

POLICY 918

CEP ANTI-RACISM POLICY Unlearning Racism

The Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada is leading the way in becoming a more inclusive union because of our progressive change and action on equality issues demonstrated at the '98 Convention when we unanimously passed the **"Equality Action Plan"**. This, coupled with our previous policies on Human Rights, Employment Equity, Pay Equity and Anti-Harassment, is evidence of our deep commitment to equality.

Our Union recognizes that racism is systemic in Canadian Society. We hear it when references to Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour are often racist, learned in our schools by the absence of the contributions of Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour in the curriculum, and perpetuated by negative media images in print and broadcast. As reported in the **Canadian Labour Congress Report, Challenging Racism: Going Beyond Recommendations**, "In a study of visible minority and Native Canadian inclusion on CBC and CTV newscasts it was concluded that "during more than four weeks of national news programs, only 20 out of 725 interviews solicited the opinions of non-Whites for subjects not specifically about people or stories from their communities".

Racism is more than obvious racially motivated acts such as violence, segregation or the blatant denials of human rights. It is embedded in the dominant culture and social institutions in a way that is so pervasive that it is often invisible.

Racism, like all forms of discrimination, hurts everyone, whether or not we are members of the target groups. It affects the perception of the world of those who knowingly or unknowingly carries around the baggage of racist attitudes or stereotypes which make them prejudice individuals and situations. These perceptions lead to behaviours that validate and propagate racism. Racism affects the everyday reality of Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour at work, at home and in their communities.

Racism causes pain and humiliation and has far-reaching consequences. Racism is about denying the full humanity of groups of people—those inalienable rights that are conferred on all human beings.

In order to unlearn racism we must first understand what it is, what sustains it and how it is used to divide working people and society as a whole. When workers begin the process of unlearning racism, we strengthen solidarity among working people. We are then a step further in reaching justice and equity for all working people.

PRINCIPLES

CEP is committed to increasing awareness and appreciation for the racial, cultural, and religious diversity of its' membership.

CEP is committed to the elimination of racism and all forms of discrimination by identifying and eliminating any barriers that preclude Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour from full participation in the union, workplace and in society.

CEP's policies, procedures and relationships with staff, members and the communities, in which we work and live, will reflect our commitment to the principles of equity.

CEP will not tolerate or condone any acts of systemic or overt racism within our union whether intentional or not.

IMPLEMENTATION

CEP will develop and provide anti-racism training for the leadership of the National Executive Board and Local Unions and staff.

CEP will review and revise practices, policies and procedures to be consistent with equity principles in order to promote full participation of Aboriginal Workers and Workers of Colour in CEP.

CEP through the implementation of Policy 913 is developing networks through a database of CEP members attending equity caucuses at CEP events who self identify.

CEP has established a National Equity Committee to make recommendations to advance issues of equity within the union. This work will include working with the Education Director to integrate anti-racism tools and analysis within existing CEP courses. An anti-harassment course has been developed and will contain an anti-racism component. This course can be offered to all Locals in Canada.

**CEP Executive Board
November 7, 2002**

**Board meeting
June 12, 2008**