



CUPE BC Convention 2016

CUPE BC Convention is an excellent way to see Union solidarity in action. This year, the 4 day event was held in Victoria at the Conference Centre. The opening evening began at 7pm on April 27th and closed Saturday April 30th at 3pm. The days were long, the content at times emotional, spirited, but always inspiring. For me, the moments that stand out the most are the resolutions that spark passionate responses. What compels someone to make that purposeful trek up to the microphone to speak to a room of almost 600 people? It is daunting! One delegate spoke on the impact of cuts to bus passes for persons with disabilities. She was nervous, her voice trembled and she paused to catch her breath. Few people in the room could see the hand that slipped into hers- quietly lending strength and support. A stranger, a union sister who saw another in need and didn't hesitate to lend a hand. With a tremulous pause, and the support she needed, she found her voice. The tears rolled and she spoke about how her family was being affected by fresh cuts to government funded programs. When she finished and wiped her eyes, every delegate was on their feet. The roar of applause that followed as she returned to her seat was inspiring, heartwarming and for me, what being part of CUPE is all about. A hand when you need it, to draw strength from when you need it, and a voice added to yours when you feel your voice isn't being heard-this is CUPE. It is impossible to sit in a room bursting with social justice-minded people and not believe change is possible. Convention is Union democracy in action, a Union parliament as it were. It is also a reminder that we belong to a strong, purposeful community that cares, that will act, that will lend a hand when needed because we aren't strangers, we are united with purpose. We are that hand to hold onto when needed.

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