

April 24, 2018

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

This April 28th, the National Day of Mourning, our union must once again reflect on the continuing tragedy in workplaces.

We have lost members over the last year, and across Canada, the death toll is still between 900 and 1,000 fatalities a year in all industries.

Our campaign to Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law also continues, one year after we commemorated 25 years since the Westray Mine explosion, and now 15 years since the Westray Law was passed unanimously by Parliament.

Last year, the federal government announced at a Day of Mourning ceremony in Ottawa that the Justice Minister was committed to working with the provinces to ensure better enforcement of the Westray Law and more criminal accountability for companies that kill their workers and get away with it.

One year later, there is no evidence that anything has changed.

Although some provinces have established protocols between law enforcement and regulators, training of police officers to treat workplace fatalities as potential crime scenes is not happening – yet.

Our campaign is making progress, but it must continue to be the job of every USW activist to press their provincial politicians to become a voice for workers in provincial legislatures. Regardless of their political views, ask what they are doing to make sure that the Westray Law is enforced. Provinces have the constitutional responsibility to enforce the Criminal Code of Canada.

We know fines imposed by provincial Labour Ministries are not the answer. Killing workers must never be seen as a cost of doing business.

We want to thank everyone who has taken this campaign to their cities and towns and won local endorsement of our campaign.

And, as always, we want to recognize the work that is being done every day by our health and safety activists who are constantly striving to prevent incidents from happening – by demanding increased training, better ergonomics, and stopping workplace violence and stress caused by cutbacks and unsafe working conditions.

Thank you for your tireless efforts to protect workers.

In Solidarity,



Ken Neumann
National Director



Stephen Hunt
Director, District 3



Alain Croteau
Director, District 5



Marty Warren
Director, District 6

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United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union
Syndicat international des travailleurs unis de la métallurgie, du papier et de la foresterie, du caoutchou,
de la fabrication de l'énergie, des services et industries connexes