

NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S

UPDATE



USW National Director Ken Neumann with members of Local 9700, workers locked out by ABI.

March 2018

Staying Focused on **SOLIDARITY**



In the 1940s, workers joined the United Steelworkers across Canada and

the United States because our union represented strength, solidarity and a path to a better future – together. Canadian workers were eager to join the Steelworkers to be part of a strong union and fight back against employer unfairness.

In today's world of increasingly globalized multinational employers, the USW derives strength from our position as a large, diverse, international union.

We have a proud history of coming together and working together for better wages, job security, reasonable hours and safer working conditions.

These principles guide our great union today.

In 2018, we face a divisive challenge

to our labour movement in Canada with Unifor's disaffiliation from the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) in order to raid the membership of UNITE HERE Local 75. Unifor's behaviour has been denounced by all 55 of the CLC's affiliated unions across Canada.

We call on Unifor to cease its raiding activities and return to the CLC. View our union's statements and posts from the CLC and other organizations here: www.usw.ca/clc-ctc.

Let's stay focused on solidarity. We can't let division in our labour movement – created by a single union – distract us from our focus on improving workers' lives.

There is an opportunity now to grow our labour movement by organizing the unorganized. Working people are looking for a real voice on many fronts – from greater rights in precarious jobs, to fair trade deals, to

climate justice solutions that address the needs of workers.

We're using our global connections and solidarity networks to put pressure on international corporations Alcoa and Rio Tinto to end the lockout of our 1,030 members at the ABI smelter in Bécancour, Que.

We're using our solidarity to ensure working people's interests are reflected in international trade deals.

We are joining together to fight against racism and work towards gender equality, celebrating Black History Month in February and International Women's Day in March.

We are counting on our collective strength to build our labour movement and restore its unity and purpose.

In solidarity,

Ken Neumann
National Director



uswmetallos



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Stepping

The #MeToo and #TimesUp movements have revealed just how prevalent and pervasive sexual harassment is. More and more women are bravely coming forward with stories of sexual harassment by men in positions of power.

Why do we call these women 'brave'? Because the least-common response to harassment (of any gender) is to report it.

Employees don't report harassment because they fear they won't be believed. They fear they will be blamed. They fear they will suffer retaliation or a setback in their work life. They fear alienation from co-workers.

Harassment and sexual harassment are union issues regardless of the complainants' gender. While we must be sensitive to this, women are almost four times as likely to have been harassed as men.

Our union has an anti-harassment policy. We are strong advocates for taking action to stop harassment. We are joining campaigns and partnering with allies and front-line community organizations. But we know this isn't enough.

Let's take this #MeToo #TimesUp moment as an opportunity to revisit and expand our policies.

We must talk about anti-harassment policies so our members know what to do if they or someone they know is experiencing harassment. Our union executive members and stewards should know what to do if

Up to **Stop Harassment**

someone comes forward. We must work to bring employer policies up to date.

Unions have a role in developing and enforcing strong policies to prevent and stop harassment. But we must also devote energy to being more supportive of those who come forward with experiences of harassment. We must find ways to offer emotional, psychological and moral support to members and staff complainants as we navigate the process involved in a complaint.

Let's take this #MeToo #TimesUp moment as an opportunity to revisit and expand our policies.

Women particularly, are feeling emboldened by the silence-breaking that is happening in our society right now. Our union must be there for our members when they turn to us to tell their stories of harassment in the workplace. Survivors who come forward expect us to take action against harassment. Let's make sure we are there for them and know what to do.

USW Is Updating our Anti-Harassment Policies

The USW National Office is revisiting our policies and guides to ensure we are following best practices

and offering practical resources for preventing and dealing with harassment.

The USW is developing a training program for advocates who will be available to offer support and referrals to members in our workplaces experiencing harassment or domestic violence.

The USW is reviewing our Steelworkers Anti-Harassment Policy, the Yellow Sheet.

We are active in campaigns and initiatives with community partners on advocacy and education.

In the meantime, there are lots of resources and ideas for local union initiatives.

Anti-Harassment Resources

- Policies, guides and model collective agreement language are available on our website at www.usw.ca/womenofsteel and www.usw.ca/anti-violence.
- Look for resources through your provincial or territorial labour federation.

Know the Policies that Apply

In a unionized workplace, there are three places to look for anti-harassment policies:

- Employer anti-harassment policies
- Collective agreement
- Provincial or territorial occupational health and safety laws, or federal law in workplaces under federal jurisdiction

What Unions Can Do to End Harassment

- Familiarize yourself with anti-harassment policies (employer policies, collective agreement, applicable laws).
- Review employer policies against the checklist for workplace policies in the Steelworkers Guide to Preventing and Dealing with Harassment.
- Work to strengthen employer and collective agreement policies through bargaining, side letters or your joint health and safety committee.
- Display the USW poster on sexual harassment in your workplace (available to download at www.usw.ca/womenofsteel).
- Have your local take the IndustriALL Pledge – Unions Say No To Violence: Not in our workplace, not in our union (PDF available at www.usw.ca/womenofsteel).
- Discuss this article with your USW staff representative and make an action plan.
- Promote and sign up for USW courses on harassment prevention and investigation.
- Partner with organizations working to end sexual harassment and violence against women.

Speak Out. Speak Up. Believe Survivors. ■

After years of pressure from human rights and labour groups – including the Steelworkers – the federal government has created an ombudsperson's office to investigate the behaviour of Canadian mining companies operating abroad.

The USW is a proud member of the Canadian Network on Corporate Accountability, which mounted an unrelenting advocacy campaign calling for a federal ombudsperson to investigate alleged human rights abuses linked to Canadian mining operations.

There is cautious optimism over the Liberal government's announcement in January of a new Canadian Ombudsperson for Responsible Enterprise. The government opted to establish the ombudsperson's office through ministerial regulations, rather than enacting legislation. Key details of the regulations have yet to be confirmed, such as the scope of the new ombudsperson's mandate, independence and powers.

Steelworkers lobbied forcefully for a mining industry watchdog because successive Liberal and Conservative governments failed to address human rights abuses linked to Canadian companies. It is an appalling record.

A 2016 study by researchers from Toronto's Osgoode Hall Law School documented more than 1,000 human rights violations associated with Canadian companies over 15 years in Latin America alone. These included 44 deaths – 30 of which were "targeted" killings.

These cases represented only "the tip of the iceberg" in Latin America, the researchers noted. Not to mention thousands of incidents of violence, assassination attempts, forced displacement, environmental destruction and other human rights abuses linked to Canadian mining companies elsewhere around the world.

Steelworkers have long collaborated with our international allies to combat human rights abuses linked to Canadian mining companies.

The most-recent example involves

the operations of Canada's Torex Gold in Mexico, where the company has frustrated workers' rights to join the union of their choice. During a protest near Torex operations last Nov. 18, two workers were killed. A third worker was murdered Jan. 24. No one has been held accountable.

Steelworkers are calling for federal regulations that give the new ombudsperson meaningful powers, including:

- Operating independently from government;
- Strong investigatory powers, including the power to compel evidence;
- Recommending remedies and sanctions;
- Operating transparently and open to public scrutiny.

Such commitments would demonstrate to vulnerable workers and communities around the world that, after decades of inaction, Canada's government is serious about cracking down on human rights abuses. ■





Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath with District 6 Steelworkers at a rally for decent work.

***In It to Win It* Ontario Election 2018**

There's a lot at stake in the 2018 Ontario election. The scandal-plagued Liberals are hugely unpopular. From privatizing Ontario Hydro to ordering striking college faculty back to work, this is an anti-worker government. In power for more than 14 years, Kathleen Wynne is pitching her party as progressive, stealing the NDP's policies and counting on union votes.

The Conservatives are still in the running despite their former leader's resignation over sexual harassment allegations and a leadership race with only months until the June 7 election.

But this election is not just between Liberals and Conservatives.

Andrea Horwath and the NDP team are in it to win it! And with the help of Ontario Steelworkers – talking to our members and volunteering in NDP campaigns – we can help make this happen.

Andrea is a trusted leader who offers hope for the future. She is by far the most popular leader in Ontario. She's an experienced campaigner. And the NDP is on our side as working people.

Putting People First

In this election, Andrea Horwath and the NDP are focused on putting people first.

Andrea Horwath will be a premier we can trust. The Steeltown Scrapper brings hope to Ontario.

The NDP's priorities are Steelworker priorities: quality public health care, reducing wait times, creating good jobs, making childcare more affordable, introducing universal pharmacare.

The NDP will end the privatization of Ontario Hydro so we can have

the utility back in public hands.

The NDP will support unions and workers by bringing back card-check certification that was scrapped by the Conservatives.

Andrea Horwath: A Premier We Can Trust

But most importantly, Andrea Horwath will be a premier we can trust. The Steeltown Scrapper brings hope to Ontario.

Ramping Up Political Action

The District 6 Political Action Committee is asking USW members to get involved. As we've seen with NDP victories in Alberta and British Columbia, anything can happen in an election. And with Steelworkers on the ground talking to our members and volunteering in campaigns across the province, we can make a difference.

This June, the election is about change. But let's choose change for a better Ontario. Let's vote for Andrea Horwath and the NDP! ■

'Workers Were Sold a Lie'

NAFTA must defend good jobs, improve living standards

As NAFTA renegotiations drag on, Steelworkers and our allies across the continent are dogging the governments of Canada, the U.S. and Mexico with a clear message: if this trade agreement is worth saving, it must serve the interests of working people.

An open letter co-authored by leaders of the USW and Los Mineros, Mexico's mineworkers

union, attracted media coverage when NAFTA negotiations shifted to Montreal in January.

"With NAFTA, workers were sold a lie," stated the joint letter from USW Canadian Director Ken Neumann, USW Quebec Director Alain Croteau, USW International President Leo W. Gerard and Los Mineros

President Napoleon Gomez.

"NAFTA has not served the needs and expectations of working people and the most vulnerable in the U.S., Mexico and Canada. It was a corporate-rights agreement that ... benefited the rich and powerful while effectively excluding ordinary people in all three societies."

Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau has portrayed himself as a knight in shining armour, committed to



standards and reverse growing inequality.

negotiating a so-called “progressive” NAFTA.

To be truly progressive, however, a trade deal needs strong, enforceable provisions on key issues such as labour rights and environmental standards. Trudeau’s credibility on these issues took a severe blow in January when his government completed secret negotiations for the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), a corporate-friendly trade deal among 11 Pacific Rim countries.

A “progressive” deal in name only

Prior to the 2015 federal election, Trudeau denounced the Conservative government’s

secret negotiations on the TPP. He promised a Liberal government would be open and transparent in pursuing trade deals.

Once elected, the Liberals continued the same secret TPP agenda. And with NAFTA’s fate in limbo, Trudeau became desperate to secure a Trans-Pacific deal.

As TPP details leak out, it has become clear why the Trudeau government kept Canadians in the dark. The agreement will further erode Canada’s manufacturing and industrial base, eliminate middle-class jobs and drive down wages and working conditions.

The TPP embraces corporate rights and power, while Canadian auto, steel, dairy, transportation and construction workers will face a race-to-the-bottom competition from cheap labour and poor working, safety and environmental standards in Asia.

The TPP entrenches one of the greatest failings of such trade deals – the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) system. ISDS allows multinational corporations to sue our government – in secret tribunals – if they believe our laws infringe on their potential profits.

Incredibly, the Trudeau government also is fighting to preserve ISDS in a new NAFTA, while even the right-wing American government recognizes that ISDS must be removed from the agreement.

“In its desperation to sign the TPP, the Trudeau government was severely outplayed in the negotia-

tions by countries including Japan, Australia and Vietnam. Facing a choice to accept a bad deal or no deal, Trudeau blinked,” Ken Neumann said when the deal was announced.

Facing a choice to accept a bad deal or no deal, Trudeau blinked.

– Ken Neumann

The Liberals can take credit for one particular change – insisting on a cynical revision of the TPP’s official title. The new deal is now called the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership. But it is a “progressive” deal in name only.

A NAFTA for all workers

Steelworkers are not anti-trade. To the contrary, we recognize that many jobs rely on trade. We also believe trade deals must raise living standards for all workers and reverse growing inequality.

Canada’s government must recognize that NAFTA faces a crisis of political legitimacy because it places corporate rights and powers ahead of Canadian jobs and meaningful labour and environmental standards.

If NAFTA is to survive, it must create a fair, democratic and secure trade regime.

It must finally serve the interests of working people. ■



Aluminum Workers FIGHT BACK

Hundreds of Local 9700 members and their supporters rally outside Quebec's National Assembly on Feb. 7, as legislators unanimously pass a motion condemning ABI's lockout and calling for a return to the bargaining table.

Steelworkers solidarity counters appalling lockout by multinational giants Alcoa and Rio Tinto

An entire region's economy is being affected as multinational aluminum giants Alcoa and Rio Tinto Alcan resort to familiar tactics to try to impose their will on more than 1,000 Quebec families and their communities.

The massive ABI aluminum smelter in the community of Bécancour is the region's largest employer and is the second-largest smelter of its kind in North America. Steelworkers Local 9700 represents 1,030 ABI employees who for months have been attempting to negotiate a new collective agreement with the company.

Rather than pursuing a fair deal at the bargaining table, ABI twice attempted to impose concessionary "final" offers, which were rejected by workers. Alcoa and Rio Tinto

then opted to lock out workers at 3 a.m. on Jan. 11, shocking an unsuspecting community.

Not only does this action have a direct impact on more than 1,000 families, it affects the region's economy, and ultimately, the economy of Quebec as a whole.

— District 5 Director Alain Croteau

"Not only does this action have a direct impact on more than 1,000 families, it affects the region's economy, and ultimately, the economy of Quebec as a whole," said Steelworkers Quebec Director Alain Croteau.

The locked-out workers have received widespread support from Steelworkers and allies across Quebec and beyond, as well as all-party recognition in the Quebec National Assembly that ABI must return to the bargaining table to negotiate, rather than impose, a settlement.

In February, as hundreds of Steelworkers and their supporters rallied outside the National Assembly in Quebec City, politicians unanimously passed a motion calling for an immediate resumption of bargaining. The motion condemned the ABI lockout's "negative impact on workers, on the economy of the Centre-du-Québec and Mauricie regions and on the economy of Quebec."

"This sends a clear message to the head offices of Alcoa in Pittsburgh and Rio Tinto in London. We're now hoping they will finally authorize their negotiators to seriously seek a negotiated settlement," Croteau said.

Quebec's Labour Minister also met separately with union and company officials, urging them to return to the bargaining table. While USW Local 9700 representatives have been ready and willing to resume negotiations all along, as of press time ABI had not confirmed if it would comply with the government's request.

The labour dispute centres around pension plan issues and seniority rights.

"These are work organizational issues that do not necessarily entail significant monetary impacts. However, the employer does need to have an open mind to reach a settlement," said Steelworkers Local 9700 President Clément Masse.

The union and others have questioned the corporate motives behind the lockout, noting ABI's revenue losses from production cuts far outweigh the costs of a negotiated settlement.

Critics suggest Alcoa and Rio Tinto may be pressuring the Quebec government for more favourable hydro rates, while at the same time the lockout will potentially boost prices at other aluminum plants owned by the two multinationals.

"Sometimes you have to ask who benefits from the crime," Croteau said.

"These corporations benefit from extremely favourable electricity rates – a public resource – and in return they create good jobs in our

regions. This social contract has now been broken. They have taken 1,030 workers and an entire region hostage." ■

Donations to the locked-out members of Local 9700 can be sent to:

MÉTALLOS SL 9700 F.D.P.

ATTN: Éric Moore, financial secretary

**Syndicat des Métallos,
section locale 9700
8310, rue Desormeaux
Bécancour (Québec)
G9H 2X2**

Donations can also be made online at:
www.metallos.org/lockout-abi

Mining Safety

Back on the Agenda



Steelworkers Quebec Director Alain Croteau is surrounded by news media in September 2017 as he denounces mining companies for boycotting provincial health and safety committees.

Quebec Steelworkers have renewed efforts to improve mining safety after an industry association finally ended its shameful boycott of provincial health and safety committees.

"Our hope now is that everyone can work together for regulatory improvements and to define concrete plans to ensure safety in the mining sector," said Steelworkers Quebec Director Alain Croteau.

Last year the USW drew public attention to the Quebec Mining Association's boycott of joint committees through which labour, management and government collaborated to improve workplace safety. Companies boycotted the committees to protest the Quebec workplace health and safety agency's ban of a particular method of ore extraction due to safety concerns.

Mining companies finally ended their boycott of the joint health and safety committees in February.

At their first meeting, all parties agreed to focus on preventing underground mine collapses – a Steelworkers' priority.

"There have been a number of underground mine collapses in recent years. There is a pressing need to address this risk so that we can avoid serious incidents," said André Racicot, President of Steelworkers Local 9291 in the Abitibi region and the most senior union representative on the provincial health and safety committees. ■

Potash Workers STANDING TOGETHER



United Steelworkers potash locals in Saskatchewan are united like never before following two days of strategy meetings where local unions came together to discuss a number of issues important to Steelworkers who work in potash mines in the province.

The meeting follows on the heels of the merger between employers Agrium and Potash Corp. The new employer is Nutrien and the USW sees the merger as an opportunity to strengthen the collaboration between all potash locals.

"The importance of standing together, shoulder to

shoulder, was recognized by the leadership of all USW locals. We know that by co-ordinating our efforts like never before we can ensure Steelworkers are treated with the respect and fairness they deserve," says Darrin Kruger, President of USW Local 7552.

As USW members employed by Nutrien and Mosaic prepare to go into bargaining, the meeting was an opportunity to build power and create even greater collaboration among potash workers. USW locals at Nutrien let the Mosaic locals know in no uncertain terms that they have their backs and vice-versa.

That unwavering, mutual support will help all locals achieve good things for members over the coming years, says Kim Wehner, President of USW Local 7689.

"When we stand united, we can achieve tremendous things for our members."

A key point of discussion is the rise in potash prices and the positive outlook for the industry.

USW District 3 Director Stephen Hunt congratulated the locals on their commitment to working together and says it's how workers will continue to make progress at the bargaining table.

"From stem to stern, in every one of our potash locals and in every facet of our union, there is a strong commitment to speak with one voice and to stand united and together. It means good things ahead for our members," said Hunt.

The USW potash locals represent 2,500 potash workers in Saskatchewan in USW Locals 189, 7458, 7689, 7656, 7552 and 7916. ■

Mark your Calendar! USW Events 2018

www.usw.ca/events

USW Health, Safety and Environment Conference

26-30 March Pittsburgh, PA

District 5 Regional Meetings:

17-18 May, Brossard; 24-25 May, Montreal; 31 May-1 June, North/Northwest; 7-8 June, Quebec City; 14-15 June, North Shore

District 3 Summer School

10-15 June Kimberley, B.C.

District 6 Conference

4-8 Sept. Collingwood, Ont.

USW International Women's Conference

14-17 Oct. Toronto, Ont.

District 3 Conference

29 Oct-1 Nov. Kamloops, B.C.

District 6 Fall School

4-9 Nov. Orillia, Ont.

District 5 Annual Assembly

21-23 Nov. Charlevoix, Que.

The United Steelworkers has won an arbitration case that puts an end to random drug and alcohol testing by Teck Coal Ltd. at its unionized mines in British Columbia's Elk Valley.

The arbitration ruling, released in late January, represents a major victory in a case fought by the USW over several years.

Teck began randomly testing employees for drug and alcohol use in December 2012. The union opposed this unreasonable infringement of employee privacy and took action to oppose its implementation.

Teck continued its random testing despite a 2013 Supreme Court of Canada ruling that supported a New Brunswick arbitrator's decision to quash a random alcohol testing policy at Irving Pulp and Paper. The Supreme Court held that employers seeking to justify random testing had a high bar to meet.

In the USW/Teck Coal case, the arbitrator supported the union's view that Teck unreasonably infringed on employees' privacy rights and found that the company failed to demonstrate a workplace safety problem related to employee drug and alcohol use.

The arbitration victory by USW Locals 7884 and 9346 required that testing cease immediately at the Fording River and Elkview mines, and that pursuant to agreements between Teck, USW Local 7284, and IUOE Local 115, it was also struck down at the Coal Mountain and Line Creek mines.

The decision is a significant victory, not only for

Steelworkers but for all workers, said USW District 3 Director Stephen Hunt.

"The arbitrator completely rejected the idea that some theoretical, but non-existent safety risk justifies the intrusion of random testing when there is no evidence of workplace problems due to drug and alcohol use," said Hunt.

"The safety of workers is paramount and we fight

The safety of workers is paramount and we fight for it every day. Random testing is a distraction that invades privacy and does nothing to keep workers and communities safe.

District 3 Director Stephen Hunt

for it every day. Random testing is a distraction that invades privacy and does nothing to keep workers and communities safe," he said.

"Any consideration of drug testing must begin by acknowledging that the right to privacy is a fundamental Canadian value, and that includes workers' rights to privacy," said USW National Director Ken Neumann. "It's clear that workplace safety can be protected while also maintaining the legal rights of employees." ■

A Victory for All Workers

Steelworkers' arbitration victory ends random drug and alcohol testing at Teck's Elk Valley unionized mines





Jagmeet Singh, Leader of Canada's NDP with Steelworkers at the party's convention in Ottawa.



Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath, USW National Director Ken Neumann and Steelworkers.



Jordan Rego (USW Local 665) and Walied Khogali (USW Local 7536).

NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh Inspires at Convention Ending pension theft adopted as party policy

Jagmeet Singh headlined the NDP Convention in Ottawa with an inspiring speech that sets the New Democratic Party apart from the Liberals ahead of the 2019 federal election. USW delegates helped the convention adopt a number of signature progressive policies including ending pension theft, electoral reform, universal pharmacare and dental care, a federal ban on street checks and carding, closing the wage gap and protecting the right to strike.

"It was very inspiring to see so many progressive and pro-labour resolutions passed with unanimous or near-unanimous support."

– Jeremy Robins, USW Local 2010, Kingston

"This weekend was a great learning experience for me and my NexGen brothers and sisters. Taking the District 6 NextGen Political Action course gave me the confidence to be an active delegate."

– Jason McDonnell, USW Local 2918, London



USW 5890 delegates Kim Roberts and Dana Faul.



NDP MP Scott Duvall with USW Next Gen delegates