

CHAPTER ACTION UPDATE

By Brent Patterson

GOLDEN CHAPTER LOOKS FOR TRADE BARRIERS

On April 1, on the first anniversary of the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (TILMA) between British Columbia and Alberta, Golden, B.C. chapter activists travelled to the provincial border with a magnifying glass to search for so-called interprovincial trade barriers. They concluded that there were no significant trade barriers – undermining the stated rationale for TILMA – and highlighted the fact that the agreement undermines local democracy.

GUELPH CHAPTER FIGHTS NESTLE

In April, the Guelph, Ontario chapter, as part of the Wellington Water Watchers coalition, successfully limited Nestlé's ability to extract water from their community. The provincial government reduced Nestlé's permit from five to two years and added extensive monitoring conditions for surface and groundwater. Wellington Water Watchers were pleased, but expressed continued opposition to any permit granting a commercial bottler from taking public water. Maude Barlow was in Guelph in early June for a screening of FLOW: For Love Of Water and to assist in the ongoing fight against Nestlé operations in the Guelph area.

WILLIAMS LAKE CHAPTER OPPOSES P3 PLAN

The Williams Lake chapter has been speaking against a private report by Epcor, which, as reported by The Williams Lake Tribune, includes a proposal to restructure the town's water utility as its own entity. In April, chapter contact John Dressler told the city's water advisory committee, "You have the opportunity to leave a legacy to the community ... If your work leads to the



Trevor Hamre of the Golden, B.C. chapter uses a magnifying glass to look for trade barriers at the B.C.-Alberta border.

erosion of a fundamental resource, your stature will be diminished." A recent CUPE bulletin notes, "The Council of Canadians has been a staunch ally, particularly in our fight for public water. A good example is in Williams Lake where their municipal council is considering a P3 that would see Epcor manage their water system. CUPE has few members in the community and the Council of Canadians is leading the fight for public water."

CAMPBELL RIVER AND COMOX VALLEY NON-PROFIT HOSPITALS SAVED

The Comox Valley and Campbell River, B.C. chapters successfully opposed a plan to replace the Campbell River and District General Hospital and St. Joseph's General Hospital with a regional hospital. Chapter activist Gwyn Frayne said, "After a two-year intensive struggle, after 19,000 signed a petition which was deposited in the provincial legislature, after we got ALL of the doctors on side from Campbell River north,

after we went to every Regional District meeting ... We convinced the Comox Strathcona Regional District Hospital Board to rescind a motion in favour of having one P3 hospital and, instead, to upgrade our two non-profit hospitals in Campbell River and the Comox Valley."

OPPOSITION TO PRIVATE CLINIC IN ALBERTA

As reported in the Calgary Herald in April, "Alberta's health minister is giving the green light to a controversial company that plans to open a private medical clinic in Calgary later this year, despite calls to stop the facility from opening. Ron Liepert said ... he is satisfied the Copeman Healthcare Centre operates within the Canada Health Act ... The comments come a day after Copeman Healthcare confirmed it is opening a private health clinic in Calgary on Sept. 8 that charges patients nearly \$3,000 a year for access to a team of medical professionals." The Calgary chapter will be organizing to try to stop this clinic from opening.

CHESTER MUNICIPAL COUNCIL CALLS FOR URANIUM BAN

The South Shore, Nova Scotia chapter, as part of the South Shore uranium action group, convinced the Chester municipal council to pass a resolution asking the Nova Scotia government for a permanent legislated moratorium on uranium exploration and mining. The Halifax Chronicle-Herald reported that "Chester municipal councillors want the province to permanently ban uranium mining ... the seven-member council voted unanimously to ask the provincial government to enshrine a ban in legislation."

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