

NATIONAL DIRECTOR'S

UPDATE



Steelworkers Instil Pride and Hope for 2021



Following historic economic and social upheaval in 2020, Steelworkers and

all Canadians could be forgiven for fearing they went from the frying pan to the fire in the new year.

A raging second wave of the COVID-19 pandemic has led to record infection rates and a tragic upturn in deaths. Too many workers, including USW members, remain jobless. Meanwhile, frontline and essential workers, including many Steelworkers, continue to bear the burden of sustaining our health-care system and our economy.

It seems no one can credibly predict when we will turn the corner on this crisis. However, there is hope for a brighter outlook, with the rollout of vaccines and projections for economic growth in the months ahead.

One thing is certain: Steelworkers and our progressive allies will persevere. Together we will stand up for the working class. We will continue our fight for a progressive economic recovery focused on long-term job creation and reversing the appalling inequalities embedded in our system.

Throughout the past year, I have been awestruck by examples of Steelworkers' commitment and solidarity, in our workplaces, our communities and our legislatures, in response to the tremendous challenges of these times.

These stories of USW spirit and activism, some of which you can read inside this magazine, should instil tremendous pride in our union and our members, as well as hope for the future.

Key Leadership Change at USW

Our union is losing a tremendous leader with the retirement of Mark Rowlinson, who served as Assistant

to the National Director since 2011. Mark previously worked as counsel in the USW legal department for 17 years. His expertise on international trade has been recognized with an appointment to a dispute resolution panel under the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement.

I am proud to announce that Meg Gingrich has been appointed the next Assistant to the National Director, effective March 15. A USW member since 2006, Meg joined the USW Research Department in 2012, demonstrating outstanding skills in interest arbitration, collective bargaining, trade and economic policy, pensions and equity and gender issues.

In solidarity,

Ken Neumann
National Director

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New FCEF Family Care Reimbursement Program

The USW's Family and Community Education Fund (FCEF) has launched a new family care reimbursement program. Now, Steelworkers who belong to local unions that contribute to the fund can apply to be reimbursed for extra child-care or family-care costs they incur in order to attend authorized union events.

Good-quality care can be expensive, which results in many of our members missing union events and meetings to cut down on family-care costs.

The initiative encourages engagement from underrepresented members of our union. The FCEF's Family Care Reimbursement Program will make it easier for members to attend local union membership meetings, union education courses, and even online union events during the pandemic. Learn more at www.usw.ca/fcef.



Raising the Bar on Women's Health and Safety



New USW Campaign

NO ACCESS TO WASHROOMS. Safety equipment that doesn't fit. It was women's stories from the microphones at our 2019 USW Policy Conference that sparked the Raising the Bar campaign.

Sister after sister spoke passionately about the health and safety issues women face on the job.

Raising the Bar is a new USW campaign to act on women's health and safety and amplify women's voices in the workplace.

Most workplaces and safety equipment have been designed to suit male workers. When we take women into account, we make workplaces safer.

Steelworkers pride ourselves on being the health and safety union. Women of Steel are pointing to hazards and health issues they face as women workers.

The campaign website includes an action guide and an inspection checklist.

The action guide describes 16 health issues or hazards that women workers can experience. Each section looks at:

- ▶ Why is this a challenge and how does it affect women?
- ▶ How can we take action in our local union?
- ▶ What have USW locals, activists and allies already done?

At the end of the guide, the Action Tools section includes a discussion process for talking with women about health and safety, steps for making a committee action plan, the Menopause Hazard Assessment Checklist, the Hazards Checklist for Pregnant Workers and more.

Let's make women's health and safety issues a priority for action!

www.usw.ca/raisethebar ■

Harry Hynd

FOR NEARLY SEVEN DECADES, Harry Hynd was a champion for workers' rights, unions and the social democratic movement.

"Harry was a consummate trade unionist, a man of great character and integrity, and a true gentleman. We've lost a tremendous leader," Steelworkers National Director Ken Neumann says of the former USW District 6 director, who died on Dec. 29 in Hamilton at age 87.

Neumann was a Steelworkers Area Co-ordinator in British Columbia in 1989 when Harry was appointed interim director of USW District 3.

"I developed a bond with Harry very quickly. He was committed, above all else, to providing the best representation to our members. We had the same passion for our union, for social democracy and our party, the New Democrats," Neumann says.

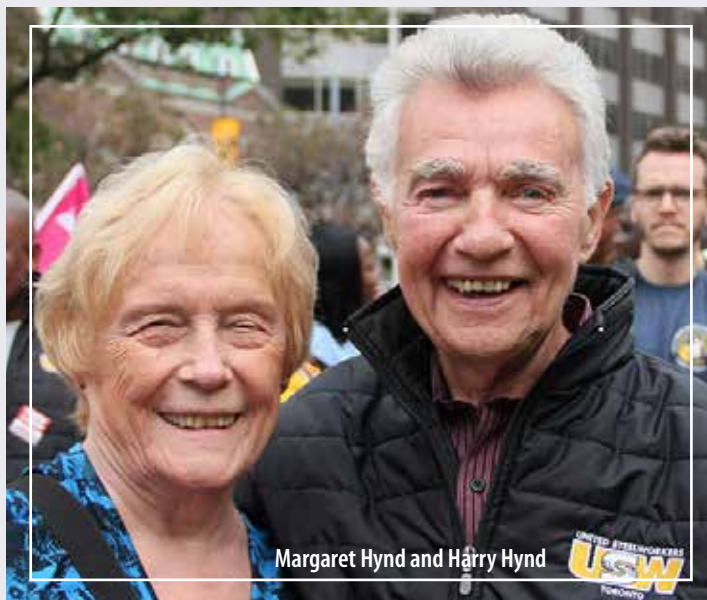
He was committed, above all else, to providing the best representation to our members.

– Ken Neumann

Harry's union activism began as a teenaged member of the National Union of Mineworkers, toiling in a Scottish coal mine. He immigrated to Canada in 1957, joining the Steelworkers in 1958 when he got a job at Stelco in Hamilton. He was an active member of Local 1005 and soon earned the position of plant grievance chairperson.

Harry was hired as a USW staff representative in 1971. His leadership, bargaining and troubleshooting skills led to his hiring as Assistant to the District 6 Director,

"A Trade Unionist of Great Character and Integrity"



Margaret Hynd and Harry Hynd

followed by his appointment as interim District 3 Director in 1989. He became District 6 Director in 1991 and was elected to two more terms in 1993 and 1997 before retiring in 2002. He served as SOAR International Vice-President from 2005 to 2019, when he was appointed SOAR Vice-President Emeritus.

Over the years, Harry and his wife Margaret developed a deep affinity for Cuba and its people, visiting often, Neumann says.

"They sent countless donations to their Cuban friends – from clothing to stationery and even car parts."

Harry and Margaret 'adopted' a Cuban family, eventually helping the family acquire a home. The Cuban couple in turn chose Harry and Margaret as godparents to their children.

"Harry and Margaret did everything together, they were a team," Neumann says. "It was a great partnership, a great love affair."

Harry is survived by Margaret, their daughters Carol Craig (Bill) and Susan D'Angelo (Sebastiano), three grandchildren and one great-grandson. ■

Shameful ‘Reforms’

Quebec’s Bill 59 will weaken workplace health

QUEBEC STEELWORKERS ARE DENOUNCING so-called “reforms” to the province’s occupational health and safety laws that will actually weaken protections for workers.

The conservative Coalition Avenir Québec government announced in late 2020 it would “modernize” the province’s 40-year-old workplace health and safety legislation. The USW and Quebec’s labour movement expected improvements such as the extension of prevention measures to all workplaces, given that many employers were exempted from such safeguards.

However, the CAQ’s Bill 59 actually maintains those exemptions while also weakening existing safeguards in many industrial workplaces.

“This ‘reform’ would lead to a prevention regime that exists on paper only. It would weaken the ability of unions to force employers to ensure real prevention in the workplace,” says Steelworkers Quebec Director Dominic Lemieux.

Biased definition of risk

Bill 59 would create new classifications of workplaces according to levels of risk. A company classified as low or medium risk would have more lax health and safety requirements. Employers would be ranked based on their compensation claims, rather than actual risks in the workplace.

“In our plant, we assemble small, medium and large-caliber munitions containing explosives. Under these reforms, we would be considered low risk, given our compensation costs,” says USW Local 9238 President Eric Blais, representing workers at General Dynamics in Repentigny.

“However, our compensation costs are low precisely because we’ve done so much work – with management – on health and safety. So it doesn’t make sense to weaken a system that works!” Blais says.

Nadine Joncas, a USW Health and Safety Representa-

tive at the Mont Wright mine in Fermont, is surprised that the mining sector would be considered “medium risk” under Bill 59.

“Last year we mourned another death of one of our own and we inaugurated a monument in honour of our many deceased workers,” notes Joncas. “And now the government wants to cut prevention? It’s shameful!”

Less time for prevention

Bill 59 would encourage employers to contest compensation claims and cut the time allocated to workers’ representatives for prevention programs. It would reduce the roles of unions and joint health and safety committees, allowing companies with multiple plants to establish a single health and safety committee for all of their facilities.

“This is completely ineffective. Health and safety representatives will have less time to cover each workplace, some of which they won’t even be familiar with,” says Marc-André Fontaine, a USW Local 6586 Health and Safety Representative at an ArcelorMittal steel plant.



and safety protections.

The bill also would impose more restrictive criteria for official recognition of many occupational diseases, from cancers to deafness.

“Several workers in our plant have been recognized to have occupational deafness, but others have fallen through the cracks of the system and are not recognized,” says Cédric Joly, USW Health and Safety Representative at the Rio Tinto Fer et Titane metallurgical complex in Sorel.

“The new law will make the system more complicated and more workers will fall through the cracks. They won’t even have access to hearing aids.”

The bill also will make it more difficult for a pregnant worker to qualify for “preventive withdrawal” benefits in cases where the woman’s job poses a risk to her health or that of her unborn child.

Steelworkers and the Quebec Federation of Labour have launched a campaign to defeat Bill 59 and bring about meaningful health and safety reforms. ■



SOLIDARITY Makes the Difference

A QUEBEC-WIDE WAVE OF STEELWORKERS solidarity led to quick settlements for members of two USW locals involved in brief strikes in late 2020.

Local 7531 members at furniture manufacturer HP Cyrenne in Victoriaville, Que., were on the picket line for two weeks when delegates to the USW District 5 Annual Assembly stepped up, raising \$40,000 for the strikers, with many locals pledging recurring donations.

“We were speechless, it was coming from everywhere,” said Local 7531 recording secretary Nathalie Ratté. “That was a massive boost to the picket line.”

After the employer learned the strikers would soon be receiving strike pay nearly equivalent to their regular wages, bargaining resumed within days, followed by a settlement with wage increases that were double the employer’s previous offer.

A similar situation unfolded for Local 2008 members, less than a month into their strike at window and door manufacturer ENERGI Solutions in Terrebonne. The prospect of substantial financial support for the strikers led to an agreement addressing a key issue – creating a fair wage scale to replace an arbitrary pay system.

“The employer saw we had the support of other union members and that we were prepared to stay out. Their attitude changed dramatically, overnight,” said bargaining unit president Serge Raymond. ■



Quebec Steelworkers Tackle Social Polarization, Economic Recovery

DESPITE PANDEMIC-IMPOSED RESTRICTIONS, more than 400 USW activists and allies participated in the 56th Annual Assembly of Quebec Steelworkers last November, debating critical issues including social polarization and economic austerity policies.

Delegates to the online conference held a discussion with renowned economist Pierre-Antoine Harvey, who in a detailed analysis demonstrated why pandemic-related economic challenges do not justify government austerity measures that would undermine health care, education and other critical public services.

Canadian governments must instead commit to more-progressive and fair taxation policies, including capital gains and wealth taxes and a crackdown on tax avoidance, which could generate as much as \$50 billion in annual revenues, Harvey argued.

Delegates also tackled the thorny issue of political and social polarization, the challenges it presents to labour solidarity and the role that unions can play to counteract the phenomenon. The discussion included insights from political

scientist David Morin, psychologist Stéphane Bujold and Marie-Ève Carignan, a communications professor at Université de Sherbrooke.

“This polarization is fostered by our anxieties and is amplified by social media, where a lot of false news circulates ... and where people tend to become more aggressive in their social interactions,” said Carignan.

False news travels two or three times faster than real news and it is more widely shared.

Marie-Ève Carignan,
Communications professor,
Université de Sherbrooke

“Statistical analyses show that believers of conspiracy theories get more of their information from social media than from traditional media. You can always find people who think just like you on social media,” she said. Opinion polls show up to 12% of Canadians believe false information about COVID-19 propagated on social media, she noted.

“False news travels two or three

times faster than real news and it is more widely shared,” she added.

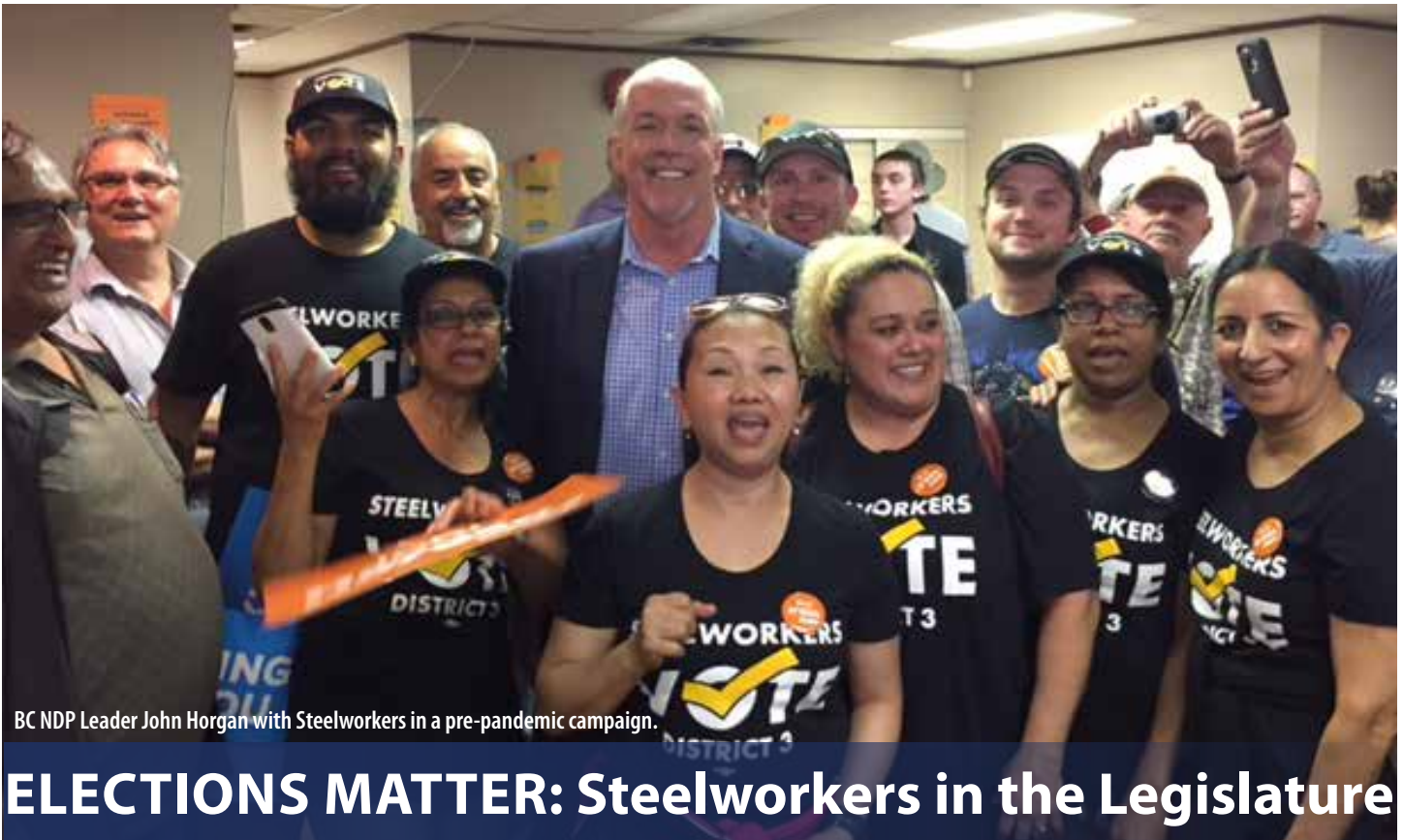
Unions and their leaders can play a positive role in combatting polarization, particularly in the workplace, by fostering respectful dialogue among members, Bujold said.

“We should be listening, not blaming or judging, and not shutting down the dialogue, which can cause grief and increase the risk of alienation and radicalizing positions,” the psychologist said.

Delegates also engaged in an eye-opening session, led by USW District 5 Education Co-ordinator Maude Raïche, revealing the disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women.

Women have suffered disproportionately in virtually all aspects of the pandemic, from COVID-19 infections, to job losses, to increased caring and family responsibilities, to a rise in domestic violence.

Steelworkers, the labour movement and our progressive allies are demanding an economic recovery plan that targets the pandemic’s negative impacts on women and the elimination of longstanding gender-based inequalities. ■



BC NDP Leader John Horgan with Steelworkers in a pre-pandemic campaign.

ELECTIONS MATTER: Steelworkers in the Legislature

STEELWORKERS WERE ENGAGED in election campaigns held last fall, supporting candidates that share our values of social and economic justice, equality and fairness. The elections in British Columbia and Saskatchewan were like no other and we can be proud of our hard work.

In British Columbia, Premier John Horgan ran a strong campaign to keep B.C. moving forward by investing in people and delivering programs and services that matter most to British Columbians.

Five Steelworkers were re-elected in British Columbia: Doug Routley in Nanaimo-North Cowichan; Jagrup Brar in Surrey-Fleetwood; Katrine Conroy in Kootenay West; Harry Bains in Surrey-Newton and Raj Chouhan in Burnaby-Edmonds.

Premier John Horgan appointed two Steelworkers to cabinet: congratulations to Katrine Conroy

who will now serve as the Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development; and Harry Bains who returns as the Minister of Labour. As well, Raj Chouhan made history, becoming the first Indo-Canadian chosen to serve as Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.

In Saskatchewan, NDP leader Ryan Meili's "People First" plan promised to invest in people and stand against Sask. Party austerity cuts to health care and education.

Three Steelworkers ran as candidates in Saskatchewan. Jennifer Bowes, USW Local 5917, was elected as the MLA for Saskatoon University and was appointed the critic for Status of Women. Congratulations, Jennifer!

Malik Draz, President of USW Local 2014, was the candidate in Saskatoon Westview and Kelly Hardy, USW Local 9841, was the

candidate in Regina Walsh Acres. Although they did not get elected, they both ran strong campaigns.

Our six Steelworkers join two others currently serving in Legislatures in Western Canada including Tom Lindsey, MLA for Flin Flon in Manitoba, and Alberta NDP leader Rachel Notley, MLA for Edmonton-Strathcona.

When we are at the bargaining table, we cannot forget that there are three parties – the union, the employer and the government. That is why we must continue to connect the bargaining table with the ballot box. To level the playing field, it is important that workers have representatives who understand the labour movement and give a voice to all working people.

Thank you to all Steelworkers for getting involved. ■

USW CAMPAIGNS: STAND UP FOR S



Stand Up for Steel

The USW's Stand Up for Steel campaign calls on the federal government to:

- ▶ Ensure unions have the right to initiate trade cases
- ▶ Better define the impacts of unfair trade on workers and communities
- ▶ Establish a carbon border adjustment to reflect the real price of imported steel made in countries with lower environmental standards
- ▶ Demand the use of Canadian-made steel in infrastructure projects

JOHN CATTO still vividly remembers the stomach-turning spectacle, 12 years ago, when a massive cargo freighter arrived at the Great Lakes port of Oshawa, Ont.

"The city had a 'top hat ceremony' to celebrate the arrival of the first ship in the spring. But our members weren't in a celebratory mood," recalls Catto, President of USW Local 6571, representing workers at the Gerdau steel plant in Whitby, only a few kilometres from the Oshawa port.

Steelworkers at the Whitby plant produce high-quality steel, primarily rebar and merchant bar for the construction industry. In March 2009, 180 USW members at the plant were laid off.

"We went from running flat out – 24 hours a day, seven days a week on four crews – down to a two-crew operation. We were effectively cut in half," says Catto.

USW members were still reeling from the job losses that spring when the first ship of the year arrived in Oshawa. Its cargo? Steel rebar manufactured halfway around the world.

"When our 180 members were on their way out the door, the first ship at the Oshawa harbour

contained 17,000 tonnes of Turkish rebar," says Catto.

"Meanwhile, a Canadian steel plant, capable of making that very steel, isn't running at full capacity, and has a large chunk of its workforce laid off. It didn't make sense."

Over the years, more than one million tonnes of foreign steel have flowed through Oshawa's port, much of it purchased with Canadian tax dollars, for use in public infrastructure projects.

"We are still feeling the effects," says Catto. "We still haven't ramped back up to full capacity since then."

Stop using foreign steel

Steel dumping by foreign producers with lower labour and environmental standards has had negative impacts for Steelworkers across Canada who must continually fight against "a race to the bottom," Catto says.

Local 6571 members produce steel melted in an electric arc furnace – a process that is "cleaner and greener" than much of the foreign steel dumped into Canada, he adds. When the environmental impact of shipping by diesel-burning freighters is factored into the

carbon footprint equation, "we are miles ahead."

Still, Canada's federal and provincial governments refuse to prioritize Canadian-made steel, even in public infrastructure projects being built literally down the road from the Gerdau plant in Whitby, Catto notes.

"Many of our infrastructure projects – bridges along Highway 407 for example – don't contain any Canadian steel. Even though steel made right here in Whitby is among the highest-quality as well as the greenest steel on the planet."

Catto is among numerous USW local leaders across Canada who have been playing key roles in the union's political action campaign, Stand Up for Steel. The campaign is pressuring politicians to defend Canadian workers and steel producers and to crack down on unfair trade.

Due largely to evidence presented by USW members to the Canadian International Trade Tribunal, the union has had victories in several steel dumping cases.

"Stand up for Canadian steel. It's not too much to ask of our politicians," Catto says. ■

www.usw.ca/standupforsteel

STEEL – FORESTRY IS FOR EVERYONE



USW MEMBERS involved in the union's lobbying campaign, Forestry Is for Everyone, recently welcomed a favourable trade decision and Employment Insurance (EI) changes.

The World Trade Organization (WTO) last year upheld Canada's

position in the long-standing U.S. softwood lumber dispute. Since the U.S. imposition of softwood duties in 2017, Canada is estimated to have paid more than \$4 billion in duties.

The WTO ruling must lead to removal of U.S. duties and decisive action by the Canadian government to end the softwood lumber dispute, said Jeff Bromley, Chair of the USW Wood Council, representing 14,000 forest industry workers across Canada.

"The best solution for workers on both sides of the border is to reach a negotiated settlement on softwood lumber and bring an end to unfair duties," Bromley said.

The USW Wood Council also welcomed proposals to make it easier for forest industry workers to access EI benefits. However, the changes are either one-time or temporary measures, and the Wood Council is demanding the provisions be made permanent by the federal government.

The USW forestry campaign outlines five issues that will sustain the industry into the future, including that billions of dollars in duties being held in limbo at the Canada-U.S. border be used to backstop loan guarantees to forestry companies. ■

www.forestryisforeveryone.ca

Steelworkers Give Back

THE STEELWORKERS HUMANITY FUND made contributions totalling \$226,750 to 117 food banks across Canada before the holidays in 2020. USW members contribute to the Steelworkers Humanity Fund through clauses negotiated into collective agreements. usw.ca/humanity #USWCares



District 5 Salaberry-de-Valleyfield, Que.



District 6 Timmins, Ont.



District 3 Regina, Sask.

LEO W. GERARD

LEO W. GERARD, the USW's International President Emeritus, was honoured with the Wood Prize by the Broadbent Institute in 2020.

"The people who are instrumental in keeping society going are paid the least," Gerard said during his Wood Lecture, noting that the pandemic has revealed our society's deep inequalities.

Gerard received the prize for his decades-long service to the trade union movement and contributions to social and economic justice in Canada and around the world.

"It's never 'I'. It's 'we'."

– Leo W. Gerard, USW International President Emeritus

The prize is awarded annually in honour of the late, internationally renowned scholar Ellen Meiksins Wood, and recognizes the outstanding contributions of an academic, labour activist or writer.

In October 2020, Gerard delivered the Wood lecture – in an online format due to the pandemic – from the Steelworkers Hall in his hometown of Sudbury, Ont.

Entitled "My fight for democracy: Reflections on 50 years of union activism," Gerard framed his remarks around the idea of collective action. "It's never 'I'. In reality, it's 'we.' We need to build alliances and networks that can bring people to the fight for

on 50 Years of Union Activism

Wood Lecture for the Broadbent Institute



social and economic justice."

Gerard covered many United Steelworkers achievements through his career, including the start of the Women of Steel program; building alliances with environmental organizations to demonstrate we can have both good jobs and a clean environment; the union's work for strong occupational health and safety; and forming Workers Uniting with Unite the Union to build global union power.

"You can't have a better world unless you've got an activist, strong, effective labour movement. And you can't have a strong labour movement unless you're involved in having a strong, progressive society, fighting for equality," said Gerard.

Following his remarks, the event featured lively conversation between Gerard and the Atkinson Foundation's Ausma Malik. They discussed the implications for

working people of the U.S. election that was two weeks away at the time, and shared insights on the need for workers and unions to build coalitions beyond labour to strengthen our movement.

"There is a hunger for equality. There is a hunger for values that sustain people," said Gerard.



The 2020 Ellen Meiksins Wood Lecture

Gerard's presentation is available on the Broadbent Institute's YouTube channel. ■



NDP Gets Results for Workers

THE FEDERAL NDP is holding the Liberal government to account and getting results for workers – making Parliament work for people, especially during COVID-19. Let us count the ways:

1 Progress on Pharmacare: the NDP's Peter Julian actually introduced a private member's bill on universal Pharmacare, while the Liberals just keep studying it and making promises, as they have since 1997.

2 Paid sick days: first, the NDP forced a commitment from the Liberals to work towards 10 paid sick days for all workers. In September, under NDP pressure, the government expanded eligibility for the \$500-a-week, two-week Canada Recovery Sickness Benefit to cover more workers.

3 Support for students: in November, the NDP won unanimous consent for its motion calling on the Liberals to extend the pause on student loan repayments.

4 Momentum for a Wealth Tax: The Liberals, the Bloc and the Conservatives all voted against the NDP's motion for a wealth tax, even though Canadians support a tax on the super-rich – to help pay for programs people need like universal Pharmacare, dental care, a universal basic livable income and investments in housing.

"New Democrats are focused on fighting for people. Just as we have done every day of this pandemic. And we won't stop fighting – for your families, for your health, for good jobs and a healthier environment. In Parliament, and every day, we are fighting for you," said NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh.

Workers First Bill Reintroduced Congratulations to Steelworker and NDP MP Scott Duvall, who has introduced two worker-focused private member's bills: C-258 will protect workers in the event of a strike or a lockout; and C-259 will protect the pensions and benefits of workers caught up in corporate bankruptcy proceedings. ■

Not So Fast, Erin O'Toole

Conservative Leader Erin O'Toole says he's a friend of workers and unions. Not so fast. O'Toole's Conservatives and Trudeau's Liberals are fair-weather worker friends: they voted to order Canada Post workers back to work;

introduced anti-union laws (Conservatives) and pushed for a target-benefit pension bill (Liberals; Bill C-27) that fortunately did not become law before the last election. Of course, O'Toole wants votes from workers; but even conservative commentator Andrew Coyne says this about O'Toole: "Was he lying then? Or is he lying now?" ■

Join Team Unite CLC

Help Revitalize the Canadian Labour Congress Convention 2021

THE USW IS LOOKING FORWARD TO a strong Steelworkers delegation at the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) convention, which will be held online in June 2021.

Though we have had our differences with the CLC over the last few years, our union values the strength and solidarity of a strong central labour body – particularly a renewed congress.

The USW Canadian leadership is excited to support three candidates for CLC Executive:

Bea Bruske for CLC President:

Bruske is a National Vice-President on UFCW Canada's National Council Executive Board, Secretary-Treasurer of UFCW Local 832 in Manitoba and is a proud New Democrat.

Lily Chang for Secretary-Treasurer:

Chang is a Unit Officer with CUPE 79 and an Executive Board member of the Toronto and York



LILY CHANG
FOR CLC
SECRETARY-TREASURER

BEA BRUSKE
FOR CLC PRESIDENT

SIOBHAN VIPOND
FOR CLC EXECUTIVE
VICE-PRESIDENT

Region Labour Council. She's active with the Labour Council Women's Committee and chairs the Municipal Committee.

Siobhan Vipond for CLC

Executive Vice-President: Vipond is Secretary-Treasurer of the Alberta Federation of Labour, a member of IATSE Local 210 in Edmonton and Treasurer of Alberta's NDP.

"Our movement is strongest when we work together. I know that Bea, Lily and Siobhan are motivated to rebuild the unity of our movement through mobilizing and engaging our grassroots membership," said Ken Neumann, USW National Director.

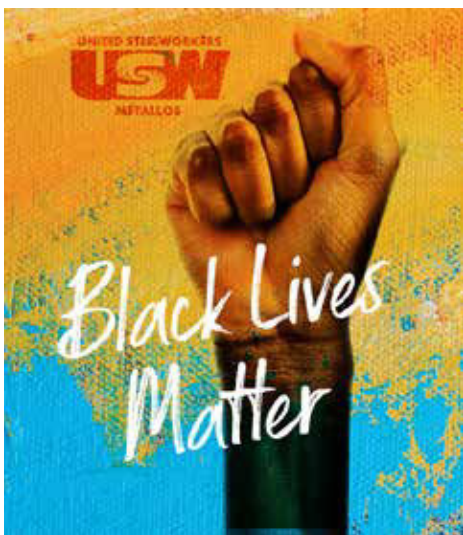
"We need to get back to workers recognizing that we have collective

power. I've been a labour activist from the age of 18 when I walked my first picket line. I learned that we're all there for the same reason – standing up for our rights," said Bea Bruske, candidate for CLC President.

"All three of us really want to make a difference and we all want to make the CLC the organization that it needs to be for Canadian workers," said Bruske.

Team Unite CLC are strong, dedicated and experienced, change-minded leaders committed to building a strong, unified CLC. Please plan to attend the CLC's virtual convention in June.

Join the team: teamuniteclc.ca
#TeamUniteCLC ■



USW Announces National Anti-Racism Working Group

INTERNATIONAL MOBILIZATION AGAINST RACISM has swelled since the murder of George Floyd in the U.S. at the hands of police last year. The USW has created a National Anti-Racism Working Group, which will consult with and help our union develop initiatives against racism in all its forms.

During Black History Month, Steelworkers celebrate the accomplishments of Black Canadian people in society, acknowledge the achievements of activists in our union and encourage Steelworkers to continue the struggle for equality. We recognize that despite advances in equality, racism has played a historic part in our national experience.

Read more in the USW's Black History Month statement at usw.ca. ■

USW Teams Up with Pro Athletes' Union for Online Media Training



The CFLPA's Ryan King hoisting the Grey Cup

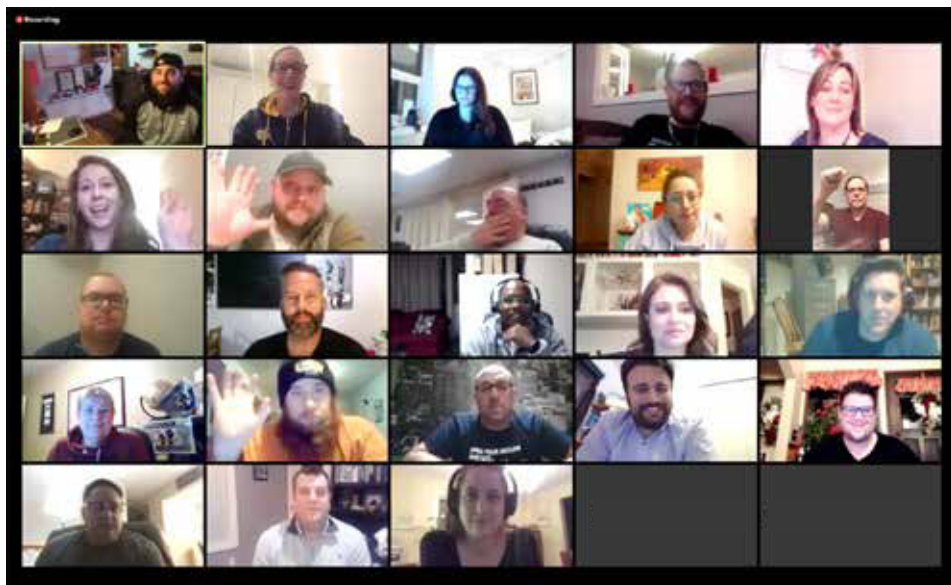
STEELWORKERS MEMBERS had the chance to do a type of drill-training with a professional athlete in December, during two online workshops on media training, featuring Ryan King from the Canadian Football League Players' Association (CFLPA) who plays with the Edmonton Football Club.

Drawing from his experiences doing media interviews, King provided Steelworkers with tips on preparing for a media interview and how to focus on a key message. He also provided strategies for responding to controversial or antagonistic questions.

The free, interactive online 90-minute workshops gave USW members the chance to learn from and practice with King, a nine-year CFL veteran, Grey Cup Champion and 3rd Vice-President of the CFLPA.

The training is a collaborative project between the USW and the CFLPA that builds on our two unions' Strategic Alliance partnership – sharing ideas and resources in the common goal of advancing rights and respect for employees in Canada.

In pandemic times when we can't get together in person, these online



It was one of the most useful courses I have been on in a long time! Ryan's sample comments were absolutely terrific.

– Margaret Bucknam, USW Local 1998 (Toronto)

workshops are a way to make USW opportunities available to the broader membership.

"It was one of the most useful courses I have been on in a long time! Ryan's sample comments were absolutely terrific," said USW Local 1998 member Margaret Bucknam.

The workshops were open to all Steelworkers members who were interested. The USW scheduled two

separate sessions over two weeks to accommodate members living in different time zones.

Following the success of the workshops, the USW and CFLPA will offer a French version of the workshop in early 2021.

In addition, USW staff intend to work with the CFLPA to offer a few more of these sessions in English, to make it possible for more USW members to participate. ■



Bring Back Manufacturing – and Good Jobs

COVID-19 HAS MADE IT more clear than ever that Canada needs a stronger domestic manufacturing sector.

Two USW staff members have co-authored a research paper documenting how the absence of a national industrial strategy and years of offshoring, outsourcing and just-in-time production has left Canada ill-equipped to deal with our most-basic needs in a time of crisis.

“In its most acute sense, this took the form of lack of access to essential medical and personal protective equipment,” state the authors – Mark Rowlinson, Assistant to USW National Director Ken Neumann, and Meg Gingrich, staff representative in the USW Research Department, who will become Assistant to the National Director, effective March 15.

The pandemic left federal and provincial governments scrambling to provide essential supplies to Canadians, but shortages have remained throughout the pandemic, notes the research paper, published recently by the

Public Policy Forum, a non-profit Canadian think tank.

“Ultimately, the pandemic shows the importance of a strong domestic manufacturing sector to produce what Canada needs. It has also shone a light on the decline of Canadian manufacturing sector over the last number of decades.”

Ultimately, the pandemic shows the importance of a strong domestic manufacturing sector to produce what Canada needs.

Canada must rebuild and sustain “a manufacturing economy that will be more competitive in a globalized economy and that will create good jobs while minimizing environmental impacts,” the paper states.

Industrial production accounts for only 10% of Canada’s gross domestic product, compared to

16% in 2000 and 30% in the 1950s. In 1980, 20% of all jobs in Canada were in manufacturing, compared to 9% as of last year. Wages have stagnated and private-sector unionization has declined, while Canada increasingly relies on extraction and export of unprocessed natural resources.

It didn’t have to be this way, the authors note, as demonstrated by countries with robust industrial strategies, such as Germany, which “has seen GDP from industrial production rise by more than 66% over the last 20 years.”

Canada must change course, develop a national industrial strategy and revitalize manufacturing with “policies that promote good jobs to benefit communities across the country, while reducing environmental impact.

“If Canada does not use this opportunity to rethink the role of manufacturing in our economy, it risks being left behind in a changing international economic order.” ■

If You Work, Take the Survey

National Survey on Workplace Violence and Harassment

HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE are serious health and safety issues that have no place in the workplace.

The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) has launched a national online survey to gauge the severity and measure the response to violence and harassment in Canada's workplaces. Researchers from Western University and the University of Toronto are conducting the survey.

harassment at work.

"This national survey is important so we can see what women are experiencing in their workplaces. We have so many different sectors where women are working now that we need to see all perspectives. We want to know their experience in dealing with risks to health and safety," said Caroline Demers, a member of USW Local 1-2010.

President, USW National Local 1944 and a member of the USW National Women's Committee.

"While this new survey speaks to violence and harassment within the workplace, the same logic applies. If we don't have a set of data from which to go forth, we will not correct the myriad of problems that exist. At the end, all we seek for all workers is a safe and healthy place to work," said Hokiro.

Let's make safe workplaces a reality for all workers



The Steelworkers union is encouraging all USW members to take part.

The survey will look at the experience of both unionized and non-unionized workers to uncover why employees choose to report or not report, and examine differences between their experiences.

All workers, of any gender, are encouraged to fill it out, whether or not they have personally experienced or witnessed violence and

Demers serves on the USW National Women's Committee and her local's Women's Committee. She is a community health worker at the Centre de santé communautaire du Grand Sudbury.

"USW Local 1944 was proud to lead the charge with our Hang Up on Abuse campaign, to highlight aggressive customer interactions, and that led to many changes for our members who work in call centres," said Donna Hokiro, Acting

USW Locals 1-2010 and 1944 are promoting the national survey to members through social media such as Facebook.

The survey is open to workers 18 years of age or older. It takes approximately 10 to 30 minutes to complete. All respondents will remain anonymous. The survey runs until April 2021.

Take the survey:
usw.ca/nationalsurvey ■

Supporting Workers Around the World

Pandemic response from the Steelworkers Humanity Fund

THE STEELWORKERS HUMANITY

FUND was swift to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic by doubling its annual contributions to food banks across Canada in March 2020, just as Canada began lockdown.

The Humanity Fund reached out globally as well, using established connections to support workers in Asia, Latin America and Africa.

Bangladesh: Clothing brands cancelled their orders from garment factories in Bangladesh. Millions of workers, the majority of them women, lost work with no financial savings to draw on.

The Bangladeshi government's nationwide lockdown instead prompted massive travel as many

workers scrambled to get back to the informal social safety net of their home villages.

The Humanity Fund already works with the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity (BCWS) and supplemented an ongoing project with a contribution of \$50,000 in emergency relief.

With matching funds from other Canadian unions, a total of \$110,000 helped BCWS distribute food baskets to thousands of Bangladeshi garment workers.

Mexico: The fund and local unions in District 5 have joined the Quebec-based Centre inter-national de solidarité ouvrière (CISO) to support the Authentic Labour Front (FAT, in Spanish) in distributing food baskets

and providing safety equipment such as masks, gloves and sanitizer to help landfill workers.

Brazil: The fund has also partnered with the Quebec-based Committee for Human Rights in Latin America, to support organizations and social movements.

These groups are responding to the emergency needs of indigenous groups, quilombola (black rural communities) and impoverished urban neighborhoods which were already suffering from the government's neoliberal policies.

Madagascar: The fund supported local union activists who organized awareness-raising events and the distribution of basic protective equipment and food staples in

villages near Fort-Dauphin.

Chile: Funds also were granted to a coalition of exiled Chileans living in Canada to support 10 grassroots Chilean women's organizations building a solidarity network that will provide basic assistance to affected communities.

"It is clear that everyone does not fare the same through COVID-19. The pandemic has amplified existing inequalities, which is why we are supporting initiatives seeking to address its longer-term effects on the most marginalized," said Ken Neumann, United Steelworkers National Director and President of the Steelworkers Humanity Fund. www.usw.ca/humanity ■





Un soutien aux travailleurs à l'échelle mondiale

Le Fonds humanitaire des Métallos réagit à la pandémie

LE FONDS HUMANITAIRE DES

MÉTALLOS a réagi rapidement à la pandémie de COVID-19 en doublant ses contributions annuelles aux banques alimentaires canadiennes en mars 2020, alors que le pays entrait en confinement.

Il a aussi agi à l'échelle mondiale par l'entremise de contacts établis pour soutenir les travailleurs en Asie, en Amérique latine et en Afrique.

Bangladesh : Les marques de vêtements ont annulé leurs commandes auprès des manufactures de vêtements au Bangladesh. Des millions de travailleuses et travailleurs, surtout des femmes, ont perdu leur travail, se retrouvant sans aucune épargne.

Le confinement national décrété par le gouvernement du Bangladesh a

entraîné des déplacements massifs alors que de nombreux travailleurs et travailleuses se dépêchaient à rentrer dans leurs villages pour profiter des mécanismes de protection sociale informels.

Le Fonds collabore déjà avec le Centre de solidarité des travailleuses et travailleurs du Bangladesh (BCWS) et a versé 50 000 \$ en secours d'urgence à un projet en cours.

Le BCWS a reçu 110 000 \$ en fonds de contrepartie d'autres syndicats canadiens, ce qui lui a permis de distribuer des paniers alimentaires à des milliers de familles.

Mexique : Avec le Centre international de solidarité ouvrière, le Fonds humanitaire et les sections locales du District 5 ont aidé le front authentique des travailleurs (FAT, en

espagnol) à distribuer des paniers alimentaires et à fournir de l'équipement de protection (masques, gants et désinfectant) aux travailleurs des sites d'enfouissement.

Brésil : Le Fonds s'est aussi associé au comité québécois des droits de la personne en Amérique latine en vue de soutenir des organismes et mouvements sociaux.

Ces groupes répondent aux besoins urgents des Autochtones, des Quilombolas (communautés noires rurales) et de la population des quartiers urbains défavorisés souffrant déjà des politiques néolibérales du gouvernement.

Madagascar : Le Fonds a soutenu les militants des sections locales des Métallos qui ont organisé des activités de sensibilisation et distribué

de l'équipement de protection et des denrées de base dans les villages près de Fort-Dauphin.

Chili : Le Fonds a aussi appuyé une coalition d'exilés chiliens au Canada afin de soutenir dix organisations locales de femmes chiliennes dans l'établissement d'un réseau de solidarité qui apportera une aide de première nécessité aux communautés touchées.

«Il est évident que la COVID-19 ne touche pas tous les gens de la même manière. La pandémie a accru les inégalités existantes, c'est pourquoi nous appuyons les initiatives visant à contrer ses effets à plus long terme sur les plus marginalisés», a souligné Ken Neumann, directeur national des Métallos et président du Fonds humanitaire.

www.metallos.ca/humanitaire