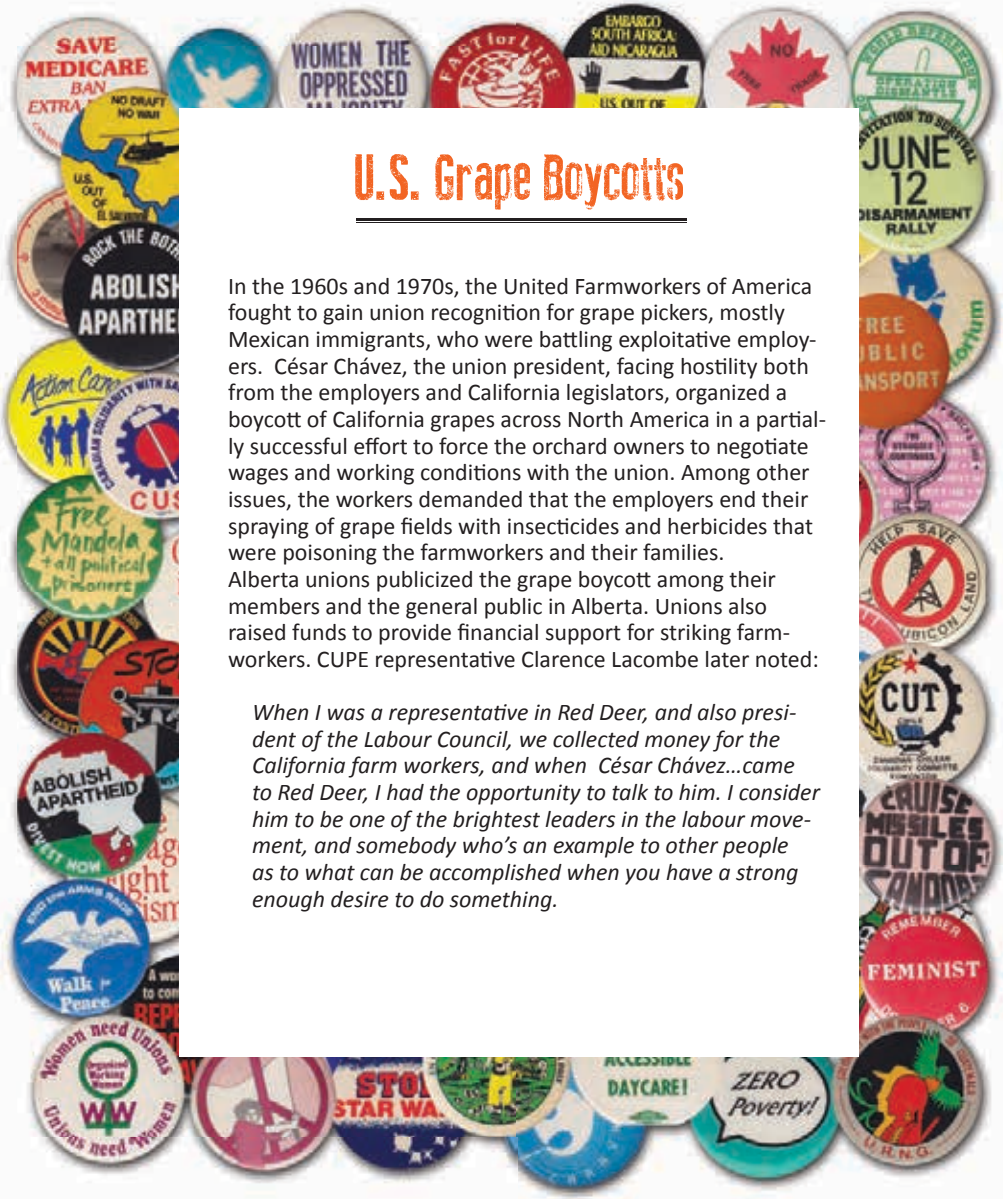
March 27, 1912 IWW launches strike on Canadian Northern and Grand Trunk Pacific lines

March 30, 1927 César Chávez born near Yuma, Arizona

March 31, 1949 Last major strike of Canadian Seamen's Union



Boycott poster of the UFWA circa, 1985. Artist unknown.



U.S. Grape Boycotts

In the 1960s and 1970s, the United Farmworkers of America fought to gain union recognition for grape pickers, mostly Mexican immigrants, who were battling exploitative employers. César Chávez, the union president, facing hostility both from the employers and California legislators, organized a boycott of California grapes across North America in a partially successful effort to force the orchard owners to negotiate wages and working conditions with the union. Among other issues, the workers demanded that the employers end their spraying of grape fields with insecticides and herbicides that were poisoning the farmworkers and their families.
Alberta unions publicized the grape boycott among their members and the general public in Alberta. Unions also raised funds to provide financial support for striking farmworkers. CUPE representative Clarence Lacombe later noted:

> *When I was a representative in Red Deer, and also president of the Labour Council, we collected money for the California farm workers, and when César Chávez…came to Red Deer, I had the opportunity to talk to him. I consider him to be one of the brightest leaders in the labour movement, and somebody who's an example to other people as to what can be accomplished when you have a strong enough desire to do something.*

APRIL

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13	14	15	16	17	18 Good Friday	19
20 Easter	21 Easter Monday	22	23	24	25	26
27	28 International Day of Mourning	29	30			

MARCH 2014

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This Month In Labour History

April 1, 1966 The Canada Assistance Plan provides federal cost-sharing to provinces for social services

April 1, 1902 United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners granted charter for Local 1055 in Calgary

April 1, 1917 Strike by 7,500 Crowsnest Pass miners belonging to the United Mine Workers of America

April 11, 1983 Bill 44 introduced: removes the legal right to strike for all hospital workers

April 12, 1919 The Edmonton Free Press, journal of the Edmonton Trades and Labour Council, begins publication

April 12, 2001 Amalgamated Transit Union Local 583 ends Calgary transit strike

April 17, 1907 Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers International Alliance Local 371 formed in Edmonton

April 17, 1982 The Constitution Act is proclaimed, along with the Canadian Charter of Rights & Freedoms

April 17, 1984 The Canada Health Act penalizes provinces that violate provisions of the Medical Care Act

April 18, 1980 United Nurses of Alberta begin legal strike at 79 hospitals

April 20, 1914 Ludlow, Colorado massacre of U.S. miners

April 22, 1980 Nurses defy back-to-work order, winning a negotiated settlement six days later

April 22, 1951 Civic, school board, and healthcare employees form the Federation of Public Employees, forerunner of the National Union of Public Employees

April 23, 1956 Canadian Labour Congress is formed as a merger of two competing trade union federations

April 27, 1933 Fourteen leaders of a Calgary relief strike are arrested

April 29, 1903 76 people are killed in Frank, Alberta when Turtle Mountain, weakened by mining, collapses

April 30, 1900 First Alberta local of the International Association of Machinists (IAM 357) formed in Calgary

Canadian Auto Workers' free trade protest 1984.

Anti-Free Trade Movement

In 1985, the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney began negotiating a free-trade agreement with the American government. An agreement was announced in 1987, and its provisions included an end to tariff protection for Canadian industries and of most other forms of protection, as well as an end to most efforts to support Canadian ownership of companies in Canada.

Alberta unions had begun opposing talk of free trade as the negotiations took place, noting that Mulroney had pledged during the 1984 federal election that he would not pursue freer trade with the United States, a country against which Canada had dropped many of its earlier barriers to trade in the post-war period. AFL president Dave Werlin warned the organization's convention in 1986 that free trade threatened "our Canadian resources, our Canadian jobs, our Canadian culture, our Canadian social services, our Canadian standard of living, and Canadian sovereignty."

The Pro-Canada Network, a broad activist coalition, in which labour played a key role, organized opposition to the free-trade agreement. In the November, 1988 federal election, a majority of Canadians voted for parties that opposed the FTA. But the split of the anti-FTA vote delivered a majority of all seats to the PCs, who benefited from a multi-million-dollar corporate and media campaign in favour of the free-trade deal.

MAY

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11 Mother's Day	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19 Victoria Day	20	21	22	23	24
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This Month In Labour History

May 1, 1917 Civic Employees Federal Union No. 30 granted charter

May 1, 1923 Edmonton workers rally to support striking Edmonton coal miners

May 1, 1957 Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act proclaimed; provides federal matching grants for provincial hospitalization programs without user fees

May 4, 1886 Workers demonstrating in Chicago for the eight-hour day are attacked by police on Haymarket Square

May 5, 1818 Karl Marx born in Trier, Germany

May 5, 1903 First issue of Alberta's labour newspaper, Bond of Brotherhood, appears in Calgary

May 7, 1968 French students and workers revolt in Paris

May 14, 1771 Labour reformer Robert Owen born in Newton, Wales

May 15, 1903 International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftsmen grants charter to Local 1 in Edmonton

May 15, 1919 Winnipeg General Strike begins

May 18, 2007 Greyhound workers strike across western Canada

May 24, 1921 Trial of Italian-American anarchists Sacco and Vanzetti begins

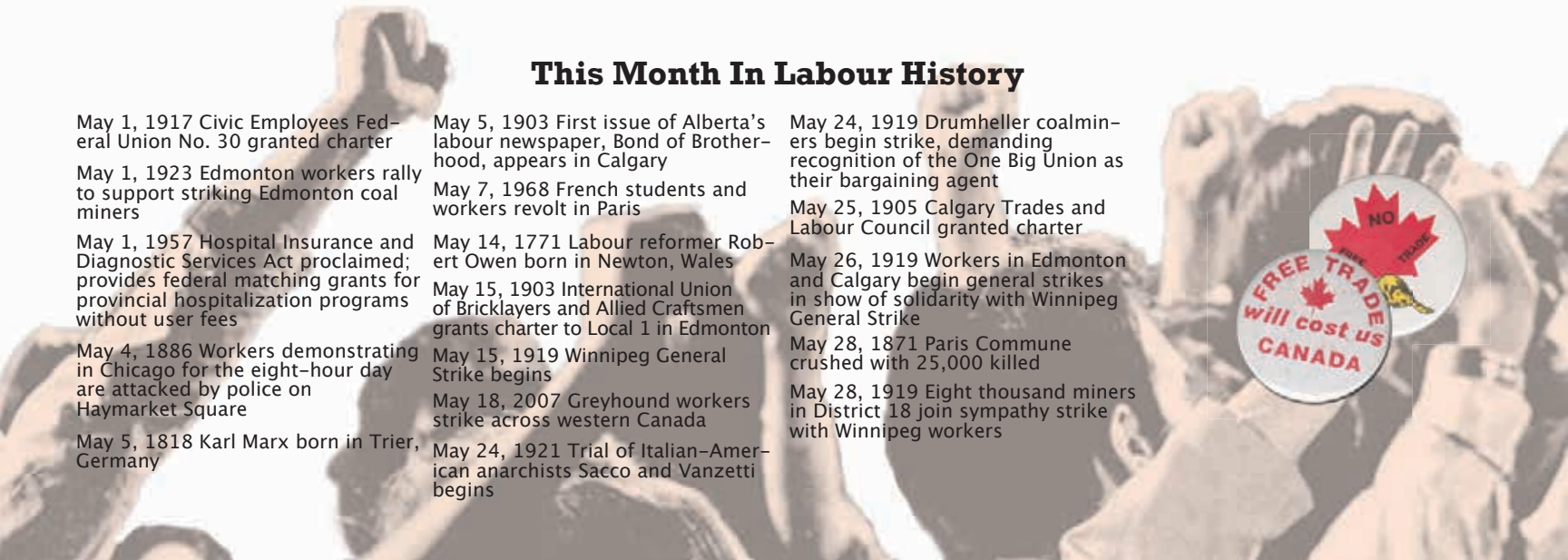
May 24, 1919 Drumheller coalminers begin strike, demanding recognition of the One Big Union as their bargaining agent

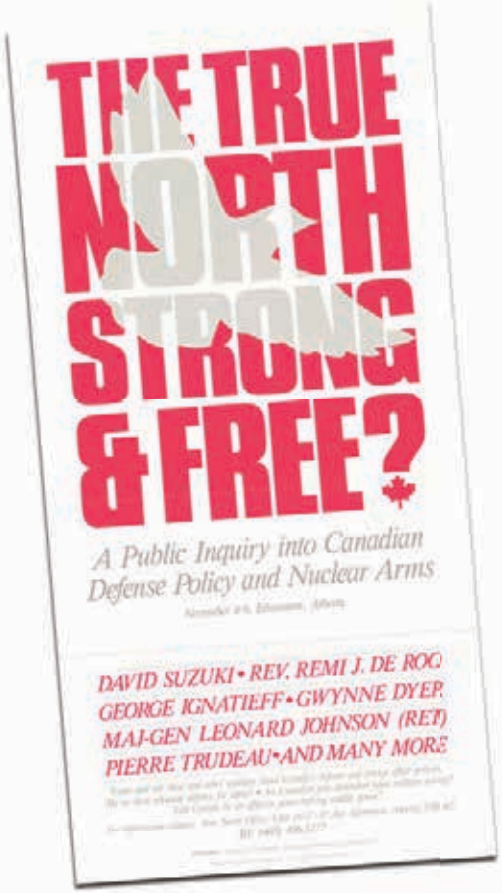
May 25, 1905 Calgary Trades and Labour Council granted charter

May 26, 1919 Workers in Edmonton and Calgary begin general strikes in show of solidarity with Winnipeg General Strike

May 28, 1871 Paris Commune crushed with 25,000 killed

May 28, 1919 Eight thousand miners in District 18 join sympathy strike with Winnipeg workers





Poster for peace and disarmament conference, Edmonton 1989.

Peace & Disarmament

In the early years of the Cold War, the trade union movement was blindsided by government, media, and corporate efforts to brand as Communist subversion any opposition to American-led efforts to subordinate the Third World to Western economic interests. The trade union movement was therefore largely missing in action as anti-nuclear and anti-imperialist organizations attempted to sway Canadian public opinion away from a militaristic view of Canada's possible role in international affairs.

But by the 1970s, as cracks in the Cold War coalition emerged, the labour movement began to view militarism and imperialism as doubtful friends of Canadian workers. The Alberta Federation of Labour organized Alberta workers to oppose the aggressive military build-up under President Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. In particular, it spoke out against Reagan's plans to build a strategic shield around the United States, which would protect that country against possible nuclear attack while allowing the U.S. to strike out against other countries without having to fear retaliation. It called instead for joint disarmament among nuclear countries. The AFL also opposed Canada's willingness to test the Americans' Cruise missiles, missiles that could kill scores of people while leaving buildings standing. Alberta's trade unions were the major organizers of a march from Cold Lake to Edmonton in May, 1983, in which, for 13 days, workers and other peace activists marched from town to town, joined at each stop by members of local anti-Cruise committees who participated for the duration of the march.

JUNE

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15 Father's Day	16	17	18	19	20	21 Summer Solstice National Aboriginal Day
22	23	24 St. Jean-Baptiste Day	25	26	27	28
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MAY 2014

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JULY 2014

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This Month In Labour History

June 1, 1986 "The Battle of 66th Street"- United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Local 280P begin six-month strike at Gainers meatpacking plant

June 1, 1986 UFCW workers at Fletchers in Red Deer begin strike

June 7, 1935 The On-to-Ottawa Trek reaches Calgary from Vancouver

June 13, 1381 Wat Tyler leads march of English peasants to London

June 14, 1872 Trade unions provided first recognition in Canadian law but severe restrictions force most of them to forego registering

June 14, 1912 First convention of newly-formed Alberta Federation of Labour begins in Lethbridge

June 19, 1914 Hillcrest mining disaster leaves 189 dead, the worst mining disaster in Alberta's history

June 19, 2002 Alberta Teachers Association reaches deal that ends dispute with the Conservative government

June 21, 1919 "Bloody Saturday" police repression of workers in Winnipeg General Strike results in two deaths

June 27, 1869 Emma Goldman, famous anarchist-feminist, born in Kovno (now Kaunas), Lithuania

June 28, 1926 Six Labour members win seats in Alberta provincial election

June 30, 1919 Government raids unions across Canada, enforcing new "sedition" legislation meant to restrict unionism and fend off socialism

Edmonton unemployed protest circa 1972.
Provincial Archives of Alberta:
PAA J.591/1

Unions & Anti-Poverty Movements

The trade union movement has a long history of fighting for state provision for needy Canadians. Trade union campaigns played a big role in convincing governments to legislate minimum wages, workers' compensation, old-age pensions, and unemployment insurance. The trade union movement has consistently fought for improvements to these programs, against which corporate groups continue to urge governments to limit both coverage and payments.

The trade union movement, beginning in the 1940s, also worked in coalitions with veterans' groups, social workers, and seniors' organizations to campaign for a large-scale public presence in the housing market. This coalition argued that this was the only way to insure that lower-paid workers, the unemployed, and those unable to work were all housed decently. In the 1970s, the trade union movement added the struggle for public, geared-to-income daycare to its demands in recognition of the fact that women were more likely to be living in poverty than men.

Since the 1970s labour has also worked with anti-poverty organizations controlled by poor people themselves, such as today's Canada Without Poverty, formerly the National Anti-Poverty Organization. Labour calls for a guaranteed annual income above the poverty line for all Canadians. The labour movement has also called for a public homecare program and for a public system of homes for seniors and younger disabled people who require a level of care too high for homecare to fulfill.

JULY

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		1 Canada Day	2	3	4	5
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JUNE 2014

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AUGUST 2014

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This Month In Labour History

July 1, 1919 A mass arrest of One Big Union members is coordinated by federal government

July 1, 1935 On-to-Ottawa Trek violently repressed by RCMP in Regina

July 1, 1958 Alberta proclaims its Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act

July 1, 1968 Federal Medical Care Act comes into force but Alberta does not yet participate

July 1, 1968 Canadian Union of Public Employees 474 in Edmonton is granted a charter

July 1, 1969 Alberta agrees to provide a provincial program that meets requirements of the federal Medical Care Act

July 1, 1980 AUPE "wildcat strike" at Alberta Liquor Control Board

July 6, 1949 International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers Local 720 charter issued

July 7, 1977 2,500 Alberta nurses begin legal strike at seven hospitals

July 7, 2000 After eight months of a bitter first contract fight, Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Local 115A strikers lose fight for union contract at the Calgary Herald

July 8, 1918 Hotel and Restaurant Employees Union organizes two hotels and six restaurants after Calgary Labour Council threatens strike

July 8, 1953 Sheet Metal Workers Local 558 formed in Lethbridge

July 10, 1997 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1118, meatpackers at the High River, Alberta plant go on strike

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

July 14, 1912 Woody Guthrie born in Okemah, Oklahoma

July 17, 1936 Spanish Civil War begins

July 18, 1921 United Farmers of Alberta government is elected; four Labour members are also elected

July 19, 1933 The first national convention of the CCF adopts the Regina Manifesto, pledging a socialist transformation of Canada

July 20, 1966 Canada Packers strike by United Packinghouse Workers of America

July 26, 1948 Canadian Air Line Flight Attendants Association (CALFAA) is certified

July 27, 1997 Canadian Auto Workers Local 4050 goes on strike against Marriott Food Services, Red Deer

CIO Committee to Abolish Racial Discrimination poster, 1945, Artist: Bill Seaman.

Anti-Racism

In 1960, the AFL, making its annual presentation to the provincial government, called for human rights legislation to ban discrimination on the basis of "race, colour or creed." In 1967, the theme of the AFL's Canadian Centennial convention was "Human Rights for All." The AFL worked closely with the Alberta Human Rights Association in its efforts to persuade Alberta provincial governments, which were reluctant to interfere with the rights of employers and landlords, that discrimination was intolerable in a democratic society. In 1972, the Alberta legislature passed the Individual Rights Protection Act, which spawned the Human Rights Commission and the right of citizens to have discriminatory practices that they had experienced investigated and reversed.

The AFL's creation of the Workers of Colour and Aboriginal Workers Committee in the 1990s was a recognition of the fact that discrimination has continued despite the protections in law that are supposed to prevent it. This committee has identified and fought against subtle forms of racialism in which stereotypes of particular racial groups reduce the possibilities of advancement of individuals who are "racialized" as members of that group and not judged on the basis of their individual achievements. The committee has fought for better representation of diverse workers within both the unions and at all levels of various workplaces. It has played a big role in campaigns against employer exploitation of temporary foreign workers, whose employers, as studies suggest, have, in the main, ignored labour legislation in their dealings with these vulnerable workers.

AUGUST

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3	4 Heritage Day	5	6	7	8	9
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JULY 2014

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SEPTEMBER 2014

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This Month In Labour History

August 1, 1932 The CCF is founded in Calgary by labour, farmer and socialist parties and the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Employees

August 1, 1906 Edmonton Trades and Labour Council granted charter

August 1, 1918 With trade union pressure the Workmen's Compensation Act becomes effective for the coal-mining-industry.

August 2, 1997 United Food and Commercial Workers Local 1118 settles strike

August 4, 1908 Two-month national rail strike of CPR shop and yard workers begins

August 6, 1945 U.S. drops nuclear bomb on Hiroshima.

August 6, 1981 Wardair locks out its 700 flight attendants for 13 weeks, with the company using scabs and a strikebreaking security firm

August 7, 1940 The Unemployment Insurance Act receives royal assent. Labour had fought a long battle for a federal program of UI

August 19, 1905 Formation of the first Medicine Hat Trades and Labour Council

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

August 22, 1911 Amalgamated Transit Union 569 granted charter

August 22, 1961 Amalgamated Association of Street Electric Railway & Motor Coach Employees of America Local 583 Calgary Transit strike ends

August 22 1980 Solidarnosc founded in Poland

August 23, 1927 Execution of Sacco and Vanzetti by state of Massachusetts

Women protest health care privatization legislation at Alberta Legislature, 2000.

Medicare

The labour movement in Canada had campaigned for a program of universal medical insurance even before World War I. After World War II it became a key political cause for labour and was enshrined as a chief plank for the New Democratic Party when it formed in 1961 as a coalition of labour political action committees and the old CCF. Tommy Douglas, the NDP's first national leader, had won the 1960 provincial election in Saskatchewan on a promise to implement a provincial medicare scheme, and his successor, Woodrow Lloyd, followed suit. Douglas had the opportunity to insure that such a national program was implemented when the Liberals, whose nominal commitment to medicare since 1919 had never persuaded any federal Liberal government to fulfill the promise, found themselves in a minority position after the federal election of 1963. A federal medicare program was part of the price that Douglas extracted for NDP support of the Liberal minority government. Labour played the main role in pressuring Prime Minister Lester Pearson not to stall medicare's implementation. It was labour's interventions before the Hall Commission, established by John Diefenbaker's Conservatives, to study the funding of medical care in Canada, that led to the Hall Report of 1964 that firmly supported a national, universal program. But the Liberals failed to include dental care, pharmacare, and homecare, which the labour movement continues to advocate for to this day.

SEPTEMBER

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	1 Labour Day	2	3	4	5	6
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AUGUST 2014

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OCTOBER 2014

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September 1, 1905 Alberta becomes a province

September 3, 2004 First IWW North American General Assembly in Alberta begins in Edmonton

September 4, 1920 Edmonton Free Press becomes Alberta Labour News; serves as official paper for AFL

September 6, 1946 Alberta Farmers Union begins 30-day strike demanding minimum fixed price for wheat

September 8, 1886 Alberta's first union, the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, is founded in Medicine Hat

September 9, 1991 Canadian government workers stage 9-day strike

September 10, 1904 Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 488 receives first charter: largest plumbers and pipefitters local in Canada and one of the largest in North America

September 11, 1973 Democratically elected government of Salvador Allende overthrown by CIA-backed-Coup.

September 17, 1956 Convention begins in Edmonton leading to the merger of the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Industrial Federation of Labour of Alberta

September 17, 2003 CEP Local 1900 walk out in Edmonton in effort to ratify first contract with A-Channel

September 19, 1909 Civic Service Union 52, representing City of Edmonton inside workers is founded

September 24, 1918 IWW declared illegal in Canada

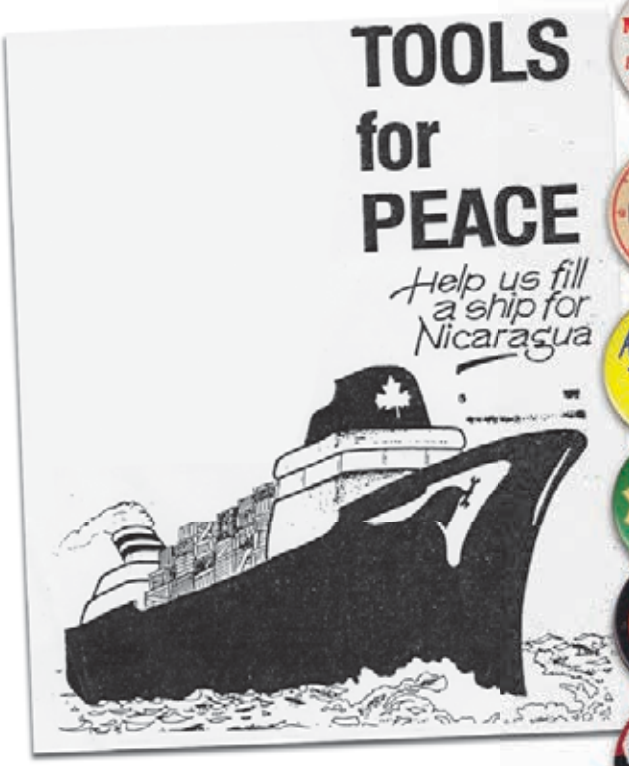
September 24, 1963 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) is formed by a merger of National Union of Public Employees and National Union of Public Service Employees

September 25, 1918 Borden government outlaws publications and meetings in 14 languages. Canada's radical and labour press are targets

September 25, 2003 Levi Strauss announces closure of Edmonton's GWG plant founded in 1911

September 26, 1918 Borden government bans 14 organizations, including IWW, Social Democratic Party, Chinese Labour Association and Ukrainian Social Democratic Party

September 29, 1931 RCMP murder 3 coal miners in Bienfait, Saskatchewan during peaceful strike demonstration



Tools for Peace Calgary chapter poster calling for donations to help the people of Nicaragua, 1986.

Latin American Solidarity

At the height of the Cold War, Charles Millard, director of regional organization for the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions from 1956 to 1961, and former Canadian director of the United Steelworkers of America, attempted unsuccessfully to challenge the AFL-CIO's Cold War mentality regarding Latin America. The AFL-CIO worked with American intelligence to subvert independent Latin American trade unions, claiming that they were fronts for international communism.

The Canadian trade union movement gradually separated itself from their American counterparts' bipolar view of the world and asserted the right of workers everywhere to organized trade unions free of control by the state in their own country or by the United States. The Canadian Labour Congress denounced the military overthrow of Salvador Allende's elected left-wing coalition government in 1973 and the banning of the country's trade unions, a coup that was soon followed by military takeovers across that continent and the murder of trade union leaders.

By the early 2000s, with the Cold War over, trade union leaders in Canada became bolder in denouncing American efforts to overthrow progressive elected regimes in Latin America and state efforts to intimidate trade unionists on the continent. In 2005, the Alberta Federation of Labour and the Edmonton and District Labour Council endorsed Hands off Venezuela (HOV), a social movement formed to oppose American efforts to topple the elected government of President Hugo Chávez, which had dramatically reduced poverty and inequalities in Venezuela. Edmonton Ironworkers 720 made a significant donation to HOV.

OCTOBER

SEPTEMBER 2014

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NOVEMBER 2014

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This Month In Labour History

October 1, 1920 One Big Union miners begin province-wide strike. Government passes Order-in-Council for miners to accept UMWA as their official representative

October 1, 1948 International Union of Operating Engineers Local 955 granted charter

October 4, 1918 Amalgamated Meatcutters Union formed in Edmonton

October 6, 1958 Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 379 chartered in Calgary

October 8, 1919 Alberta Teachers Alliance holds province's first teachers' strike

October 12, 1918 Unionists in Calgary stage sympathy strike with Calgary freight handlers

October 12, 1975 Grace Hartman becomes CUPE president, the first woman president of a major union in North America

October 14, 1976 Canadian Labour Congress holds national day of protest against the Trudeau government's wage-control policy

October 15, 1919 Alberta Teachers Alliance strike resolved

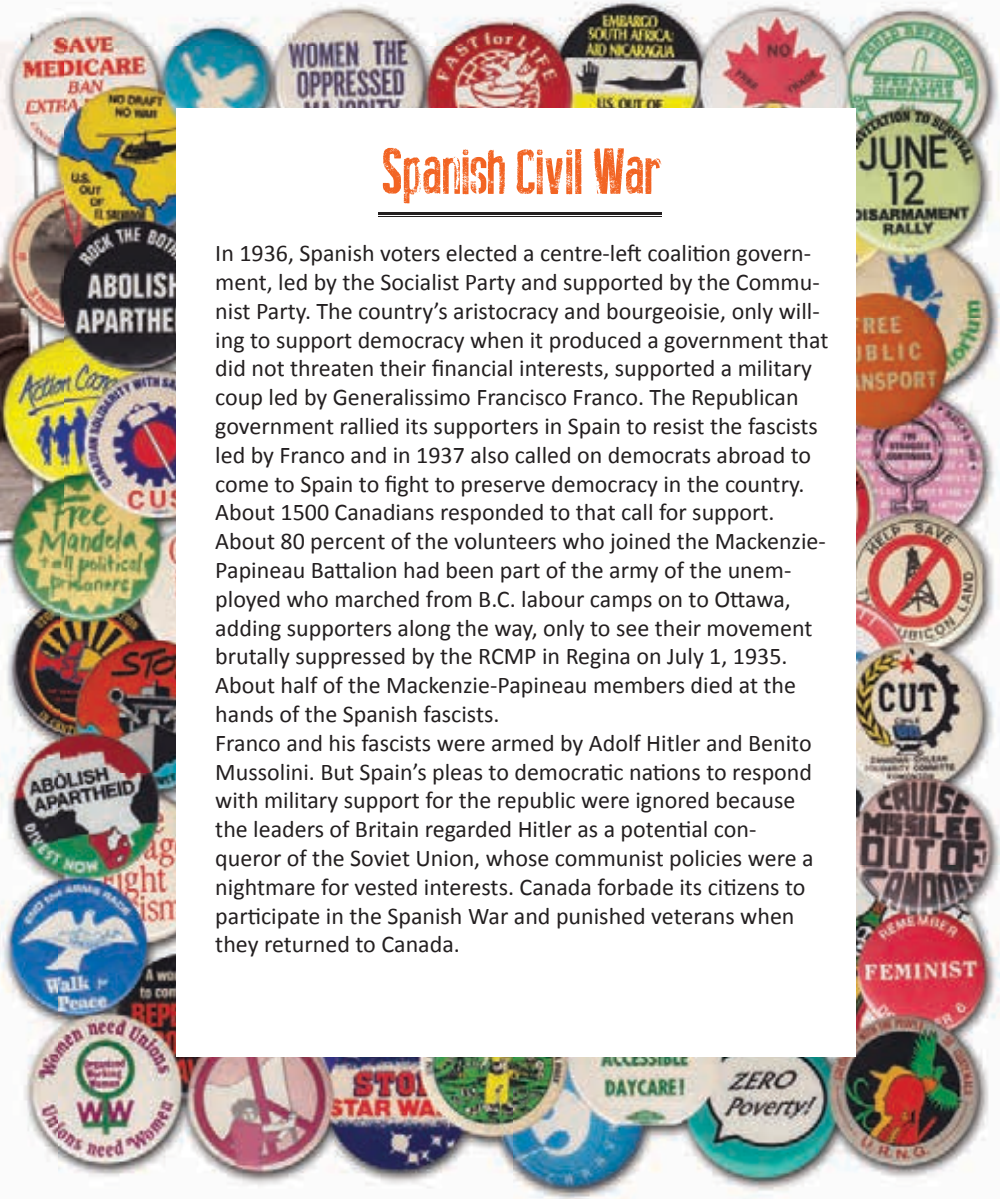
October 17, 1865 Delegates meet and form the National Bricklayers Union

October 21, 1999 Founding meeting of Alberta Labour History Institute at southside Rosie's, Edmonton

October 28, 1995 Federal government workers win major pay equity claim after 16 years of struggle

October 29, 1737 Thomas Paine, Anglo-American revolutionary writer, born in Thetford in Norfolk, England

Edmonton May Day parade float calling for support of Canadian Medical Unit during Spanish Civil War, 1937.



Spanish Civil War

In 1936, Spanish voters elected a centre-left coalition government, led by the Socialist Party and supported by the Communist Party. The country's aristocracy and bourgeoisie, only willing to support democracy when it produced a government that did not threaten their financial interests, supported a military coup led by Generalissimo Francisco Franco. The Republican government rallied its supporters in Spain to resist the fascists led by Franco and in 1937 also called on democrats abroad to come to Spain to fight to preserve democracy in the country. About 1500 Canadians responded to that call for support. About 80 percent of the volunteers who joined the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion had been part of the army of the unemployed who marched from B.C. labour camps on to Ottawa, adding supporters along the way, only to see their movement brutally suppressed by the RCMP in Regina on July 1, 1935. About half of the Mackenzie-Papineau members died at the hands of the Spanish fascists.

Franco and his fascists were armed by Adolf Hitler and Benito Mussolini. But Spain's pleas to democratic nations to respond with military support for the republic were ignored because the leaders of Britain regarded Hitler as a potential conqueror of the Soviet Union, whose communist policies were a nightmare for vested interests. Canada forbade its citizens to participate in the Spanish War and punished veterans when they returned to Canada.

NOVEMBER

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OCTOBER 2014

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DECEMBER 2014

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This Month In Labour History

November 1, 1934 Amalgamated Sheet Metal Workers International Alliance Local 371 re-chartered to become Local 271, Edmonton

November 8, 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

November 11, 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

November 14, 1995 CUPE Local 8 and AUPE Local 55 (Foothills Hospital) laundry workers in Calgary engage in illegal strike to stop contracing out. Strike spreads to all major hospitals

November 16, 1997 Maple Leaf pork plant (formerly Gainers) workers strike despite company threat to close plant if workers strike

November 22, 2002 Edmonton Shaw Conference Centre workers UFCW Local 401 strike ends with workers winning first contract

November 23, 1170 BC First recorded strike of workers occurs in Egypt

November 24, 1995 CUPE Local 8 and AUPE Local 55 hospital laundry workers' illegal strike in Calgary ends with moratorium on contracting out

November 25, 1983 Canadian postal workers reduce postal rates to 2 cents as part of negotiating tactics with Post Office

November 27, 1992 Canadian Paperworkers Union, Communications Workers of Canada, and the Energy and Chemical Workers Union merge to create Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union (CEP)

International Women's Day poster, Artist: Nancy Hom, 1980.

Women's Movement

A latecomer to support of the women's liberation movement that emerged in the 1960s, the Alberta trade union movement gradually became a leading advocate. The United Garment Workers organized Edmonton's GWG plant in 1911, but further organization of women workers came slowly. In the 1960s, as the numbers of unionized public employees grew rapidly along with women's employment in those jobs, women began their march to becoming a majority of union members.

As women gradually entered the ranks of leadership in unions, they insured that working women's issues took on increasing importance in negotiations, grievances, and day-to-day union work. Trade unions led the way in winning maternity leave rights for women employees. Such rights were later extended to other women by governments. In 1992, thanks to pressure from Susan Parcels, an Alberta nurse, who had the backing of the United Nurses of Alberta, the courts ruled that women are eligible for sick leave benefits during the health-related portion of their maternity leave.

Women's trade unionism, particularly three strikes by UNA from 1979 to 1988, has changed the status of nursing from near-charitable work rewarded with low pay and no say in working conditions, to a profession characterized by professional pay and at least some union say in the organization of nursing work.

Thanks to the work of union women, the labour movement has campaigned for publicly subsidized daycare, for workplaces free of sexual harassment, and for equal opportunities for promotion for women.

DECEMBER

NOVEMBER 2014

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21 Winter Solstice	22	23	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day	27
28	29	30	31 New Year's Eve			

JANUARY 2015

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This Month In Labour History

December 6, 1921 William Irvine of Calgary wins first federal labour seat in Alberta for Canadian Labour Party

December 7, 1896 International Union of Steam and Operating Engineers is issued a charter by the American Federation of Labor

December 9, 1869 Knights of Labor founded

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

December 10, 1886 American Federation of Labor founded

December 12, 1883 Railway engineers and firemen in Calgary strike against wage cuts

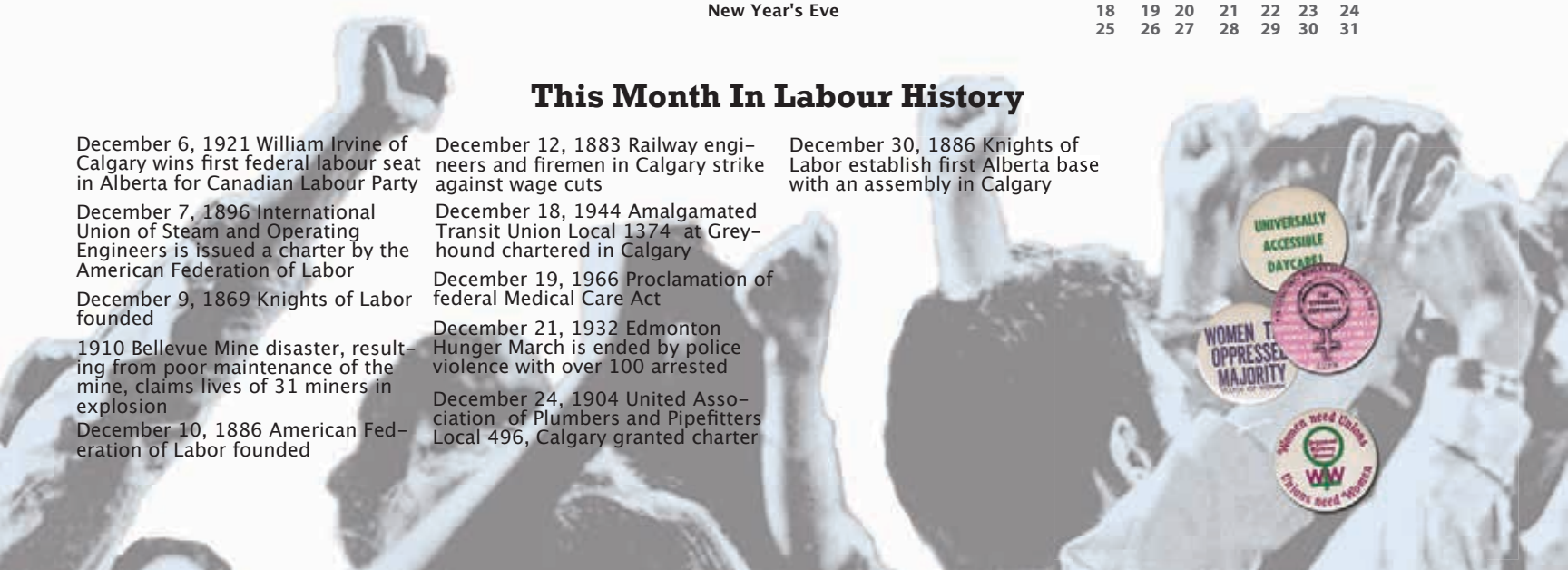
December 18, 1944 Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1374 at Greyhound chartered in Calgary

December 19, 1966 Proclamation of federal Medical Care Act

December 21, 1932 Edmonton Hunger March is ended by police violence with over 100 arrested

December 24, 1904 United Association of Plumbers and Pipefitters Local 496, Calgary granted charter

December 30, 1886 Knights of Labor establish first Alberta base with an assembly in Calgary



Uniting in the Struggle: Labour and Social Movements

2014 Alberta Labour History Institute Conference

Join us from June 18 - 21

The labour movement has a long history of working alongside a wide variety of other social and political movements: from the anti-fascist popular front to the Latin American solidarity campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s, from the women's movement to LGBTQ movement today, from anti-nukes to environmental movements, from human rights campaigns in the 1940s and 1950s to Idle No More today. The Alberta Labour History Institute (ALHI) conference of 18-21 June, 2014, wants to investigate this past, present and future of labour's interaction with other social movements in Canada and beyond.

Visit: WWW.ALHICONFERENCE.CA

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ALHI

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