



**Info-Session on the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
September 21, 2020
Via Videoconference/Webinar**

VERBATIM TRANSCRIPT

**Participants were informed that no interpretation would be available, but that this information session would be transcribed verbatim and the report would be subsequently translated.*

**CAPE's Statement on Harassment was read aloud by G. Phillips, after which participants were instructed to raise any concerns for the attention of Jennifer George.*

G. Phillips: We will get started. I am Greg Phillips and I'm President of CAPE since 2018 and I'm Chair of the National Executive Committee, and I'm also Chair of today's session. Thank you for connecting with us during your lunch hour. We hope that you're coping well, wherever you are, in dealing with this pandemic. Please continue to stay safe and to take precautions to avoid potential exposure to COVID-19; we're not out of the woods yet.

This session should not last longer than an hour. This is our second online session ever that we've done at CAPE. The membership budget meeting a couple of week ago was the first one and we're getting better. We thank you for your patience as we perfect the art of webinars.

This information session is about the Canadian Labour Congress or CLC, a national trade union centre, also known by many of you as the central labour body in Canada to which most Canadian labour unions are affiliated. CAPE is currently not affiliated but we have been considering joining for a few years.

The Chair of the National Executive Subcommittee tasked with this exercise is Howard Delnick. He is an EC Director on the National Executive Committee. Howard helped put together a steering committee to work on the resolution presented by two of our members at the 2019 AGM for CAPE to consider joining the CLC. He will tell you more in a few moments.

We're greatly honoured to be joined today by the President of the CLC himself, Hassan Yussuff, and Executive Vice-President Larry Rousseau, who, you might remember, joined us at our 2019 AGM to deliver a powerful and inspirational address concerning diversity and inclusion.

I will now turn it over to Howard for his introductory comments.

H. Delnick: Thank you. Good afternoon to all members and guests. Bonjour à tous les membres et invités. Thank you, Chair. *Merci, monsieur le Président.* As Greg mentioned, I help manage the CLC Steering Committee, a neutral, unbiased body taking no position nor offering any position or opinion on the pros and/or cons regarding the subject of the resolution. Our mandate was simply to research and assemble relevant information to assist CAPE membership in their decision-making process as it relates to the resolution presented by CAPE members Laurie Gillis and Andrew Gibson at the 2019 AGM.

The resolution reads: "*For CAPE to consider joining the CLC, and for CAPE to hold a vote to that effect before December 2020*". I would like to thank the two resolution sponsors for taking this initiative, as well as the Committee members for their diligent efforts, CAPE's communication team for their hard work, and everyone who helped and contributed to this process.

As part of the process, we're also expected to hold an information session to offer members more details about the CLC. Several weeks ago, members were sent an invitation to the session with a link page containing information about the CLC. The link, along with updated information, will be sent again after this session. After the presentation by our guests, we will proceed to the questions received ahead of the session and then go to those submitted today via email or via the chat boxes. There will also be a Q&A session later on.

I would now like to invite Mr. Hassan Yussuff and Mr. Larry Rousseau to address our membership. Gentlemen, the floor is yours.

H. Yussuff: Thank you, Howard, a lot for your hard work and, of course, on behalf of your committee, but equally, let me thank Greg and, of course, all the members of your executive board for inviting us here to dialogue with you today, but also to make a brief presentation. Of course, any questions on the session we'll be happy to respond to. I'll give you a bit of background about myself also, but in addition to that, about the Congress. I've been President of the Congress since 2014 and, of course, prior to that I was the Vice-President since 1999 for one term for three years and, subsequent to that, I became the Secretary Treasurer, as which I served until 2014.

The Congress, of course, as an organization has been around since 1956; it was founded in 1956. It's an organization that continues to evolve. Over time, because its membership continues to change and, more importantly of course, the realities of our organization, we have to respond to all of the things that are happening in our society.

When we first were founded, to a large extent we were mostly private-sector unions. That has completely flipped in regard to the representation of our organization today. Most of our affiliates and membership come from the public sector to that extent. As an organization, we continue to evolve, grow, and change in the process since we've been around. Of course, we have 12 federations of labour across the country: one in every province and, of course, we have two in the territory that represent the Nunavut, Northwest Territory and the Yukon Territory. In addition to that, we have over 130 or so labour councils across the country and they are local structures at the local level. Their leadership are elected and more importantly they are part of our body.

We are a representative organization. We have a convention that takes place every three years. Of course, because of COVID, our convention was supposed to happen in May of this year; it's been postponed until such time we can have one, which we're hoping is sometime in the upcoming 2020. In the meantime, we continue to operate and officers' terms have been extended and we continue to operate in the way that we have been. In between conventions, we're governed by a Canadian Council, on which every affiliate affiliated with the CLC have a seat. So, if you were to affiliate with the Congress, your President Greg would automatically be a vice-president of our organization and would sit on the Canadian Council to speak on behalf of your union but also to participate in a governing structure. We meet twice a year and, of course, if there's a requirement for an emergency or other purpose we meet in that capacity when a request is made.

We also have an Executive Committee that is a governing structure of the Congress. The Executive Committee meets four times a year and, of course, also requires to meet more frequently. In our Executive Committee structure, we also have recognition of gender representation, but also, we have created two seats specifically for small unions that make up the Congress as a whole structure and, of course, those two seats are elected by the Canadian Council to give small affiliates an opportunity to be on the Executive Committee to participate on the governing day-to-day affairs of the Congress.

In the context since we've been around, the Convention is where our policies and resolutions are passed and we give to Congress some guidance in regards to the three-years mandate; but if anything should come up in between, the Convention of course or Canadian Council have the authority to guide us in that regard. And more importantly, of course, we use that on a day-to-day basis to give us direction about issues that we have to respond to on an emergency basis.

We're an advocacy organization on behalf of our three million plus members right across the country. On a day-to-day basis, of course, we're trying to shape public policy both at a national level and provincial level, and at the local level. In that regard, we dedicate our efforts to continue to ensure that working people have a strong voice in this country, but equally, we're very much in the media speaking to the issues that affect Canadians as COVID-19 has brought about this emergency. Our efforts have been trying to help in shaping the policies that the Government is taking on but equally as to how we can best represent our members. The wage subsidy, the CEWS, of course, with one of those policies,

will help shape because the majority of members were in a lock-down. But then, since the wage subsidy, and more importantly, moving our members off the CERB, which will happen very shortly, as to how the EI system can respond to providing benefits to Canadians as the Government is getting ready to bring in a Throne Speech, we've rolled out a campaign in the last number of weeks since Labour Day, trying to influence what will be in that Throne Speech and, of course, this is something we do on an ongoing basis.

Once a year in the advocacy work we do on behalf of the Congress is to lobby Government, where we bring together all of our affiliates to participate to the meeting on the Hill and we pick some of the issues that we think are important on behalf of our members, and that lobby takes place in regard to the policies that we want to see Government bring in but equally we want to influence that will help our members to a large degree, assist them in the challenges we face as a movement, but equally how we can best improve our public policy to represent our members at the end of the day.

We also do interventions at the Supreme Court and legal interventions we do is to ensure that when cases are going forward to the Supreme Court, how we can best represent our members, recognizing the far-reaching implications that those decisions will have on our members. We have a mandate to represent our members in cases, of course, going to the Supreme Court. We also have a legal committee that advise us on the cases we should take to the Supreme Court and how we should intervene. And of course, we have to advance workers' rights in the broadest sense in this regard: the right to strike, the right to collective bargaining, the right to join a union... All of these have come about in a victory we won at the Supreme Court as a result of our intervention at the Supreme Court on behalf of our members and our movement as a whole.

As CAPE, you benefit from all of this because, at the end of the day, in the efforts that we lead and, of course, the costs associated with this intervention is on behalf of all working people, not just those who belong to the Congress at the end of the day. We do recognize these are important decisions in the broadest sense that can help our movement in this country but, more importantly, of course, ensuring that as a trade union movement, we have the farthest possible reach to ensure workers are going to continue to advance their interest when cases are moving forward to the Supreme Court.

CAPE is not a young organization nor is it an old organization, and in regard to this effort today to join our union legally, if you belong to our family, we're an evolving organization and, at the federal level, most recently not so long ago, over eight or nine years ago, PIPSC joined our organization and they've benefited enormously from the relationship we have had. But since then, of course, four years ago, the Association of Canadian Financial Officers joined our organization and, of course, they have benefitted. They can tell you their own stories since they've belonged to the Congress. Subsequent to that, the Canadian Air Canada Pilots have also joined our organization. So, there are lots of organizations that are still out there that are looking at membership in the Congress. So your effort today in this regard is not unique but it's also important, we think, because you should belong to the CLC family because I think you belong here and more importantly, you will benefit from being a member of the Congress.

Of course, CAPE will benefit in terms of the advocacy work we're doing on a day-to-day basis on behalf of all workers across this country, but also public-sector workers. Most recently, we were a strong advocate working with the federal government to ensure that the equity legislation that's going to govern our members in the federal jurisdiction should be enacted. The government passed that law and the regulations are now being drafted, and we hope the proactive pay equity legislation will take place very shortly because you have been waiting decades for this legislation to pass and make sure your members are paid the same of those who are working in the federal public sector, but more importantly, the federal government take the necessary steps to move forward.

We have an important role in regard to our members who bargain in the federal public sector. I know you can see from the past government action to limit your ability to collectively bargain and, of course, we've been a strong voice to push against that at a large extent over the last number of years. We've had very little interventions since the new government has been elected over the last four years and most recently. We're going to continue to push back on government trying to intervene to limit public-sector workers bargaining with their employer, which is the federal government, and we continue to do that work. Most of the legislation that governs your life, the federal *Labour Code*, parts 1, 2 and 3, that governs your life to a large extent in the federal public sector on a day-to-day basis, we continue to work to improve the laws that are going to govern our members and you will be part of the advocacy work we do at the Congress.

In addition to that, we have long-standing committees in the Congress that you'll automatically be a member of and you can choose to appoint members to serve on those committees. We have a women's committee in the Congress, we have a human rights committee, we have sub-committees in the human rights committee, a workers-of-colour committee, aboriginal sub-committees, of course, disability sub-committees, we have gay, lesbians and bisexual sub-committees, all working in the Congress, we have an education committee... Of course, all of this work you will be part of automatically, so you will benefit by partaking in that but equally to help shape the decisions of the Congress going forward.

I know there will be lots of questions today so I don't want to go on too long and I want to support your members to ask as many questions as possible, but equally I can tell you how excited I am that you're considering membership in the Congress. I think you'll fit in to the CLC family as I have and others who have joined the Congress over the years. But equally, I think your interest will be best served being part of our organization because you will be joining over three million members across this country who currently belong to the CLC and who will benefit from this membership going forward. I look forward to taking any questions you will have. I want to invite my colleague Larry Rousseau to make some remarks and then we'll take your questions. Thank you so much.

L. Rousseau: *(French part translated into English from 19:15 to 20:15) Thank you very much, Hassan and thank you very much to everyone. As Executive Vice-President, I support the President in his duties. One of the many files he has entrusted to me is the anti-racism*

question, a subject that is important in many organizations, not only in unions but in government agencies and the private sector. We are interested in the situation in the federal government, but also in other bodies to look out for workers' interests throughout Canada.

I am so very proud of the good work that is accomplished by our numerous committees and working groups, which Hassan just referred to, which inform the discussions at the Canadian Council, where all the heads of the affiliated unions sit. And especially I'm very proud of the work that we're accomplishing, especially over the past six months with this crisis/pandemic. It's just amazing what the CLC has been able to do, and that we are continuing and going to continue to do in the coming months as we deal with this crisis.

I'm really looking forward to meeting and helping to find the solutions to challenges that the current crisis is bringing for all workers.

(French part translated into English from 21:02 to 21:43) Finally, as a federal public servant, my home based continues to be Statistics Canada. As a former member of the Translators and Interpreters Group, I am particularly aware of the challenges faced by our workers in the Language Sector.

I'm looking forward to your questions and the discussion, and once again I'd like to thank your president, Greg Phillips, and your entire Executive at CAPE for having us here today. Merci!

G. Phillips: Thank you, Larry and Hassan, for that interesting presentation. We received some questions through email beforehand: What we did at the membership budget meeting. Our Director of Communications, Katia, read the questions out, which she'll do now and then we'll ask either yourself or Mr. Yussuff to answer the question.

Q&A Period (moderated by K. Thériault)

Question 1: How would our dues and dues structure decisions be affected by joining the CLC?

G. Phillips: Over the past couple of years we've had a surplus. This year, those of you who attended the membership budget meeting saw that we had about a \$2.9 million surplus this fiscal year. So, we kind of figure that we will be able to shuffle our budget around for next year. By the time this passes, we would cover the cost through probably our contingency funds for the remainder of this year; we'd have to look at it. We would then have to re-jig our budget for next year to include the cost. I can be corrected if I'm wrong but the cost I believe is 75 cents a member. It's hard to say what's our exact number but we're sitting at maybe 18 to 19,000 members, maybe a little bit more. So, we're looking at between \$160K and \$170K a year in order to join the CLC. So, after doing the budget exercise next year,

we'd have to see where we are financially and what kind of an impact that would have, but traditionally, we have large surpluses every year so I think we would just simply re-jig our budget to include those amounts.

Question 2: What measures are in place to ensure that small unions have a voice in setting the direction of the CLC? G. Phillips also prefaced by asking: With CAPE sitting at 19,000 members, would we be considered a small one or what size would we be within the Congress?

L. Rousseau: So, effectively, CAPE would be considered a small union, but as Hassan had mentioned in his presentation, we have two seats on the executive for small unions, as well as the fact that the CAPE President would be sitting on the Council. This is where the discussions take place and this is where we come together when we're coming to either consensus or coming to a decision. But definitely, if you look at unions such as ACFO and PIPSC, very active and very much their voices are heard. As Hassan mentioned, the public-sector voices are very much there. CAPE would definitely be part and your voices would be heard and we'd be looking forward to hearing what the membership of CAPE wants to say and share and seeing that shared amongst the wider labour movement.

Question 3: What concrete benefits will being a member of the CLC bring to the members of CAPE that CAPE could not or is not currently delivering to its members? In other words, concretely, what is the gap that the CLC would fill in terms of existing or future CAPE members' needs?

G. Phillips: Not being a member of the CLC, it's hard for us to exactly know the details but we've talked to other unions, we talked to ACFO and we talked to PIPSC and we have some points from here. So, what we see in terms of benefits of joining the CLC would be:

- Access to training and broad union knowledge. Because there are so many unions involved in the CLC, we'd benefit from the expertise from a lot of our "brothers and sisters" in other unions but we'd have access to a vast knowledge-base there. There's a lot of experience that they've gone through and we would be able to access that. And the CLC has a lot of training that we would have access to.
- Participation in nation-wide assemblies and conventions where our voice would be heard and we would have the chance to provide our input and guide the labour movement in Canada.
- Greater support to challenge unfavorable government decisions such as layoffs or tax on our pension.
- Having the CLC as an ally and having our back when there are government decisions that would attack public servants, such as WFA situations or if our pensions were under attack. I'm sure the CLC would have our back on that.
- An opportunity for CAPE to contribute its analytical expertise to the broader Canadian labour movement and community. We have a unique background with our

membership and/or knowledge, and greater political leverage acquired from being part of the labour community.

- What ACFO has sent to us recently is political access; the CLC President and senior leadership have extensive networks on the Hill and ACFO has been able to get meetings with their help that would have been a lot trickier if they tried to secure access to those political leaders on their own.
- Resources and network: The CLC has a large research team and they host tables for researchers, communications folks, etc. where everyone can share intel and collaborate on initiatives. ACFO considers it useful for building a union that is more effective to its members.
- Campaign opportunities: the CLC hosts an annual Lobby Day on the Hill, which allows activist union member to get some training on government relations and the chance to meet and lobby members of Parliament. They also produce campaigns on major issues like pharmacare, childcare, wage supports that union members can participate in.

So that is what's been prepared for me as some of the pros for joining the CLC. I'll let Hassan or Larry also contribute if they know of other things that might be of concrete benefit to CAPE and its membership.

H. Yussuff: In regard to the work we do on the Hill, that's one part of it. The reason for doing the lobbying is to bring parliamentarians issues that directly affect our members, but equally is to remind them that we want to see action on these issues on a day-to-day basis. In addition to that, there are many briefs that we provide to Government almost on a daily basis on a variety of things that the Government are engaging the Congress with, and what we try to do, of course, is to bring all of the members of the CLC to partake in that work so for those who work in the public sector and the federal public sector are directly involved with private member sectors, so the full force of the Congress is engaged in this work to a large extent.

Right now, the Government has been going through a process of updating *Labour Code*, part 3, as an example. We have been working for the last two years to ensure that every piece of that work we're helping to shape, but more importantly, is to ensure we can influence what the Government is going to do. This is going to determine how workers are going to be treated in the federal jurisdiction, but equally, for instance home work, the right to disconnect, the right to deal with harassment, all of these things have been part and parcel of that work and we need to engage in that level.

Also, at the provincial level, we work with our federation labour to provide them the support to ensure that provincial laws are equally mirroring to a large extent with what we do at the national level. The strengthened work that we're doing so it's not seen in isolation at the federal level from work we're doing at the provincial level.

Question 4: I note that there does not seem to be an office and CLC representation in Quebec. Is that the case and, if so, is that a short-term project?

H. Yussuff: Back in 1992, after we had our convention in Vancouver, Quebec at the time the FTQ had a candidate. That candidate did not win the election but Jean-Claude Perrot, of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, won the position of Vice-President. After that, the FTQ felt that they needed to change the relationship going forward with the Congress. So, what was developed back in 1992 was the Quebec protocol of what the relationship's going to be. And what that protocol basically says is that the FTQ will speak for workers in Quebec and the CLC will transfer an amount of money equal to the membership that's in Quebec that's affiliated to the CLC. Equally the FTQ would work with the Congress and they no longer are requiring to have a particular seat reserved for Quebec that's part of the four seats for the officers today. The FTQ and the Quebec members equally participate in our convention, our policy decisions, our Canadian Council and what have you because they have representation for those affiliates in Quebec, but they no longer require to have a seat and, of course, the Quebec protocol today governs the relationship with the FTQ and our members in Quebec going forward.

Question 5: Can you talk about solidarity among unions and how that could benefit all union members, maybe with reference to the larger threats to the union movement such as large multi-national corporations and conservative parties becoming increasingly radical?

H. Yussuff: Thank you very much for your question. Our solidarity is our strength. The three million plus members across this country recognize that, when we stand together even for those affiliates, even though they belong to the Congress, we recognize we've got to stand with all workers when they're under attack, either by employers or by government across the country. We consistently bring that membership to be in solidarity with each other to ensure that regardless of what part of the country, governments that are reported as attacking workers, we are going to stand together.

I'll give you two examples. Recently you might see in Alberta, the Alberta Government table will have far-reaching implications for the labour movement based on restrictions how they can spend their dues, and more importantly, how they collect their dues from their membership across Alberta. We know that that legislation is going to be very corrosive as we've seen under this Harper administration on 57. We recognize fundamentally the only way we're going to defeat that legislation is to work together in solidarity but equally ensure we have a legal strategy moving forward as to how we're going to defend workers. The last point I would make is, of course, most recently, as you know, Unifor had a terrible strike out in Saskatchewan with their refineries. Even though Unifor hasn't been an affiliate of the Congress, we felt that as a labour movement, we should show our solidarity because the threat that they faced from that is fundamental to the movement, we went out there and joined them in their solidarity efforts to ensure that the Governments need to know that we're going to stand strongly with workers who are under attack by an employer and, to a large extent, by the provincial government. We show our solidarity for the workers,

equally recognizing that's what the employers and government need to understand. No matter where the struggle is across the country, we will come together as a movement to defend each other, public and private equally, in our sectors across this country.

Question 6: How can government unions show support for private-sector unions? After years of wage stagnation, government workers now sometimes make more than their private-sector counterparts. How can we lift up low-waged workers?

H. Yussuff: We've been advocating for the longest time: How do we grow the industrial sector of this country; how do we have an industrial policy that's going to continue to keep these good jobs but also expand these good jobs in the country? We recognize fundamentally that we have an unequal equilibrium in the country today. Private-sector union membership is anywhere between 18-19%, depending on the measurements and what time you're taking this. And we know we got to grow that. So, whenever our private-sector workers are dealing with issues that are fundamentally about the changing nature of economy, we're continually arguing as to how do we grow the private sector but also, how do we have an industrial strategy that allows those unions who historically have been the backbone of our movement to continue to be there. We recognize fundamentally that we got to work together. If we're going to have a strong public sector as we do in this country, we also need a strong private sector, because those jobs are fundamental, of course, to the social programs and the things that governments do across this country. Fundamentally, we need to have our national government develop an industrial policy that's going to grow the private sector. Equally, we need to have good laws that allow the private sector to continue to unionize and grow their membership across this country. The only way we can do that is if we work in solidarity with each other but, equally, try to influence government policy on a day-to-day basis across this country at the provincial level but also at the federal level.

L. Rousseau: *(French part translated into English from 40:37 to 41:35) I may want to add very quickly to this question. We must remember that in the lower-paid positions in the private sector, we're talking about people who are on the front line. We recently saw in the COVID-19 situation that there are often workers of colour. We now know that 1/5 people and soon 1/4 people in Canada's population are persons of colour. It's very important in our work to ensure the rights and benefits of these employees.*

Question 7: Can you talk about the influence you have with governments as a representative of so many different unions. It seems that you've had access to the Trudeau government that some other organizations or individual unions haven't had.

H. Yussuff: This is an evolutionary challenge, as you know. Governments come and go; some are very hostile to the labour movement and some are more open. When the Government was elected back in 2015, we made a decision obviously: we wanted to engage the Government, we wanted to see some policy reversal based on the previous government

attacking the labour movement. And at that time, the Prime Minister came to speak and said: "I want to work with the CLC in a collaborative fashion". What we've done ever since is to try to do that and maintain that relationship. Also, it's not just with the Prime Minister, but it's also with the Minister, who's equally, of course, honest and integral to our own union as a labour movement. We recognize fundamentally this is always going to be a challenge, but when there's an extended hand, work in collaboration and what we've done ever since 2015, we've done that and continue to do that.

One of the reasons we need to take advantage of this opportunity is to recognize that this reality can change. As you know, political parties go through many changes and more importantly, we also have to be vigilant to ensure that we are not going to be the source of their attack and what we've seen for almost 10 years under the Harper government. But at the same time, we also need to remain vigilant in our efforts to defend our movement right across this country in terms of our relationship. The federal government is one example but, equally, I've always said I will work with any government that wants to work with us to advance the interest of working people. But if they treat us with hostility, we are going to push back and defend the interest of our members. The reality is elections do end up shaping our movement but it also shapes the society in which we're trying, of course, to build a better future for people.

So constantly, we need to be engaged; I think we spend a lot of time and effort as a labour movement trying to influence what the Government is doing, but equally, trying to make sure we're defending the interest of our members as we're engaging in their policy decisions going forward.

Question 8: How has the CLC adjusted its business following the disaffiliation of Unifor to ensure long-term sustainability?

H. Yussuff: We're a voluntary organization; nobody has to belong to the CLC. We have some days something close to 60 affiliates, or maybe a bit less depending on when you do the measurement. Unifor chose to leave the Congress because they didn't agree with our policies in regard to how they interact with other affiliates. We feel that's a fundamental violation of our solidarity but, equally, our constitution. Since they've left, their per capita was a little over \$2 million when they left the Congress but, at the end of the day, we recognize that we have to take that into consideration. We were able to continue to govern our organization and do the things that we're doing on behalf of our members because we're no longer dependent on one organization. Our per capita payment is based on everybody paying 75 cents per member per month. When we build our budget, it's not budgeted on the last fees that we get from our affiliates; we built in a cushion so when we have challenges like this with Unifor or others, we recognize fundamentally that we should be able to operate the organization. Despite the fact that they have left, we were able to continue to do all the things and even more so despite the fact that Unifor took over \$2 million per capita when they left.

What we have recognized fundamentally is what the strength as an organization is all about. Even though we'd like to see Unifor come back to the Congress and be part of our family, there has to be a recognition that our constitution is fundamental to our solidarity. We're not simply saying that we're a rigid organization; the organization can change and we continue to change over time but the affiliates need to recognize that they need to abide by the constitution and it's fundamental to our solidarity. As you can see, we continue to operate despite the pandemic while we will face more challenges with loss of membership because of what's going on right now with the pandemic. We still have enough cushion in our budget to continue to manage the affairs of the Congress and continue to represent our members across the country as we move forward. But this is the strength of the CLC: it's how we take the per capita and use it in an effective way and recognizing there will be lows in our finances but we also need to manage that in a very diligent and effective way to ensure we're going to carry out the responsibilities on behalf of all the members, not just those that are paying per capita when they have the capacity to do so.

Last question: What would joining the CLC mean in practical terms? How would it affect our association dues, our benefits? For example: sick, vacation, medical and family leave, our Phoenix-related efforts, for example, compensation, and other components?

H. Yussuff: I think joining the CLC would strengthen what you're already doing and make it that much stronger. Your collective bargaining is between you and the government, but you would be able to use the CLC as your arm to help you in whatever way you feel it's necessary. We don't interfere in your relationship; we assist you in your relationship with government to send the message or we work with you in a way to ensure the government is addressing your bargaining needs, but also to support you in whatever way we can. As you know, the majority of federal public-sector unions already belong to the Congress. There's strength in that relationship to strengthen your efforts in CAPE to continue.

In terms of things you have in your collective agreements, whether it's sick pay or whatever measures that you have in your collective agreement, that will not change in any way. Of course, what will change is the strength and support; that will send a message to the federal government that we're one larger family now and CAPE is part of that family. Nor can they take advantage of you or disregard you in any shape or way because, if they do that, they will have to deal with the entire CLC family. With the relationship we have, you'll use that to strengthen your efforts to, of course, bargain with the government but also to represent yourselves with the government.

We do a lot of outreach and support for our affiliates when we're asked to do so and we work with them to support their best efforts to ensure whatever it is that their membership has managed you to do. We can help you achieve those objectives by using our voice and using our influence to help you ensure you can do that. More importantly, you become a part of this big family. The fact that you have not joined the Congress in all the years that you've existed, you have been a member of our family regardless. As you know you may have been a distant cousin, but you're still a cousin. We would love to have you. As an

integral part of the family, you're a cousin, so that you're at the table shaping the discussions that we're having. We're not unique. We are, of course, an evolving organization and you will help shape the organization through the policy discussions we have, through your President having a seat on our Executive, but you're also able to participate in all the structures we have in the Congress. We're not unique in that way; we're truly democratic. I quite often speak publicly and say: "We're the largest democratic organization in this country". There are no other organization that can claim to have the base that we have as an organization, but equally the membership we have.

This Labour Day, we've launched an important campaign to basically say as the Government will look to reset Parliament for the new Throne Speech, we want to ensure that the concerns of the working people are heard. What we said is that COVID has shown that there are some cracks in the system in many ways. It also should show the strength in the system because it was the Public Service that came together and said, "we can get benefit and put together a system that delivers CERB cheques to Canadians within three weeks" that kept this country going but at the same time we recognize the country has got some major cracks. So, how do we fix those cracks going forward? We think the Government needs to make some strategic investments as they go forward. How can we create jobs that are going to boost the economy that are going to get jobs for the two million people who are currently unemployed? Over 22% of them are young people. How do we fix the healthcare system that has some major flaws both in terms of how we take care of the seniors or we can expand the healthcare system to include national pharmacare so we're not totally dependent on what happened at the bargaining table when we're going to get medication for those millions of Canadians who don't have access to medication? How do we fix the EI system that has shown to be not ready to deal with the cracks in terms of the system in getting benefits to people? How do we improve it? How do we bring in a national child care system that no longer disadvantages women in this country who are forced to take responsibility for children but equally now take responsibility for family members that are in need of help? We launched a campaign to influence the Throne Speech and, of course, to let the Government know we have a vision. We also have an agenda, and that's our three million plus members, that allows us to do that in that campaign.

Equally you will be part of that effort and, more importantly, play an active role in that moving forward. So, in that regard, I think that the things that you're doing will continue but, equally, we'll be able to strengthen that by working side-by-side with you and supporting you in whatever way we can. Based on the request of your President and your national leadership as well, we can assist you, but equally support you to make sure your agenda is successful in how you're dealing with government in regard to your bargaining, but anything else that may come forward that you think we can be of assistance for going forward to the end of the day.

G. Phillips: Thank you very much, Mr. Yussuff. So, I would like to again apologize to everybody for the glitch that we've had with interpretation today. It was our goal to have interpretation today. That's why we've set it up with three different lines, but unfortunately there was a glitch that prevented that. So, I'll just remind everybody that we are going to

have a transcript of this session. There will be an English transcript and there will be a French transcript. Up until the November vote, we will be accepting more questions. The email address should you have more question is: info@acep-cape.ca. We will endeavour to write back to everybody. The CLC is being very generous with us through Joel Duff in helping us respond to some of the questions we get in. We will be updating our website and just so everybody knows, the new CAPE website went live today, so I encourage everybody to go and check out the new CAPE website. It's up! It might take some time to populate. You might still see the old CAPE website for a little while, but the brand new one is up today. We've gone live and we will be updating it.

I'd just like to highlight that of the four, PSAC, the largest federal public service union, is a member of the CLC; PIPSC, which is the second largest public service union, is a member of the CLC; ACFO, which is about a third our size and the fourth largest is also affiliated with the CLC. As Mr. Yussuff has pointed out, we kind of stand out in the fact that we're not a member of the CLC. That doesn't necessarily mean that we have to be, but not being affiliated with the CLC, we do stand out as an outlier.

So, respecting everybody's lunchtime, I want to thank everybody and I'm going to see if Mr. Yussuff and Larry are available for some final words and if participants want to stay around for the final words, you're more than free to. But I want to respect the fact that your lunch is almost over. It's 12:57, so those of you who need to leave can leave. Then I will also ask Howard to see if he has anything to say. I've kind of been answering questions where I should have delegated it to Howard to answer. Sorry to Howard, but it's just my nature; when I know the answer, I like to jump in. Again it's info@acep-cape.ca to send your questions. We will get the transcript out ASAP. In the meantime, take a look at our brand-new website. It's pretty nice.

So, I'm going to turn it over to you, Mr. Yussuff and Larry Rousseau, if you have any final words and then we'll let Howard have the last word.

H. Yussuff: Let me thank you for your generous opportunity for us to present here today, but equally, thank Howard for the hard work on behalf of your board. We'd obviously be delighted to welcome you as part of our family, but equally, of course, whatever we can do to continue to assist and support you to join the Congress, we welcome it. This is an historical occasion for us to present, and equally, an opportunity to speak today. As you know, we are very transparent in our organization and, more importantly, if you're part of this family that we call the Canadian Labour Congress, you will also be shaping the direction as to where we're going as an organization, but equally, how you can strengthen work that we're doing. We'd be honoured to take any other questions that you may have come across in this session and provide you whatever answer. First of all, thank you so much for the time and thank you, Howard, for the hard work you did in allowing this opportunity for us to present before you today. We look forward to you joining us. Please stay safe because we look forward to continue working with you in the near future.

L. Rousseau: *(French part translated into English from 57:32 to 58:03) I simply want to say a big thank you to CAPE for your invitation. It's greatly appreciated. We are honoured and very proud to be here. I'm a proud federal public servant and I assure you that you are welcome to join us if that's your decision. I wish you good luck with your AGM later this year in the fall. Have a good day.*

H. Delnick: I would just like to express my thanks to Mr. Yussuff and Mr. Rousseau. Nice to meet you, Mr. Yussuff, and Mr. Rousseau, nice to see you again. Thank you so much for taking the time to address the membership. We look forward to future communication. Have a great day!

H. Yussuff: Thanks, my friends. All the best and take care!

G. Phillips: Thank you, everybody, and thank you for participating in today's session.

End of transcript