

May 2010

TO ALL CUPE CHARTERED ORGANIZATIONS

IN SOLIDARITY WITH FIRST PEOPLES

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

June 21, 2010 is the first day of summer and is also recognized as National Aboriginal Day, a day for all Canadians to celebrate the cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples.

National Aboriginal Day was proclaimed in 1996. Today National Aboriginal Day is part of the annual nation-wide Celebrate Canada events, with celebrations centering around National Aboriginal Day, but continuing through Saint-Jean-Baptiste Day, Canadian Multiculturalism Day and concluding with Canada Day.

Setting aside a day for Aboriginal Peoples is part of the wider recognition of Aboriginal Peoples' important place within the fabric of Canada and their ongoing contributions.

We encourage CUPE members to support and enjoy activities around the Aboriginal culture and traditions. These activities are for all people of every nation, to have some fun and gain insight into the beauty that Canada's original people have to share. Although the official day is June 21, celebrations in many parts of Canada last the entire week.

While June 21 is a day of celebration, it is also a day to remember that governments have not taken into consideration the unacceptable conditions faced by Aboriginal Peoples. It is deplorable that year after year governments have failed to provide for the basic necessities such as safe water, health care and economic sustainability. The inability of governments to recognize that these necessities are fundamental rights of citizenship has led to many negative statistics.

CUPE stands firm in our commitment to further Aboriginal rights. We will continue to fight for equality, justice, full inclusion and the right to self-government. We call on all governments to respect treaties and the agreed-to and inherent rights of Aboriginal Peoples.

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We encourage all members to celebrate National Aboriginal Day on June 21 and other activities during that week, as a way to acknowledge the unique heritage, cultures and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

In solidarity,



PAUL MOIST
National President



CLAUDE GÉNÉREUX
National Secretary-Treasurer