

## **NUPGE appeals to Harper to sign Workers' Bill of Rights**

**February 17, 2006**

Circulated to all major political party leaders and candidates during the recent election campaign, the document declares that all workers have the freedom to form unions and to determine wages and working conditions through collective bargaining without interference by government.

Drawn up by NUPGE and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW Canada), the Workers' Bill of Rights document was signed during the campaign by all national leaders except Harper. The two unions represent well over half a million Canadian workers in both the public and private sector.

Now that the campaign has ended and Harper and his Conservative Party have taken over the government of Canada, NUPGE President James Clancy is urging Harper to take another look at the bill and its contents. "Despite sending you a second letter during the election campaign reminding you of our Workers' Bill of Rights and asking you to sign it on behalf of the Conservative Party, we did not get a reply from you or any Conservative Party officials," Clancy notes in his latest letter to Harper.

"You were the only federal leader who failed to sign the Workers' Bill of Rights. Liberal Leader Paul Martin, Bloc Quebecois Leader Gilles Duceppe, NDP Leader Jack Layton and Green Party Leader Jim Harris all chose to sign the document on behalf of their parties," he notes.

"I am hopeful that your failure of not yet acknowledging our request that you support and sign the Workers' Bill of Rights was an oversight by your staff during the hectic period of an election campaign and not a reflection of any lack of commitment that you or your Party have regarding workers' rights.

"I therefore once again ask you to pledge your support of the attached Workers' Bill of Rights – this time as Prime Minister of Canada. Our union would view your signature on this important document as a very clear statement that our new federal government under your leadership will stand up for workers' rights here in Canada and internationally."