



Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alliance de la Fonction publique du Canada

May Day 2006



The Truth About the **EKATI DIAMOND MINE STRIKE**

BHP Billiton's Actions Demonstrate Why CANADA NEEDS ANTI-SCAB LEGISLATION

PSAC and its Component, Union of Northern Workers request your help to demand that Multinational Corporations respect Canadian and Northern values. 400 members of PSAC/UNW Diamond Workers Local X3050 went on strike April 7th to achieve a fair first collective agreement. In an unprecedented move, mine owner BHP Billiton has demanded that the Union hold another representational vote before they will come back to the bargaining table. PSAC was certified as the bargaining agent in June 2004 and BHP is attempting to bust the Union through its despicable use of SCABS.

A **HARDSHIP FUND** has been established for striking Diamond Workers and their Families. Help Diamond Workers and their Families stand up for Canadian and Northern values by supporting their fight against the Worlds largest resource company!

Ekati Diamond Mine:

Canada's first and largest diamond mine, Ekati is located 300 km northeast of Yellowknife and 200 km south of the Artic circle. BHP Billiton is a large multinational corporation based in Australia and made profits of \$7.5 billion worldwide in 2005. The Ekati mine is a remote site and workers are flown into and out of the mine. BHP has hired an outside security force called **AFI – International**, an organization that specializes in recruiting replacement workers and conducting surveillance. Complaints have been filed with the RCMP alleging that these BHP security representatives are intimidating and harassing striking union workers and their families, as well as, union representatives. This is the same security company that Telus used during their strike with the Telecommunications Workers Union.

Bargaining Issues

The key issues in the strike are job security, seniority, vacation and wages. The employer refuses to agree to layoffs by seniority, or to offer assurances preventing contracting out.

Company email says "tone down" statements about "highly profitable" business

In a confidential email dated April 7, 2004, after PSAC organized Ekati workers to join the union, BHP Billiton Business Improvement Manager Grant Farrows wrote to the Ekati Management Team and stated: *"I suggest we start to tone down the 'Diamonds is a highly profitable business for BHP Billiton...' part of the message as this could be used against us in future negotiations with PSAC, and government agencies, NGO's, etc...It makes it tougher to negotiate tighter unit rates, workplace agreements, reduced regulatory and monitoring programs, etc...on our terms when people keep hearing how deep our pockets are."*

Bargaining in Bad Faith Complaint

On April 13, 2006, PSAC filed an 88 page bargaining in bad faith complaint with the Canada Industrial Relations Board. Among other things, the complaint alleges that during federal mediation talks, the Employer attempted to renegotiate terms and conditions already agreed upon and has refused to continue bargaining until the union first holds a representational vote. While claiming publicly they will not use scabs or replacement workers, BHP introduced language at mediation to protect replacement (SCAB) workers.

BHP Billiton admits 36% drop in diamond production

BHP's credibility shrinks dramatically along with admitted 36% drop in diamond production at Ekati mine. On April 26, 2006, BHP released a production report confirming significant drop in production. This report contradicts statements made by BHP on April 21, 2006, where company claimed "full production" at Ekati and "best production week since August 2005."

Hardship Fund Donations

Donations to the Hardship Fund should be made to the UNW and sent to the PSAC Yellowknife Regional Office, 4916 - 49th Street, P.O. Box 637, Yellowknife, NT, X1A 2N5. Please ensure that all donations reference Local X3050. For more information and press releases, visit websites: www.psacnorth.com or www.unw.ca or call 1-800-661-0870.

Thank you very much for your Support and Solidarity!