

Job losses ticking away

Union campaign aims to keep workers in Canada

BY MATT GOERZEN

A campaign to keep Canadian jobs from being transferred overseas made a pit stop in Brandon yesterday to drum up support and signatures.

The Western-Canada-based Telecommunications Workers Union has sponsored a campaign to carry a National Unemployment Clock across the country to educate Canadians about the dangers of allowing international corporations to continue to move Canadian jobs off shore.

"It started on Parliament Hill, and we're taking it all the way to Vancouver," said driver Dave Rowswell, who carries the clock on the back of a lettered black van.

"Industries are taking a lot of money out of Canada, and having jobs in other countries. And we're saying, well, if it's a Canadian company and you're taking profits from Canada, why don't we have some legislation in place to keep more jobs here?"

The National Unemployment Clock offers what the

union says is a real-time count of job loss in Canada. The count represents the number of employable people who are currently unemployed, according to Statistics Canada.

At the time Rowswell stopped outside the Brandon Sun yesterday, the number was up to 1,605,484 and counting one higher every 31 seconds.

Local street teams go out into the community and ask Canadians to sign the group's petition when the van rolls into a town or city. By yesterday afternoon, the campaign had secured 5,205 signatures on the street and through its website keepjobsincanada.ca.

The target number is 20,000.

The TWU represents workers employed with Telus Communications Inc. According to the union, Telus has more than 7,000 employees in the Philippines.

Rowswell and his van will make their next appearance in Regina. The campaign will end in Vancouver by early June.

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Dave Rowswell has been on a cross-Canada trip with the National Unemployment Clock, sponsored by the Telecommunication Workers' Union, collecting names for a petition. (Bruce Bumstead/Brandon Sun)