

Society Newscast 2004:04

This is the Society Newscast for Tuesday, July 20, 2004

Board highlights: July 6, 2004



The Society Executive Board met on Tuesday, July 6th. Board members were introduced to two new IFPTE organizers: Shirley Dufour and Tom Galivan (see story below). President **Andrew Müller** and others reported on the following significant events:

- ◆ Bill 100: An act to amend the *Electricity Act* had been introduced in the Ontario Legislative Assembly. Among other things, it will set up an Ontario Power Authority to engage in long-term system planning, and procure new generation, if necessary, from the private sector. Society representatives have had two meetings with government political and technical advisors to gain information and discuss concerns. Meetings will be held soon to discuss OPA staffing and the role of OPG in the future.
- ◆ Canadian Council of Professionals: Executive VP **Leslie Forge** reported on the May CCP meeting in Winnipeg. Matters discussed included negotiation updates, bargaining strategies, harassment training, office, low water levels for generation (including Manitoba and Québec), and growth at Hydro Québec. (Perhaps unlike Ontario, Hydro Québec is almost fully supported by elected representatives.)
- ◆ Professional Employees Network: President Müller attended a PEN meeting in mid-June in Ottawa. The Network is considering staffing for assistance in coordinating meetings and actions, and will formulate a "national power policy" arguing the need for more generation, and that it should be under public ownership.
- ◆ Canadian Nuclear Society/Association: President Müller also attended meetings of the Canadian Nuclear Society and the Canadian Nuclear Association, held conjointly. (The CNA is an organization consists of organizations—corporations, universities, government agencies, trade unions, etc.—involved in the nuclear industry, while the CNS is an organization of *individuals* with direct connections to nuclear.) The Society sponsored a coffee break at the CNS meeting, and President Müller noted that CNS meetings were a good place to meet other professionals in the industry. Allan Kupcis, former CEO of Ontario Hydro, resigned as Chair of the CNA Board, and was replaced by Duncan Hawthorne, CEO of Bruce Power.

Labour Council Representation: Hydro One Local VP Keith Rattai proposed a method for determining the designated representatives for the Toronto & York Region Labour Council, where the Society is entitled to nine representatives. A designate from the Hydro One Local will coordinate such representation, and a position will be offered to each Local that has Society-represented members on the Toronto-York region. If after that process is carried through the number of representatives is insufficient, the Board would be asked to fill out the spots.

Mr. Rattai said the Hydro One Local was offering to take the lead because "due to the potential of a labour dispute next year it is essential that the political profile of the Society be increased in the broader labour movement." The Board accepted Mr. Rattai's recommendation.

Standing Committees: In its June meeting, the Board created standing committees for the assistance of each Executive Vice President. Filling of positions on the committees was delayed so the Board could receive nominations. In the July meeting, the following individuals were appointed to the committees in question:

- ◆ Policy Committee: Keith Rattai, Lanny Totton (OPG)
- ◆ Membership Committee: Keith Rattai, Joe Sarick (New Horizon)
- ◆ Finance Committee: Lanny Totton, Joe Sarick

Audit Committee: Keith Rattai was appointed to the Audit Committee. He fills the position vacated by Bill Jones (Kinectrics), now Acting Executive Vice President Finance.

Bill 100: At the suggestion of the head office of the IFPTE, the Board approved the expenditure of up to \$15,000 to commission a research paper on the likely effects on the Ontario electricity industry of implementation of Bill 100. The research will be conducted by the Public Service Institute Research Unit of the University of Greenwich, U.K., a unit with a great deal of expertise in electricity deregulation and liberalization worldwide. It is expected to be completed and delivered in August.

Charges laid in Barrett Chute tragedy

After a two-year investigation, the Ontario Provincial Police have laid several criminal charges arising out of the deaths of a mother and her son in an OPG spillway.

OPG itself, Ottawa/St. Lawrence plant group manager John Tammadge, and operator Robert Bednarek have been charged with criminal negligence. Mr. Bednarek was allegedly the operator on duty in June, 2002 when water was diverted through the Barrett Chute GS spillway. Cyndi Cadieux, then 32, and her

son Aaron, seven, sunbathing in the spillway, were swept away in the torrent, and were killed.

The incident occurred shortly after the electricity "market" was opened by the then Harris government. At the time, market rules treated hydro-electric generating stations as individual stations—instructions to one station to generate were not necessarily followed by instructions to those downstream to do so. On the day in question, Mountain Chute, just upstream, was passing more water than Barrett Chute could handle, so Barrett Chute was instructed to spill. The market rules involved have since been changed, so that all the stations on a river are treated as a *system*, where actions upstream have consequences downstream.

"We suspected there might be charges," said OPGI Local VP **Lanny Totton**. "We're grateful that no Society members are involved, but saddened that Mr. Tammadge and Mr. Bednarek are. In our view, when the rules were set up so that water would have to be spilled, the market was set on a wasteful and dangerous course. We believe that the introduction of the market rules was much more responsible for the tragedy than any individual."

The Society cooperated fully with the OPP investigation. The next date in the proceedings involved is September 21st, in Pembroke. The Society will monitor the court proceedings in order to ensure members' interests are protected.

New IFPTE organizers work out of Society office

There are two new faces in the Society office.

The International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers has rounded out its Canadian hirings by spiriting away Shirley Dufour and Tom Galivan from their previous employers.

Shirley comes to IFPTE from the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, where since 1991 she had been employed as an organizer. She organized units of the Federation all over the province, "Red Lake,



Shirley Dufour, IFPTE



Tom Galivan, IFPTE

Moose Factory, you name it," in publicly funded schools and universities. Among her experiences are involvement in strategic planning, research into employers, and the development and carrying out of strategic contract campaigns.

Tom was an organizer for the Service Employees International Union, where he organized in the health-care sector, first at SEIU Local 220 in London, Ontario, and later for Local 528, a province-wide local of employees in the "gaming" (racetracks, casinos, etc.) industry. He developed an organizing strategy for Local 528 that doubled the size of the local.

Society members sometimes have friends, relatives, neighbours, or other acquaintances who are professional employees who might like to be represented by the Society. For such tips, Tom and Shirley can be reached at (416) 979-5478.

Erratum

In Society NewsFLASH 2004:03, Mr. Jake Epp was identified as the CEO of OPG. He is actually the Chair of the Board, while Mr. Richard Dicerni is the CEO.

And that is the Society Newscast for Tuesday, July 20 2004.

Members can hear the current Newscast by calling (416) 979-2709 x.2035.

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