Canadian unions celebrate defeat of C-377, international attacks against unions intensify

Teula Fuatia, rabble.ca, January 13 2016

Canada's unions celebrate their first victory -- the elimination of the Harper government's union-reporting laws -- their counterparts in the U.S. and U.K. are engaged in similar battles for workers' rights.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has announced that his government will do away with the reporting rules required by Bill C-377. This legislation would have forced unions to declare any transactions made over $5,000, all salaries totaling more than $100,000 and details of all political activities starting in 2016.

While the failure of C-377 to make it to the New Year was worth toasting, the fight for workers' rights -- both at home and in the U.S. and the UK -- is long from over.

Charles Smith, assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Saskatchewan, said unions in all three countries are facing similar challenges in the battle to sustain workers' rights.

"C-377 was a direct way of saying: 'the internal affairs of a union are not the internal affairs of the union,'" says the labour union and public policy expert. "It's pretty clear that [C-377] was a way to...use the state to interfere in the affairs of labour unions, in democratic organizations [and] highlight the type of political work they do."

A bill proposing amendments to union laws in the U.K., currently being debated in the British Parliament, has many similarities to C-377. Proposed by David Cameron's Conservatives, the Trade Union Bill -- coined as the biggest shake-up in Britain's industrial legislation in 30 years -- would make it harder for workers to strike if passed.

The bill also proposes changes to the process around which union members can pay into their union's political fund, by replacing the current political levy opt-out system with an opt-in written-requirement for members.

According to a report in *The Guardian*, the effects of such a requirement would cost the British Labour Party -- which relies on unions for about a third of its funding -- up to £6 million in annual income.

The motivation behind the Tory's Trade Union Bill was similar to what propelled C-377, says Smith.

"[Unions are] probably the best financed social movement on the centre left," says Smith, who added that this is true in all three countries.

"They have a chain of income from their members… and it's no secret that in these countries, the unions funnel some of that money into the political movement. They have done that forever. And it's always been a thorn in the side of Conservative parties that they have this well funded opposition," he says.

In the U.S., there is a case before the Supreme Court involving a challenge by 10 non-union California public school teachers demanding an end to mandatory union dues. At issue is legislation that requires non-union workers to pay fees equivalent to union dues in about 50 per cent of states in the U.S., including California.

The precedent at the centre of the case is based on a 1977 Supreme Court ruling that found unions were entitled to collect fees from non-union workers as long as no money was spent on political activities.

U.S. unions have warned that overturning the ruling and enabling non-union workers to stop paying fees equivalent to union dues would threaten funding to public sector unions by millions of dollars. This would dramatically decrease their political clout.

"It's the same type of argument [as C-377 and the Trade Union Bill], that individual union dues are being used for political purposes against the will of the individual," says Smith.

"It's a cost argument. The right-wing supporters will say: 'we're not against the cost of bargaining -- that ship has sailed. But we're against...union dues being used for other purposes.'"

However, this scenario is a distortion, and unions must think "strategically" about combating, he says.

"Just imagine the scenario of a new teacher's union organized for better education, so it supports a political party that wants more education dollars spent in the classroom.

"How do you separate that from a bargaining issue? You can't," says Smith.

Supreme Court seeks compromise to allow doctor-assisted death

Sean Fine, The Globe and Mail, January 11 2016

In an extraordinary hearing on Monday, judges on the Supreme Court of Canada said there may be ways to permit a doctor-assisted death for grievously suffering individuals beginning next month, while also allowing the federal government the extra time it is requesting before the Criminal Code ban on assisted dying is lifted.

One such compromise solution would be to let individuals who are suffering unbearably apply to a judge for approval, thus clearing the way for a doctor to help end that life without fear of being criminally charged.

The federal government is asking the court to do something it has rarely done before – grant an extra six months on top of the 12 months already allowed before its ruling takes effect.

That request puts the Supreme Court in a corner. Having declared last year that Canadians have the constitutional right to escape unendurable suffering, the court is being asked to make them endure it a little longer. Somewhat in the manner of abortion, for which there is no criminal law, the matter could simply be left to doctors, patients and medical regulatory bodies. However, the federal Liberal government says it intends to legislate. Among the provinces, only Quebec has a law setting out how medical aid in dying works.

“We’re talking about the line between killing and not killing, and Parliament has difficult choices,” federal lawyer Robert Frater told the court. The government says it needs the extra time to develop a framework with the provinces for a system in which grievously suffering people can apply for a doctor-assisted death.

Justice Rosalie Abella asked Mr. Frater whether individuals could go to a judge for approval during an extension in which the right to an assisted death would not yet be in effect. Mr. Frater said no, adding that the court's ruling last year contemplated a carefully designed and monitored scheme, not one overseen by judges. Justice Abella then asked what harm would be caused by allowing the right to take effect immediately. Mr. Frater said it was unclear whether doctors would participate; Justice Abella replied that the court has already ruled they are not required to do so.

When asked about Quebec's law, Mr. Frater said the federal government does not object to it being in effect during the six-month extension.

Then Justice Michael Moldaver asked if Parliament could simply assume that the Quebec law, which took effect last month, would be in force in the rest of Canada during an extension. Mr. Frater told Justice Moldaver the legislative process must be allowed to take its course federally.

"It's a new Parliament," he said, taking aim at a criticism that hung over the hearing, that Ottawa has dragged its feet. "And the democratic process is slow." The ruling was released on Feb. 6, 2015, and the Conservative government did not draft new legislation before the election that brought the Liberals to power in October. The Trudeau government has created a parliamentary committee with instructions to report by Feb. 26.

Lawyer Joseph Arvay, speaking against an extension, told the court that no harm would be caused by letting the right to an assisted death take effect next month. (Mr. Arvay represented the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association and Lee Carter, the woman who brought the initial court challenge. Her 89-year-old mother, Kathleen, had the degenerative disease spinal stenosis, and went to Switzerland for an assisted death in 2010.) Justice Moldaver replied bluntly that harmlessness could not be taken for granted: Parliament "might want to put in measures that ensure as far as possible that we are not killing people who really ought not to be killed."

Underlying that exchange was the question of the court's role in Canada, and how deferential judges should be to Parliament. When the Supreme Court unanimously declared that the right exists – saying that the sanctity of life includes the passage into death – it overturned its own 1993 ruling in a case brought by a woman dying of ALS, and rejected the federal government's position that vulnerable people would be at risk of being forced into an unwanted death. But legal scholars say the court still managed to defer to Parliament's lawmaking authority by allowing a year to craft the rules.

Justice Russell Brown, an outspoken conservative who was prime minister Stephen Harper's final appointment to the court in July, asked Mr. Frater if the government really needs the court

to declare an extension: “Can’t the [Justice] Minister ask Parliament for a suspension by way of override?” (The Constitution has an override provision that lets a government opt out of a particular ruling.) Mr. Frater replied that the government has said it would respect the court’s ruling, but he added that it was certainly possible.

The court reserved its decision.

Malliha Wilson, a lawyer representing the Ontario government, which supported the request for an extension, said key issues are unresolved, such as whether a “mature minor” can qualify, and whether a request for an assisted death should be respected even if it is given 20 years ahead of a diagnosis, and the person is no longer able to consent.

La Cour suprême accorde un délai de quatre mois à Ottawa

Hélène Buzzetti, Le Devoir, le 16 janvier 2016

La Cour suprême du Canada a accédé en partie à la demande d’Ottawa vendredi en prolongeant encore le délai avant que l’aide médicale à mourir ne soit légale au pays. Mais alors que le gouvernement fédéral réclamait six mois de sursis, il n’en obtient que quatre. Et d’ici le 6 juin, des malades qui voudront mettre fin à leurs jours pourront s’adresser à un tribunal pour obtenir une exemption. Au Québec, la loi provinciale continuera de s’appliquer.

En février dernier, la Cour suprême a invalidé deux articles du Code criminel, soit celui prescrivant que *« nul n’a le droit de consentir à ce que la mort lui soit infligée »* et celui rendant passible d’une peine de quatorze ans de prison quiconque *« aide quelqu’un à se donner la mort »*. Les juges avaient accordé un sursis de douze mois avant que le jugement Carter ne s’applique. Ottawa demandait que ce sursis soit prolongé de six mois, jusqu’en août prochain, question de lui donner le temps de rédiger une loi encadrant l’aide médicale à mourir.

La Cour accepte, mais seulement à cause des circonstances politiques exceptionnelles.

« Suspendre la prise d’effet de la déclaration d’invalidité constitutionnelle d’une loi est une mesure extraordinaire, car elle a pour effet de maintenir en vigueur une loi inconstitutionnelle », rappellent les cinq juges de la majorité, dont font partie les trois juges québécois. *« Proroger*

une telle suspension pose encore plus problème. […] *L'existence de circonstances exceptionnelles doit être démontrée. »*

Selon les juges, la suspension des travaux parlementaires pour cause d'élection *« constitue une circonstance de ce genre. Le Parlement a été dissous le 2 août 2015 et a repris officiellement ses travaux le 3 décembre de la même année. Cet intermède de quatre mois justifie de proroger la suspension* […]*, mais seulement pour une période de quatre mois ».*

Des exemptions… même au Québec?

Ces mêmes cinq juges ont quand même entendu le cri du coeur des malades qui ne veulent souffrir davantage. Ils tranchent donc que pendant les quatre mois de sursis, les malades qui désireront mourir pourront s'adresser à la Cour supérieure de leur province pour obtenir une dérogation. *« Nous ne voyons pas la nécessité de prolonger injustement la souffrance de ceux qui satisfont aux critères clairs que la Cour a énoncés dans Carter. »*

Ces exemptions individuelles sont accordées par souci d'équité, note la Cour. En effet, la majorité accorde au Québec l'exemption générale qu'il réclamait à un éventuel sursis, avec pour effet qu'en territoire québécois, la Loi concernant les soins de fin de vie (LCSFV) continuera de s'appliquer. Mais attention ! prennent la peine d'écrire les juges. Cela *« ne doit pas être interprété comme l'expression d'un quelconque point de vue quant à la validité de la LCSFV »*.

En effet, la loi québécoise pourrait être contestée devant les tribunaux, car elle est beaucoup plus restrictive que ce que prévoit le jugement Carter. Au Québec, seuls les patients en fin de vie sont admissibles à l'aide à mourir, alors que la Cour a statué que tout malade subissant des douleurs intolérables et irrémédiables devrait y avoir accès, que sa mort soit imminente ou pas.

D'ailleurs, le constitutionnaliste et ex-ministre Benoît Pelletier, qui a siégé sur un panel fédéral sur le sujet en 2015, estime que des malades québécois qui ne se qualifieraient pas en vertu de la LCSFV pourraient, d'ici le 6 juin, s'adresser à la Cour supérieure pour obtenir quand même de l'aide médicale à mourir en vertu de ces exemptions individuelles désormais autorisées. *« C'est*

ma compréhension », dit M. Pelletier. Cela pourrait mener à bien des divergences de traitement à travers le territoire.

Importante division

Le jugement de vendredi est cependant divisé. Bien qu'ils soient d'accord avec la prolongation de délai, les quatre autres juges n'accorderaient pas d'exemption individuelle aux malades, pas plus qu'ils n'en accorderaient une au Québec.

Selon eux, déterminer *« quand il devrait être légal de poser des gestes qui constitueraient autrement une conduite criminelle »*, comme le fait de tuer quelqu'un, est un enjeu complexe qui ne peut se régler à la pièce devant des juges. *« Que ce processus législatif ait besoin de plus de temps est regrettable, mais qu'il s'agisse du meilleur moyen pour traiter de la question n'en demeure pas moins vrai pour autant. »*

Prolongation de délai ou pas, cela laisse peu de temps au gouvernement de Justin Trudeau pour concocter une réponse législative. Un comité de députés et de sénateurs commencera ce lundi ses audiences en vue de remettre un rapport au gouvernement à la fin février. Ottawa devra ensuite s'en inspirer pour rédiger sa loi, puis la faire adopter par la Chambre des communes et le Sénat avant la relâche de l'été.

La ministre de la Justice, Jody Wilson-Raybould, a déclaré vendredi soir que *« le gouvernement du Canada respecte la décision de la Cour et demeure résolu à élaborer une réponse réfléchie, sensible et éclairée à la décision de la Cour suprême. Cette prolongation fournira le temps nécessaire pour travailler en étroite collaboration* […] *avec les provinces et territoires, et pour agir rapidement, avec soin et diligence »*.

Appeal court reverses decision allowing public servant to seek $100K in damages from federal government

Don Butler, Ottawa Citizen, January 11 2016

The Federal Court of Appeal has overturned a 2015 decision that gave long-time Ottawa public servant Gisele Gatièn the right to pursue damages for mental suffering from the federal government.

Gatièn, a manager with Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, sought $100,000 for mental suffering and loss of professional standing after her employer suspended her for 10 days in 2011 for her handling of a troublesome employee who had been removed from the workplace after assaulting Gatièn.

Stressed by the employee's after-hours return to the office to collect her belongings, Gatien used filing cabinets and cardboard boxes to erect a barricade in the workplace, papering it with arrows pointing the way to the employee's work station.

Gatièn was diagnosed with post traumatic stress disorder in 2013, with her doctor blaming her employer's "refusal to recognize the harm that was done to her" by the troublesome employee as the major source of her problem. After a lengthy period on sick leave, she retired in 2014, ending her 35-year career on a sour note.

A tribunal of the Public Service Labour Relations Board later ruled that the penalty imposed on Gatièn was excessive, but denied her request for $100,000 in damages.

In a decision last April, Federal Court Justice John O'Keefe said the labour relations board misunderstood the legal test for awarding mental suffering damages and failed to consider key evidence. He referred the matter back to the tribunal for redetermination.

At the time, Paul Champ, Gatièn's lawyer, said the judgment set a precedent for public servants "who feel they have been disciplined in bad faith and made a scapegoat for the mistakes of senior managers."

But in a decision dated Jan. 6, the Federal Court of Appeal found it was O'Keefe who erred, both in his finding that the tribunal misapplied the principles applicable to awards of

aggravated damages and in his conclusion that it failed to consider evidence that Gatièn's employer was unaware of her mental health condition when it imposed discipline.

"The mere fact that she dissolved into tears or said she was stressed falls well short of proof of her suffering from a recognized psychiatric illness," the appeal court said.

The matter of when damages may be awarded for an employer's bad faith conduct "falls within the specialized expertise of labour adjudicators," the court said. In this case, the tribunal's decision was reasonable and should not have been overturned, it found.

Government agent immunity issue one of challenges for SCC

Cristin Schmitz, The Lawyers Weekly, January 15 2015

The Supreme Court kicks off its winter session with a far-reaching constitutional case that will decide whether general statutory immunities enjoyed by government agents — including justice officials such as judges, masters and administrative decision-makers — shield them from claims for damages, or other personal remedies, under the Charter.

The 21 appeals to be argued at the high court from Jan. 11 to April 1, 2016 cover questions such as: what is the proper approach to determining the standard of review when there is a statutory appeal from a tribunal (*City of Edmonton v. Edmonton East (Capilano) Shopping Centres Ltd*. March 23); what is the proper test to distinguish between the key concepts of "faulty workmanship" and "resulting damage" in comprehensive builders' risk insurance policies (*Ledcor Construction Ltd. v. Northbridge Insurance Indemnity Insurance Co*. March 30); and what test should a sentencing judge apply to decide whether to accept a joint sentencing submission (*Anthony-Cook v. R*., March 31).

At press time, scheduled for Jan. 11, however, was the constitutional test case of *Jessica Ernst v. Alberta Energy Regulator* which asks whether the general immunity in s. 43 of the Energy Resources Conservation Act (ERCA) is constitutionally inapplicable, or inoperative, to the extent that it bars claims for personal damages for free speech violations of the Charter.

Appellant Ernst became an outspoken water activist after fracking for gas near her rural property so contaminated the groundwater with methane that the well water coming out of her faucet became explosive. She sued the Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) for negligence, and for allegedly trying to shut her up by refusing to accept further complaints and communications

from her unless she stopped raising her concerns with the media and public. She claims damages for alleged violation of her s. 2(b) Charter right to freedom of expression, and damages under s. 24(1) of the Charter which permits "such remedy as the court considers appropriate and just in the circumstances."

The regulator contends that s. 43 is a constitutionally valid limit on personal claims for damages under the Charter.

The Alberta courts below agreed, and struck out Ernst's negligence and Charter claims. They ruled that although the Charter claims did disclose a cause of action and were not doomed to fail, the courts were precluded from considering them by the ERCA's general immunity which says "no action or proceeding" may be brought against the regulator or its officials in respect of "any act or thing done purportedly" in pursuance of the ERCA.

The Supreme Court's decision is expected to affect the scores of statutory immunities at the federal, provincial and municipal levels protecting all kinds of state actors, including justice system players and law society benchers.

"I think the import of the case is extraordinary because it basically asks whether a legislature is entitled to shield the public service from the Charter," says Raj Anand of Toronto's WeirFoulds. "Can an ordinary statute…make the public service a Charter-free zone?"

Anand, counsel for the David Asper Centre for Constitutional Freedoms, one of seven interveners, said if the decision below is upheld "it would certainly provide an end-run around the Charter. It basically permits a legislature, which by definition is subject to the Charter, to exempt its executive from the Charter…Our view is it's contrary to rule of law, and our system of government, for a legislature to do what even the common law has not been interpreted to do."

Anand's co-counsel, University of Toronto law professor Cheryl Milne, said "pre-emptive strikes" against Charter remedies by governments at the pleading stage too often bar potentially viable claims from trial. "I'd like to see [the court] interpret, and view, this legislation in light of a significant access to justice issue," Milne said.

"Despite this being a rather foundational Charter issue, the Supreme Court has yet to consider it," notes Ernst's counsel, Murray Klippenstein of Toronto's Klippensteins Barristers and Solicitors. "Ultimately, this appeal is about restoring the constitutional order, and re-establishing the supremacy of the Charter," he said by email. "It is about establishing that it is the judiciary, not the government that has ultimate control over which Charter remedies are

available and appropriate to remedy a Charter breach."

However the respondent regulator argues that allowing Ernst's Charter claim to proceed would be a major departure from existing law. Four attorneys general are intervening in support.

"Tribunals such as the AER, which owe only public duties, must not be inhibited by the fear of being held to account through private law remedies," the regulator's factum argues. (Counsel declined comment.)

"Subsection 24(1) operates concurrently with, and does not replace, the general law," maintains the regulator. "As such, an award of damages under s. 24(1) must be considered in the context of the traditional limits and liability principles associated with personal remedies. Section 43 of the ERCA is one of many constitutionally valid limits on access to personal remedies under s. 24(1), which include judicial and quasi-judicial immunity, the determination of what constitutes a court of competent jurisdiction, Crown immunity from execution, various preconditions and procedural requirements, and limitation provisions."

Other interesting questions raised by cases on the winter docket include:

Mandatory minimum penalties: Is the recently enacted one-year MMP for drug trafficking in s. 5(3)(a)(i)(D) of the Controlled Drugs and Substances Act grossly disproportionate such that it violates the Charter's s. 12 guarantee against cruel and unusual punishment; and does the B.C. Provincial Court have jurisdiction to strike down legislation if it breaches the Charter? *Lloyd v. The Queen* (Jan. 13).

Judicial Review: The appellant lab technicians at Mission Memorial Hospital in B.C. were denied workers' compensation for breast cancer, which they contend was caused, or contributed to, by on-the-job exposure to chemicals. Among the administrative law issues: Is the appropriate approach of the courts on judicial review of findings of fact by an administrative tribunal to determine whether there was evidence capable of supporting the findings, or to go further and determine also whether such evidence was sufficient? Does the common law power of an administrative tribunal to reopen an appeal to cure a jurisdictional error or defect include the power to cure an unreasonable, or patently unreasonable, error? *Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal v. Fraser Health Authority et al.* (Jan. 14).

Text messages as evidence: Were text messages that confirmed the testimony of an unsavoury witness at a manslaughter trial inadmissible as hearsay? *Seruhungo v. The Queen* (Jan. 15).

Judicial independence: Are 2004 legislative changes to the pay, working conditions and

pensions of some justices of the peace in Quebec an unconstitutional violation of judicial independence? *Conférence des juges de paix magistrats du Québec v. Attorney General of Québec* (Jan. 18).

Unjust dismissal: In a case affecting the job security of hundreds of thousands of federal workers, a fired Atomic Energy of Canada employee is appealing the Federal Courts' ruling that federal employers may lawfully dismiss employees without cause under ss. 240 to 246 of the Canada Labour Code, provided the severance required by the Code is paid: *Wilson v. Atomic Energy of Canada Ltd*. (Jan. 19).

Infanticide: Under the Criminal Code, a mother who has intentionally killed her child within a year of its birth can escape a murder conviction and instead be convicted of infanticide — if there is some evidence that her mind was disturbed due to giving birth or lactation. The appellant Alberta Crown asks the court define what "disturbed mind" means in the context of a case where the accused, after giving birth, wrapped the baby in a towel, put it in a plastic garbage bag, and disposed of it in her apartment's dumpster. Over three years, she did this to three babies — only one of whom survived*: R. v. M.K.B*. (Jan. 20).

Right to a fair hearing: What is the test for incompetent legal representation? The dissenting Alberta Court of Appeal judge found that the accused got a "woefully incompetent" defence from a lawyer who was restricted by the law society from practising real estate law, but not criminal law. However the Court of Appeal's majority disagreed the defence was incompetent, and upheld several Criminal Code convictions: *Meer v. The Queen* (Jan 21).

Fracking lawsuit rejected by Alberta court goes before Supreme Court in Charter test

CBC News, January 12 2016

Lawyers for an Alberta woman, who says hydraulic fracturing has so badly contaminated her well that the water can be set on fire, argued in front of the Supreme Court Tuesday for her right to sue the Alberta Energy Regulator.

Jessica Ernst, a resident of Rosebud, Alta., first began legal action in 2007 against the regulator and Calgary-based energy company Encana.

She then amended her statement of claim in 2011 to include Alberta Environment, as well.

In an earlier ruling, an Alberta court rejected Ernst's suit, ruling that immunity provisions in Alberta's Energy Resources Conservation Act exempt her from protections offered by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

"That is a rather shocking and surprising thought," Ernst's lawyer, Murray Kilppenstein, said of the Alberta court's ruling.

"A basic idea of the Charter is that it's controlling governments and limits their power is the ultimate guardian of freedom."

Klippenstein said the case is an important one that could reaffirm the importance of the Charter across Canada.

The court heard the appeal but reserved judgment for a later date. A decision isn't expected for at least a matter of weeks, possibly months

Mandatory minimum sentencing for drug offences unconstitutional say rights advocates

The Early Edition, CBC News, January 13 2016

Rights advocates made oral arguments today in the Supreme Court of Canada in a case that challenges the country's mandatory minimum sentencing laws for drug offences.

The case centres on Joseph Ryan Lloyd, an addict from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, who was convicted of drug trafficking after police caught him in 2013 with less than 10 grams combined of heroin, crack cocaine and crystal methamphetamine.

The Pivot Legal Society says mandatory minimum sentencing laws prevent judges from taking into account factors like poverty and addiction when sentencing.

It says minimum sentences hurt low-level offenders the most.

"Let judges make the decisions that are best for the public and best for the circumstances of the offence," said Katrina Pacey, executive director of Pivot Legal Society.

"Its really not for Parliament to be creating these minimum standards that, in fact, end up having the most detrimental effect on the lowest-level offenders."

Pacey says Lloyd is currently in jail, serving time for a crime unrelated to the case heard today in court.

Rights advocates speak out

Pacey pointed out the Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that minimum sentencing was part of the legacy of colonialism that led to over-incarceration.

"For many communities, including people who live with addiction, or for indigenous communities, a mandatory minimum sentence doesn't allow a judge to say, look, for this person, I think you need to think about drug treatment, or you need to think about some community connection with your indigenous community, as opposed to time behind bars."

The B.C. Civil Liberties Association opposes mandatory minimum sentencing for drug offences as well, arguing the bill that brought them into law was unconstitutional and unnecessary.

It said in a written statement, Tuesday:

"The BCCLA is arguing that the mandatory minimum sentence at issue in the case is unconstitutional."

"Canada is now second only to the United States in the number and scope of offences that carry mandatory minimum sentences. Mandatory minimum sentencing in Canada is at an all-time high even as crime rates have been dropping steadily and are at their lowest point since the early 1970s."

Bill C-10, formerly known as the Safe Streets and Communities Act, was brought in by the federal Conservative government in 2012 and made one-year sentences mandatory for people who commit another offence within a 10-year period.

'Open and accessible justice': Supreme Court of Canada joins Twitter

News 1130 staff, News 1130, January 11 2016

The Supreme Court of Canada is now on Twitter.

The highest court in the country introduced both English (@SCC_eng) and French (@CSC_fra) accounts on Monday.

"Communicating on Twitter forms part of the Court's commitment to open and accessible justice," Chief Justice Beverley McLachlin said in a statement.
"Sharing information about the Court's work is crucial to its mandate, and Twitter is a useful tool in achieving this objective."

The launch date was no coincidence: Twitter allows for messages of up to 140 characters, and 2016 marks the 140th anniversary of the first hearings held by the Supreme Court of Canada.

The United States Supreme Court doesn't have an official Twitter account, but @ussupremecourt has been online since 2008, and @isupremecourthas been active since 2010. An unofficial account, @SCC_CSC, has been releasing Canada's Supreme Court decisions since 2010.

La CSC est maintenant sur Twitter

Cour suprême du Canada, 11 janvier 2016

La Cour suprême du Canada est heureuse d'annoncer le lancement de ses comptes Twitter français et anglais. Les gazouillis porteront sur le travail de la Cour et seront mis en ligne simultanément sur les deux comptes.

Le lancement de ces deux comptes Twitter en 2016 coïncide avec un jalon marquant de l'histoire de la Cour : il s'agit en effet du 140e anniversaire des premières audiences qu'a tenues cette dernière.

Vous pouvez suivre la Cour suprême du Canada sur Twitter en français @CSC_fra et en anglais @SCC_eng.

La juge en chef McLachlin applaudit la présence de la Cour sur Twitter : « Communiquer par l'entremise de Twitter contribue à l'engagement de la Cour envers une justice ouverte et accessible. Partager de l'information quant à son travail fait partie intégrante du mandat de la Cour et Twitter est un outil utile pour atteindre cet objectif. »

Les communiqués de presse continueront d'être expédiés aux abonnés de notre service de communiqué de presse.

Pour de plus amples renseignements sur la façon d'interagir avec la Cour suprême du Canada sur les médias sociaux, veuillez consulter la rubrique Avis du site Web : www.scc-csc.ca.