

Society NewsFLASH 2005:04

Friday, July 8, 2005

Strike pay raised

The Society's Executive Board has doubled strike pay for Hydro One strikers.

As the Hydro One strike entered its fifth week, the Executive Board approved a raise in strike pay, to \$500 per week from \$250.

"[The Hydro One strike] affects everybody in this room," said OPGI's **Joe Fierro** (serving as the alternate for Local Vice President **Lanny Totton**). "The OPGI Local Committee voted unanimously to support a raise."

CAR levy to return

The Society's \$3 per week levy for the Collective Agreement Renewal Fund will be re-instituted next week.

The levy kicks in when the Fund falls below \$4 million, and shuts off when the Fund reaches \$5 million. The last time members paid the levy was in June, 2004.

Strike pay and other costs of the Hydro One strike have diminished the Fund to the point where the fund policy requires replenishment.

CLC sponsors rally for Hydro One strikers

Yesterday the Canadian Labour Congress threw a party for Hydro One strikers.



Winnie Ng at CLC support rally: "I'm proud of the Society for fighting for dignity and respect!"

Upwards of thirty unionists from various unions joined the picket line with banners and flags at Trinity Square, and several labour luminaries spoke to the line.

Present were representatives of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Canadian Auto Workers, Local 183 of the Universal Workers Union, the Amalgamated Transit Union, the Ontario Public Service Employees Union, the Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, the Service Employees International Union, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, and several others.

Society strikers **Lyla Garzouzi** and **Anshul Mathur** hosted the event, and speakers included John Cartwright of the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and Winnie Ng of the Canadian Labour Congress.

Ontario Federation of Labour President Wayne Samuelson led picketers in a chant of "We won't back down," while pointing at Hydro One's executive offices to drive home the message. "I'd like to pay tribute to your leadership," Samuelson said. "You've got a smart, strong leadership team, and the sooner [Hydro One management] gets the message, the better for everybody."

Samuelson asked, "What does it take for these guys to get the message?" "A phone call," answered a picketer, presumably meaning a phone call from a certain Premier.

Many strikers reported feeling quite re-energized by the event.

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