

USW@Work

A magazine for the United Steelworkers

June 2016



**Working with
Rachel Notley**

**The Toll on Steel
Pensioners**

Battling Uber

**Bargaining
Successes**



- Leo W. Gerard International President
- Ken Neumann National Director for Canada
- Stephen Hunt District 3 Director
- Alain Croteau District 5 Director
- Marty Warren District 6 Director
- Stan Johnson Int'l Secretary-Treasurer
- Thomas M. Conway Int'l Vice-President (Administration)
- Fred Redmond Int'l Vice-President (Human Affairs)
- Carol Landry Int'l Vice-President at Large
- Jon Geenen Int'l Vice-President
- Gary Beevers Int'l Vice-President



The Heart

More than 600 Steelworkers collectively determined our union's priorities for the next three years at our recent USW National Policy Conference in Montreal in April. The conference theme, Equality and Pride, is at the heart of

our union – in what we strive for, in how we treat each other and in what we hope the union means to our members.

We thank our new District 5 Director Alain Croteau for welcoming us to Montreal, and Quebec Steelworkers for providing some of the conference's most inspiring moments – from the principled stand for the next generation taken by our striking members at Lafarge Cement, to the taxi drivers leading the battle against Uber's illegal and destructive practices.

This issue of *USW@Work* includes a special supplement on our policy conference and additional articles on the many ways Steelworkers build equality and pride in our communities, in our country and beyond.

Our members' strength and solidarity is a continuous source of pride. We can be proud of the huge support for our members and pensioners at U.S. Steel in Hamilton and Nanticoke and Essar Steel Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie who are being left behind in corporate bankruptcies and restructuring. Hamilton's massive Stand Up For Steel rally demonstrated our resolve to fight for fairness for workers and retirees. We won't give up.

Our work for equality includes fighting for a \$15 minimum wage for all workers and working to close the gender pay gap. Canadian women still take home, on average, 30% less each year than what men earn. Steelworkers took part in Equal Pay Day actions nationwide on April 19, the day of the year that women's earnings catch up to the annual earnings of men from the year before. Unions are the best equalizers, but we have more work to do.

Through their generosity and compassion, Steelworkers families are unsung heroes in true stories of hope and community, helping newcomers fleeing war come to Canada. The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is supporting sponsorship groups that include USW members to resettle refugees from Burma (now known as Myanmar) and Syria.

The Humanity Fund also supported a labour delegation to Bangladesh in early 2016, to document progress for workers' rights and safety following the 2013 Rana Plaza factory



USW Canadian Leaders: Marty Warren, Ken Neumann, Alain Croteau, Stephen Hunt

Editor and Department Head: Bob Gallagher

Contributing Editors: David Cantatore, Clairandree Cauchy, Paula Ferreira, Etta Hall, Kim Hume, Frank Linhares, Daniel Mallette, Denis St. Pierre, Pat Van Horne, Andrew Urse, Brad West

Designer: Lesley Stodart

Direct inquiries and articles for *USW@Work* to: United Steelworkers Communications and Political Action Department
info@usw.ca



On the cover: Premier of Alberta and Woman of Steel Rachel Notley is now an honorary member of USW Local 1-207, her former local. She was presented with her membership card and a USW-made Women of Steel plaque during our National Policy Conference in Montreal.

Printed on USW-certified paper.



Join our online community of activists.

MAIL PUBLICATION AGREEMENT
#40006737
RETURN UNDELIVERABLE CANADIAN ADDRESSES TO:
United Steelworkers Communications Department
234 Eglinton Ave. E., 8th Floor, Toronto, ON M4P 1K7



of Our Union

collapse that killed more than 1,130 garment workers. Despite massive challenges, Steelworkers and the global labour movement are making a difference by bringing international pressure for improved conditions for workers in garment factories worldwide.

Our union is proud to have two new voices in Parliament! Steelworkers Erin Weir and Scott Duvall, elected as NDP MPs last October, are speaking up for workers and holding the Liberal government to account. We thank Tom Mulcair for his leadership, friendship and for making progressive policies popular again. As we embark on the process of choosing a new NDP leader, we are thankful for Tom's pledge to stay on as an elder in our party.

In solidarity,



Ken Neumann
National Director



Retirees in Jeopardy

U.S. Steel abandons pensioners p. 4



Unionizing Bangladesh

Post-Rana Plaza, garment workers organize p. 6



Sponsoring Refugees

Humanity Fund welcomes refugees p. 7



USW National Policy Conference 2016 Supplement

Our Soul is Equality

Equality, Pride, centre stage at conference p. 10



Young Leaders Take Action

Myth of whining millennials – debunked p. 14



Solidarity is Key @ Telus

TWU supports negotiating team p. 16



Two-faced, Two-tier

Quebec government should keep promise p. 17



Healthy Minds

Strengthening commitment to mental health p. 18



NDP Convention

NDPers "dream no little dreams" p. 21



Bargaining Successes

Agreement highlights p. 24



“We Feel Like We’re Begging”

Steel pensioners, workers suffer toll of corporate, government betrayal



Marilyn and Martin Rae have seen their savings depleted and their health compromised by the court-sanctioned elimination of their health benefits by U.S. Steel Canada.

This summer was to be extra special for Marilyn and Martin Rae.

The retired Hamilton couple had saved and planned for a memorable vacation to celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary.

But those plans – and savings – are now gone.

“That’s what retirement is supposed to be about – enjoying your ‘golden years’ and celebrating these milestones,” says Marilyn.

“They’ve taken that away from us.”

Over the last several months, the Raes have seen their savings depleted – and their health compromised – as a result of the court-sanctioned elimination of their health and prescription drug benefits by U.S. Steel Canada (USSC).

The Raes are among 20,000 retirees whose benefits were cut off by USSC last October. Eliminating pensioners’ benefits was part of a cost-cutting plan approved by the

Ontario judge presiding over USSC bankruptcy protection proceedings for its operations in Hamilton and Nanticoke, Ont.

“All of a sudden, you wake up one morning and go to the drug store and your pharmacist tells you, ‘sorry, you’re not covered for this anymore.’ And you say, ‘What? How can that be?’” says Martin, who worked 31 years at the former Stelco operations in Hamilton that were purchased by U.S. Steel.



"We worked our whole lives for our benefits. They weren't just given to us. We negotiated for them, we earned them ... we fought on the picket line for them," he says.

"That doesn't matter to U.S. Steel or the courts. They don't care what they've done to us."

In January, the Ontario government allocated temporary, limited funding to help USSC pensioners pay for medication. However, the very limited funds don't cover many medications, resulting in financial hardship for pensioners, and in too many cases, serious health problems for those who must go without their prescribed treatment.

"You have to pay full price up front and then try to get the money back. But a lot of prescriptions aren't covered" by the restrictive government program, says Martin. "It's deny, deny, deny."

"We feel like we're begging," says Marilyn, who needs life-sustaining medications to treat multiple sclerosis and the autoimmune disease lupus.

The Raes have depleted their savings in recent months, spending thousands on indispensable medications. They also are foregoing some drugs and medical tests that are no longer covered. Still, they say things could be worse.

One of Marilyn's medications costs several thousands dollars a month. Thanks to the intervention of her family doctor, the drug's manufacturer agreed to provide the medication at no charge.

"They're continuing the treatment on compassionate grounds," says Marilyn. "If I didn't have that medication, I wouldn't be walking today. I would start having seizures and I would end up in hospital."

The couple also points out that many other USSC retirees are in more dire straights.

"We know it's not just us," says Marilyn. "There are a lot of terrible stories out there – people with cancer, widows who are very sick, who are suffering."

Support for pensioners is one of the key measures in a steel industry action plan that United Steelworkers leaders proposed to the federal and Ontario governments last fall to address the steel crisis in Canada.

More than 120,000 direct and indirect jobs in Canada also are at risk from the steel crisis. Along with U.S. Steel Canada, Essar Steel Algoma in Sault Ste. Marie also is in bankruptcy protection proceedings. Other steel producers such as Evraz and Tenaris have shut down or cut production due to the crisis. The

USW represents workers at all of those operations.

The crisis is caused by low world prices; massive, illegal dumping of subsidized foreign steel from countries with abysmal labour and environmental standards; and the lack of government action in Canada.

Although USW leaders proposed a steel industry action plan last November, neither the federal nor Ontario governments have taken meaningful steps to even begin to address the crisis.

Earlier this year, thousands of Steelworkers and supporters from across Ontario and beyond attended a massive rally in Hamilton to demand justice for workers and pensioners and government support for Canada's steel industry.

"We need more than talk from our governments. We need our provincial and federal governments to recognize the steel crisis and take immediate action," USW District 6 Director Marty Warren told the rally.

"We need a government that will change the law so that it protects pensioners and workers – not multinational corporations," Warren said. ■



RANA PLAZA

Steelworkers helping Bangladesh garment workers organize

Kalpona Akter says that while much more needs to be done, Bangladeshi garment workers are making progress.

Three years after the 2013 Rana Plaza factory collapse killed 1,138 workers and injured 2,500 others, Steelworkers continue to help courageous garment workers in Bangladesh fight for basic rights and safe workplaces.

Steelworkers are supporting incredible activists such as Kalpona Akter organize dozens of unions at Bangladeshi garment factories, where 80% of workers are women.

Akter leads the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity – partly funded by the Steelworkers Humanity Fund – that trains and empowers garment workers to organize to improve their working conditions.

Akter was 12 years old when she began working in a garment factory, where she endured the abusive and dangerous conditions that continue to plague the industry. She was still a teenager when she was blackballed by factory owners for union activism.

Akter, who has been jailed and harassed for her activism, was a special guest speaker to the USW National Policy Conference in April in Montreal, where she thanked Steelworkers for their support. While much more needs to be done, Bangladeshi garment workers are making progress, she said.

“Women on the factory floors are beginning to feel like their voices are finally being heard ... and that’s a real step forward.”

USW activists Melanie McConnell and Colleen Burke were inspired by Akter and other courageous workers during a fact-finding visit to Bangladesh last February, sponsored by the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

“I am so proud that the Humanity Fund supports the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity. They are doing amazing work,” said Burke, President of USW Local 1998 at the University of Toronto. “One organizer said ‘even if I am killed for what I do, I know I’ve been working for the good of humanity.’”

“Their stories are so striking, so disturbing,” said McConnell, Local 7619 Women of Steel Co-Chair at Highland Valley Copper near Kamloops, B.C. “They’ve been threatened, beaten, sexually and physically harassed. Their courage to stand up and fight for their rights, it leaves me in awe.”

The Steelworkers also met survivors and relatives of victims of Rana Plaza and the Tazreen garment factory fire that killed 117 workers.

“We heard from a woman who survived the Tazreen fire but she lost her son,” said McConnell. “Her son helped several workers escape and he kept trying to save others until he died in the fire. Hearing stories like that, there were no dry eyes in that room.”

You can read the Humanity Fund delegation’s report at www.usw.ca/rana-plaza-report-2016. ■



A refugee family from Burma (now known as Myanmar), enjoyed their first winter in northern Ontario: Father Aung Ngwe, mother Pow Bow and their children Htsy Ku Paw, Ta Hay Gay, Than Thi Paw and Nik Ta Bu.

Welcome to Canada!

Steelworkers sponsor refugees

There is a 10-year-old boy sitting in the mayor's chair in Sault Ste. Marie. He's holding a gavel and grinning so widely everyone else in the room is smiling. He's only been in Canada for a month. How did he get so far, so fast!?

The boy's family is from Burma (now known as Myanmar) and he was born in a refugee camp in Thailand.

He and his two sisters, a brother and his parents, arrived in November. They have an apartment, the kids are in school with the youngest in childcare and the parents are taking English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes.

The family's Steelworker connection is Murray McLean, a member of USW Local 2724 (Essar Steel Algoma), who

joined a group that formed at his church a year-and-a-half ago to sponsor a refugee family.

When the Steelworkers Humanity Fund announced it would assist Syrian refugee sponsorship groups that included USW members, McLean got in touch and asked that the fund consider his group also. The group's application was successful, receiving \$7,500 from the fund towards their sponsorship.

McLean says learning English is the biggest barrier to employment for the father of the family. He hopes the ESL classes will provide the father with basic language skills so that he can find work initially in either hospitality or the service industry.

In preparation for the family's arrival, McLean's group

found two local college and university students who speak the Karen language. They have been indispensable in translating for the family during their first weeks here.

Learning English might be difficult. But how about opening a bank account? The Karen people don't have surnames. The appointment at the credit union took a little longer than McLean had expected because they had to negotiate accepting the family members' first names as their surnames.

McLean is all smiles talking about preparation for the family's arrival. The group found and rented an apartment in a neighbourhood close to childcare and grocery stores and the landlord was welcoming and supportive. The childcare centre had space for the

youngest, who is two, and the centre gifted back the year's fee to place him.

McLean's group started through his church and includes 16 people. McLean emphasized the group effort beyond the congregation. Many more volunteers are now involved, providing extra help learning English, for example.

"It has changed the people on our committee as much as it's changed the family. They've been changed by this experience in all good ways."

– Murray McLean, USW Local 2724

The group drafted a budget of \$30,000 to support the family in its first year. Raising the money wasn't the hard part, and McLean believes the rewards are as much for the members of his group as for the family. Quite a few of the committee members are retired, so they have the daytime hours to help – attending medical and other appointments. The group has divided the responsibilities and formed committees so no one member of the group is overwhelmed.

"It has changed the people on our committee as much as it's changed the family. They've been changed by this experience in all good ways," says McLean.

Visiting Sault Ste. Marie City Hall and meeting the mayor is just one of the many welcoming activities the family has enjoyed. McLean took them skating in the winter and the two older children got skateboards for their birthdays and are enrolled in soccer for the summer.

From Civil War to a Fresh Start

A Syrian family of five: two parents, an 8-year-old boy, 6-year-old girl and 4-year old boy, are now living in Thorncliffe Park in the east end of Toronto after arriving from Ghana in December.

Their suburban neighbourhood outside Damascus was bombed three years ago and they moved to Ghana to escape the war. While in Ghana, all five of them learned some English, which has made it easier for them to adjust to life in Canada.

Pia Berger, of USW Local 1998, staff at the University of Toronto, is a member of the family's sponsorship group. The 10-member group applied and received \$7,500 from the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

"I was reading the news, horrified at the civil war in

Welcoming activities included learning to skate.

Syria, disturbed at how little attention is paid. A relative suggested sponsoring a family and I saw that Lifeline Syria was hosting a meeting at Toronto City Hall," says Berger. After that July meeting, she recruited her parents and other neighbours in Toronto's east end to form the October 7th Refugee Sponsorship Group.

Berger follows USW social media feeds and read about the Steelworkers Humanity Fund's initiative to support Syrian refugees through active sponsorship groups like hers.

"I don't look at it as an inspirational thing," says Berger on what might interest other USW members in getting involved. "It has been a wonderful process – getting to know this family, being able to provide them with stability and a fresh start. Their future was up in the air. Now they are settled in Canada and can look to a bright future.

"The group of 10 of us have the time to do this. If you are in a position to help, then you should help."

Berger's group aimed to raise more than the \$28,000 required to sponsor a refugee family, to cover one year's living expenses in Canada. Help from the Steelworkers Humanity Fund has made a big difference.

"The 10 of us share the load. We have the support of nine other people and all of us are committed. It is a time commitment and a moral commitment," she says.

"It has been a wonderful process – getting to know this family, being able to provide them with stability and a fresh start."

– Pia Berger, USW Local 1998



The family visited the Sault Ste. Marie City Council chambers and the eldest, 10-year-old Ta Hay Gay, sat in the mayor's chair.

What USW Locals Can Do

- ✓ Find out if any members of your local are interested in or already participating in a private sponsorship group (for example a church group, community group or "group of five" or more).
- ✓ Make a donation to the Steelworkers Humanity Fund, directed to Refugee Support.
- ✓ Groups that include Steelworker members or SOAR members who are considering refugee sponsorship should contact the Steelworkers Humanity Fund at 416-544-5994, humanityfund@usw.ca, or 800-234 Eglinton Ave. E., Toronto, M4P 1K7.

To date the Steelworkers Humanity Fund has been able to make commitments to 13 different groups sponsoring refugee families. So far, four families have arrived in Canada. Others are still waiting for Canada's refugee system to complete the processing. ■

Demystifying Refugees

While we consider ourselves generous and open-minded, many Canadians are opposed to accepting more refugees. The Canadian Council for Refugees takes apart some of the myths.

- ✓ Refugees are not threats to security – they are seeking security and protection from threats to their lives and go through a security screening process before they get approved to come here.

- ✓ Families become contributors to society, both economically and socially. Those who are supported by families have an easier time getting established.
- ✓ Canada has room to receive more refugees. Canada is ranked number 33 according to the number of refugees per capita.
- ✓ The cost of health care for refugees and refugee claimants is only 10% of that of other Canadians.

USW National Policy Conference 2016 Equality Lies at the Heart

Members are our union's strength. That was evident at the 53rd USW National Policy Conference in Montreal, held this past April. More than 600 Steelworkers gathered to set our policies, confront our challenges and move our union forward.

Delegates learned from inspiring speakers, met and engaged with other Steelworkers from across the country, heard powerful panels, debated hundreds of grassroots resolutions from USW locals and gained insights and experiences to take home to share with their members.

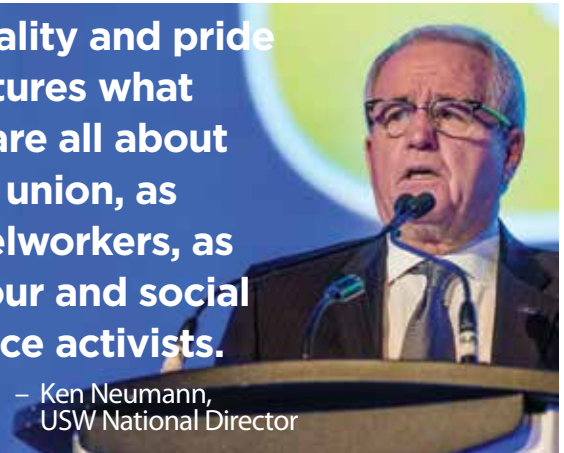
The conference opened with an Aboriginal

welcome and greetings from new USW District 5 Director Alain Croteau and local Member of the National Assembly Martine Ouellet. USW National Director Ken Neumann's remarks focused on how the conference theme – equality and pride – captures the essence of what we are about, as a union, as Steelworkers, as labour and social justice activists.

The four-day conference agenda was packed. Delegates heard from speakers and panel discussions and took part in debate on hundreds of policy resolutions. The conference benefitted from the attendance of retirees and our younger

Equality and pride captures what we are all about as a union, as Steelworkers, as labour and social justice activists.

– Ken Neumann,
USW National Director



activists, NextGen members, who came to Montreal to attend their own SOAR and NextGen conferences prior to the policy conference.

Highlights

Conference highlights are hard to select: the moving and powerful session on the Steelworkers

Aboriginal Issues Project; hearing from former Governor of Michigan Jennifer Granholm on strategies for job creation in solar, wind and battery energy industries; rallying through the streets of Montreal to call for a law banning two-tier pension plans; Napoleon Gomez of Mexico's Los

Resolutions Highlights • Resolutions

Highlights of just some of the resolutions passed by delegates to the USW National Policy Conference:

Trade and the Economy

- ✔ Rejecting the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP); pushing for effective trade remedies to stop foreign product dumping; including workers in trade agreement discussions; opposing the outsourcing and offshoring of Canadian jobs in telecommunications.

Health, Safety and Environment

- ✔ Developing a comprehensive training program to deal with workplace mental health issues; continuing to advocate for legislative measures that address climate change with job creation, workers' interests and just transition at the core; lobbying by all locals, area councils to all levels of government on our Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law campaign to enforce Criminal Code amendments on workplace deaths.

Part of Our Union

Mineros speaking on what's possible when workers unite all over the world to fight for rights; International President Leo W. Gerard encouraging delegates to be mentors to help our union grow and be a voice for justice.

We were thrilled to host Rachel Notley, a Woman of Steel and Premier of the first NDP government in Alberta. Notley highlighted her government's early achievements including tax reform that's fairer for working families, stopping cuts to public services like health care and education and setting Alberta on a path to a \$15 minimum wage. Steelworkers also gave a warm welcome to

NDP Leader Tom Mulcair just days before the NDP convention in Edmonton.

On our theme of equality and pride, our friend and ally IndustriALL General Secretary Jyrki Raina called for the labour movement to give more space to women and our Next Generation, while reminding us that joining a union is against the law in many countries.

Educational elements included learning about the proud history of Steelworkers activism in Quebec. Delegates took part in interactive opportunities using text messages to opt-in to activism and answer survey questions.

Delegates and members not able to attend in

person were able to follow and participate in conference proceedings on Facebook, Twitter and YouTube.

We learned from economist Armine Yalnizyan and public policy researcher Nicolas Zorn that growing income inequality is bad for workers, bad for our health and bad for the economy. Solutions include organizing more workers into unions to build our middle class.

Workers and unions must also be part of the solution to climate change. This ties in to supporting a viable domestic steel industry. Domestic steel has a lower carbon footprint – one-third that of foreign steel.

In addition to keynote speakers, rank-and-file members shared their experiences through a number of panels including sessions on Aboriginal issues, growing USW membership, international solidarity and diversity.

Steelworkers are making positive change. Across the country, USW members are bringing our Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law campaign to municipal councils for endorsement. Better enforcement and jail time for company executives when workers die on the job will make all workplaces safer.

The room was on its feet in supportive standing ovations for

Highlights • Resolutions Highlights

Political Action

- ✔ Lobbying the federal government to put workers first when big businesses claim bankruptcy; including labour's voice at the federal level and holding the Liberal government accountable for passing needed pro-worker reforms including expanding the CPP and restoring civil liberties.

Human Rights and Equality

- ✔ Continuing our work with women's organizations towards a National Action Plan on Violence Against Women; adopting and promoting the USW Aboriginal

Reference Group's Statement of Principles; establishing an ongoing national Aboriginal committee to engage members of Aboriginal ancestry and to bargain collective agreements that respect Aboriginal rights; developing an education and awareness program on Aboriginal issues for both union staff and activists; supporting Indigenous women and organizations to ensure the national inquiry on murdered and missing Indigenous women is followed through; continuing support for mentoring programs for NextGen members, Women of Steel and other under-represented groups.

two visiting groups of members struggling for justice: members of USW Local 6658 on strike against Lafarge Cement in Quebec and the Montreal-area taxi workers, members of Regroupement des travailleurs autonomes Métallos (RTAM, Organization of USW independent workers). World-renowned for his



international human rights activism, widely acclaimed as Canada's greatest living

orator, Stephen Lewis delivered an extraordinary speech to our policy

conference on a difficult topic – the scandal of sexual violence against women and children by UN peacekeepers. Lewis praised the Steelworkers' record of fighting for labour and human rights everywhere.

Delegates braved cold and rain to rally outside a nearby Telus office, sending a strong message to the company to bargain fairly with TWU, USW National Local 1944. We welcomed a number



Resolutions Highlights • Resolutions

Steelworkers Humanity Fund

- ✔ Urging all local unions to collect four cents per hour for every lost time hour to contribute to the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

Next Generation

- ✔ Developing our Next Generation of Steelworker activists to take on greater roles in our union; using social media to improve outreach to young members; establishing

a Steelworkers National Community Day of Action for members to volunteer in our communities.

International Solidarity

- ✔ Educating, advocating and campaigning to pressure Canadian extractive (mining) companies and retail brands to respect human rights and pushing for stronger action by Canada to promote union rights, living wages and accident compensation for workers in Bangladesh and other countries with similar working conditions;

of guests for the international solidarity session including Kalpona Akter from the Bangladesh Centre for Worker Solidarity. Akter reminded delegates of the aftermath of the 2013 Rana Plaza garment factory collapse in Bangladesh. Garment workers continue to struggle for their rights and for health and safety. One of the last sessions of the conference focused on retirement security, including an interactive

segment where delegates could participate in a poll on pensions using text messages.

“As we chart our course for the next three years, we are guided by the knowledge that equality lies at the heart of everything we do as a union,” said USW National Director Ken Neumann during his closing remarks.

“In the name of equality and pride we embrace the struggle against corporate greed, globalization,

unfair trade deals and the regressive policies of neo-liberal governments. In the name of pride and equality, we will stand up for the interests of our members, for the interests of our pensioners and for the interests of our communities. Equality and pride will remain as guiding principles as we look together to the future. Solidarity!”

USW conferences are a chance to gather, share and inspire. When

delegates return to their locals following these events, they enhance the strength of our members to demand justice, fairness and greater equality.

Watch conference speakers: www.usw.ca/video

View photo galleries: www.flickr.com/photos/usw-metallos/albums

Experience the conference via Twitter:

www.twitter.com/#uswmetallos16 ■



Highlights • Resolutions Highlights

encouraging local unions to take part in the World Social Forum in Montreal, August 9-14, 2016.

Growing New USW Membership

- ✔ Committing to more effective use of digital tools to support member engagement, including courses to train activists and experimenting with digital tools in new member organizing campaigns; lobbying for laws that protect workers' rights to join and be represented by a union; emphasizing mergers and organizing for larger bargaining units; integrating an organizing culture into all aspects of our union.

Retirement and Pensions

- ✔ Changing bankruptcy laws to put workers and pensioners' rights first, ahead of banks and other lenders in bankruptcy and restructuring situations; continuing our work with other unions, faculty associations and universities to create a sector-specific jointly sponsored pension plan (JSPP); continuing our support of the Canadian Labour Congress Retirement Security for Everyone campaign to double the Canada Pension Plan/Quebec Pension Plan (CPP/QPP).

Young Steelworkers Take Action

Debunking The Myths of Whining Millennials

An all-too-common narrative has developed about young workers. Too often millennials, born roughly between 1980 and the mid-1990s, are depicted as lazy, privileged and spoiled complainers. Millennials are frustrated by these inaccurate portrayals that seem harmless or funny, but disguise the real generational economic situation facing young workers.

These assumptions mean that when millennial workers – who are facing real problems such as low wages, contract work, high student debt and rising tuition – speak up about the collective problems they face, the complaints are often dismissed as whining.

Millennials are facing distinct

problems from those of previous generations. According to Statistics Canada, the median wage for workers aged 17-24 has declined since 1981 for men (14.2%) and women (6.5%), translating into \$4,638 and \$1,809 less per year, respectively. And women are still paid less overall in that age group. One half of young workers are employed in either food services or retail – sectors with low wages and low unionization rates. Millennial workers are also overrepresented in part-time jobs compared to their older peers.

On top of it all, getting an education and starting an independent life is now far more expensive. Housing is increasingly inaccessible and university costs more, with tuition now four times higher than in 1981. Average student debt

after four years of study is now \$28,000, according to the Canadian Federation of Students.

This is a symptom of a concerted attack on public services and broader shifts in economic and public policy since the 1990s, such as the failure to protect manufacturing jobs, a move towards a service-based and resource-based economy and corporate moves towards contract positions and part-time work.

All workers are affected by this corporate agenda and public policy shifts. But millennials are particularly hard hit and have legitimate grievances. Often painted as lazy and entitled, in reality, young workers are actually doing something about the issues they face.



USW members march through the streets of Montreal calling for a ban on two-tier pensions.

NextGen Training and Action

On April 2, 2016, in Montreal, Steelworkers aged 35 and under attended the second USW NextGen Conference.

Through its theme United We Bargain, the conference took direct aim at the assumptions about lazy millennials. In highlighting the need for collective action to confront the economic situation facing millennials, the conference included discussion and direct action against two-tier pension schemes that subject newer workers to inferior pensions based on the date of hire.

National Director Ken Neumann reminded participants of a lesson that transcends generations: we must connect our collective workplace action with

broader social struggles. Achieving improvements inside and outside of the workplace is a marathon. Challenging the generational problems we face may not be solved immediately, but that cannot deter or delay us from taking action.

In the words of a conference panellist, “history doesn’t necessarily repeat itself, but there are a lot of lessons we can learn from history.”

Young Steelworkers also discussed their organizing efforts in remote communities and reinforced the importance of connecting our union work with our political activism with the NDP. Participants emphasized that youth having a say in the workplace and in public policy will help all working people.

Gabriel Nadeau-Dubois, a leader of Quebec’s Maple Spring student protests in 2012, provided

a political and economic analysis of the situation facing students and young workers in Quebec, demonstrating how organizing and mobilizing can achieve specific goals. The alliances between students and others in Quebec in 2012 forced the government to abandon its plan to raise post-secondary tuition rates.

Nadeau-Dubois underscored how this convergence of activists did not just happen – it took a lot of work, mobilizing and building a movement. Students had to overcome a pervasive neoliberal ideology that individualizes economic and political problems and creates cynicism about the possibility of collective change. Ultimately, it was the arduous work of student leaders over years that built the resistance to proposed tuition hikes, with support from unions and all parts of society.

Finally, NextGen members

from across Canada joined with striking members of District 5 Local 6658, from Lafarge Cement, in a direct action against Quebec’s Liberal government.

The NextGen members were among nearly 600 activists who rallied outside the Quebec Premier’s office to demand an end to two-tier pension plans – a pre-election pledge the Liberal government has not fulfilled.

NextGen members learned to identify an issue, make a specific demand and tie it to a larger economic and social struggle. We raised our voices, gained experience in addressing issues facing millennials and generated ideas for more local actions.

If you are a USW member aged 35 or under, sign up for NextGen at www.usw.ca/nextgen or on Facebook at facebook.com/groups/uswnextgeneration. ■



Members support each other in tough Telus bargaining

Members of TWU, USW Local 1944 across Canada are engaged in their union like never before, supporting each other and their bargaining team's determined efforts to negotiate a fair collective agreement with corporate giant Telus.

"Our members have been building momentum and public support throughout the bargaining process. We're seeing greater membership awareness and engagement in this set of negotiations than we've ever seen before," said TWU, USW

Local 1944 President Lee Riggs.

"Our members know it's their hard work that has made Telus such a successful company and they expect a contract that treats them with fairness, dignity and respect," Riggs said.

Local 1944 represents over 11,000 Telus employees working in customer service, call centres, network support, installation and repair positions. There has been extensive bargaining since the local's previous collective agreement with Telus expired on Dec. 31,

2015. Negotiations were continuing at press time for *USW@Work*.

Local 1944 members have engaged in public actions, social media and workplace mobilization to demonstrate their solidarity and support for their bargaining committee.

Members are kept informed through Communication Action Teams that have been set up in Telus workplaces in British Columbia, Alberta, Ontario and Quebec.

Text updates, emails and leaflets are shared regularly with the membership. Members across the country have been sharing selfies taken while proudly holding placards declaring, "I Support My Bargaining Committee."

Local 1944 members, joined by supporters from other USW locals, have distributed leaflets outside 25 Telus flagship stores across Canada, generating positive reaction from thousands of Telus customers.

During the USW National Policy Conference held in April in Montreal, 300 Steelworkers from across Canada rallied outside Telus offices to demand a fair deal for Local 1944 members.

"There is tremendous solidarity among our members and incredible support from our union," said Riggs.

"The bottom line is, it's our members who make Telus a success and we all know Telus can afford to negotiate a fair and positive collective agreement." ■



Spirit AND SOLIDARITY

- ✓ 2015 revenues increased by 4.2%; operating income rose by 4.9%.
- ✓ Shareholders received \$1.6 billion in dividends and share buybacks.
- ✓ For 2016, Telus expects revenue growth up to 3%, net income growth between 5% and 12% and a 10% dividend hike.
- ✓ From 2011 to 2015, Telus paid \$6.4 billion to shareholders.

Banning Two-Tier Pensions

Steelworkers call on Quebec government to actually adopt its own policy

Steelworkers are leading a labour movement campaign to compel Quebec's Liberal government to actually adopt its own policy on pension fairness for young workers.

passed a resolution calling on the government to ban employers from imposing two-tier pension plans in workplaces, noting such practices discriminate against young workers. However, the Liberal

Quebec Premier Philippe Couillard, exposing the government's hypocrisy and demanding action. The demonstrators included dozens of young Steelworkers from across Canada who attended the USW Next Generation Conference and the USW National Policy Conference.

Corporations are trying to eliminate defined benefit pensions for young workers even when there is no financial justification, said François Cardinal, Vice-President of Steelworkers Local 6658, whose members are on strike against Lafarge Cement in Saint-Constant, Que., over the company's attempt to impose two-tier pensions.

"Our pension plan is 112% funded. They just

want to take it away for purely ideological reasons," Cardinal said at the Montreal rally. "They want to deny a decent retirement to young workers ... We're saying NO!"

The day after the demonstration, Quebec's labour minister pledged to create an advisory committee to examine the merits of new legislation on the two-tier pension issue.

The Local 6658 strikers were given a heroes' welcome at the USW National Policy Conference, as well as \$7,500 in individual donations from the conference floor and another \$63,000 from various locals, including \$40,000 from Local 9700 from the ABL smelter in Bécancour, Que. ■

They want to deny a decent retirement to young workers ... We're saying NO!

— François Cardinal, USW Local 6658 Vice-President



"We rarely agree with the Liberals but in this case we do, and we're asking them to keep their promise," said Alain Croteau, Quebec Steelworkers Director.

At its recent convention, the Quebec Liberal Party

government has to date refused to pass legislation to implement its own policy.

In April, more than 600 activists, most of them young workers, marched through downtown Montreal to the offices of



Healthy Minds

Steelworkers to promote workplace mental health

A renowned mental health advocate is praising the Steelworkers' commitment to address mental health issues in our workplaces across the country.

In a keynote address at the USW National Policy Conference in Montreal, Mark Henick encouraged the union to forge ahead with an initiative to promote workplace mental health for our members.

"Mental health, whether it's in your workplace or in your life, is a human right. It's your role, as an individual, as a union, to fight for that right, for that right to be healthy and safe," Henick told over 600 Steelworkers activists.

Prior to Henick's address, policy conference delegates voted unanimously to direct our union to develop a training program to "assist our member representatives in dealing with workplace mental health issues."

Staff in the USW's Education and Health and Safety departments are already collaborating on this project. Once completed, the new program will be added to the outstanding package of Steelworkers education and training courses provided to union activists.

Henick's address to USW delegates reinforced how crucial it is for the

union to help members deal with mental health issues in the workplace and to promote greater awareness of this growing health and safety issue.

"What ends up happening in workplaces is that these problems are left to fester for so long that people end up going off work. Or they end up having an incident or an accident in the workplace," he said.

"It's just over the last couple of years that we've been talking about this from a workplace context – ever since the release of the voluntary National Standard for Psychological Health and Safety."

Toronto-based Henick has

been promoting mental health awareness in Canada and around the world since his early 20s. He was the youngest-ever president of a provincial Canadian Mental Health Association division and is the youngest director of the Mental Health Commission of Canada.

Henick's advocacy is informed by his personal experience with mental illness – including multiple suicide attempts as a teenager – and the pervasive stigma that remains a major barrier to addressing mental health in our society.

View Mark Henick's address to Steelworkers at www.usw.ca/mentalhealth. ■

Workplace Mental Health

- ① 1 in 3 workplace disability claims in Canada are related to mental health issues
- ① 1 in 5 Canadians say their workplace is a source of anxiety, depression and other mental health concerns
- ① 44% of Canadian workers say they have, or have had, mental health issues
- ① Mental illness costs the Canadian economy \$51 billion per year



Mark Henick

On the streets and in the courts, Quebec taxi drivers are stepping up their campaign against the unregulated, unfair and wage-suppressing practices of U.S. corporate giant Uber.

For months, taxi drivers led by the Steelworkers-affiliated group Regroupement des travailleurs autonomes Métallos (RTAM) have been increasing pressure on the Quebec government to pass legislation to deal with Uber, which is accused even by some government representatives of operating illegally and evading taxes.

From licensing and insurance, to safety inspections, certifications and public oversight,

Uber and its unlicensed, uninsured drivers do not abide by the same regulations, nor do they incur the same costs that are imposed on regular taxi drivers.

Uber's unregulated practices drive down wages and take significant revenues and taxes out of the communities and provinces where it operates.

The taxi workers' campaign includes two-pronged legal action against Uber – an injunction to stop the company from operating in Quebec and a class-action lawsuit seeking financial damages. Uber attempted to have the

legal action thrown out by the courts, but failed, allowing the taxi workers to proceed with their case.

Following parliamentary hearings into Uber's operations earlier this year, Quebec government officials were indicating that legislation could be introduced as early as this spring. However, as of press time, no legislation had been tabled, leading RTAM members and other taxi workers to step up public protests and court action.

For months the taxi workers have staged massive demonstrations in several cities to pressure the government, in particular Premier Philippe

Couillard, who has been criticized for delaying any meaningful action to address Uber's unfair competitive practices.

On April 8, several hundred drivers held a rally and blockaded Couillard's Montreal offices, demanding a commitment from the premier to support a level playing field in the taxi industry.

Two days earlier, the Quebec taxi drivers received a rousing, unanimous show of support from the 700 Steelworkers' activists from across Canada attending the USW National Policy Conference in Montreal. ■

Uber out



Collage photos: Robert Devet, Halifax Media Co-op; Serge Landry, CIC New Brunswick; B.C. Federation of Labour; Manitoba Federation of Labour; United Steelworkers



Minimum Wage on the Move

Steelworkers are well-versed in the battle for fair wages. For USW members working in precarious jobs such as security guards and as casual employees, this struggle continues. Yet, in 2016, the tide may be turning. The call for a fair, \$15 minimum wage is becoming too resounding for policy-makers to ignore.

At the grassroots level, organizations like \$15 and Fairness garner national attention. On April 15, the group joined with labour federations and unions like the USW at rallies across the country calling for provincial legislatures to raise the minimum wage. USW took part in actions in Kamloops, Vancouver, Toronto and more.

In the U.S., a number of cities and the State of New York are on a path towards a \$15 minimum wage including Seattle, San Francisco and Los Angeles.

\$15 and Fairness

Only the NDP stood for a \$15 federal minimum wage in last year's federal election. Provincially, Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath and Alberta Premier Rachel Notley both support a \$15 minimum wage.

In 2015, The Workers' Action Centre reported that the percentage of low-wage labour increased by 11% since 2004 creating a 57% wage gap between women working minimum wage and full-time jobs. The Alberta Federation of Labour notes the fastest-growing population of low-wage workers in the province is over age 55. Low-wage workers made up 33% of Ontario's labour force in 2014, according to The Workers' Action Centre.

The Workers' Action Centre cites academic research showing that

implementing minimum wage increases has not led to job loss, even during periods of high unemployment. Most provinces and territories increased the minimum wage during the recent 2007-2009 recession without attributable job loss.

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives senior economist Armine Yalnizyan has argued that increasing the minimum wage boosted Canada's economic growth and increased household spending power.

These nationwide benefits are too loud to ignore. As part of a broad, progressive coalition, the USW will continue to be a strong ally in the struggle for a \$15 minimum wage.

www.15andfairness.org ■

2016

Federal NDP Convention *Bringing Passion to Policy*

A strong, 100-plus Steelworkers delegation took an active role in the federal NDP Convention in April in Edmonton, debating policy and bringing workers' issues to the convention floor.

While leadership issues dominated the headlines, policy discussions and speeches on issues were the heart of the proceedings.

The Steelworkers brought with them the priority issues debated at our USW National Policy Conference only days earlier.

The Liberals' job-killing Trans-Pacific Partnership received universal condemnation from NDP convention-goers. USW Local 1005 members got a strong voice of support from New Democrats in

their fight against U.S. Steel and provincial and federal government inaction. The convention also supported workers across the country with a call for a \$15 federal minimum wage.

In between policy discussions, speakers captivated the convention, calling on New Democrats to fight for a sustainable, equitable and open Canada.

Alberta Premier and Steelworker Rachel Notley delivered a powerful speech on the success of the NDP's compassionate, down-to-earth politics. "We care about working people, regular families," said Notley, "people who work to put food on their tables, get their kids to soccer, save for retirement and care for their parents."

Notley also outlined the groundbreaking sustainability policies the NDP has introduced in Alberta. "We are not making a choice between the environment and the economy," she said. "We are building the economy."

In an enlightening, masterful address, Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, denounced the Liberals' lack of action and failure to implement a real plan to address the plight of First Nations children and families. Blackstock demonstrated why, given the government's minimal action, Justin Trudeau's promise of a better future will remain out of reach for most Indigenous children.

Deemed by many as Canada's greatest living orator, former diplomat and Ontario NDP leader Stephen Lewis electrified delegates (and likely the live national TV audience) with a systematic dismantling of the federal Liberals' pretence of progressive "sunny ways." [See more on Lewis's speech on p. 22]

Following his loss of the leadership vote, Tom Mulcair committed to stay on until a new leader is chosen and gave an emotional tribute to the party, reminding New Democrats that we "dream no little dreams." ■



Refuting the Liberal Myths

Excerpts from Stephen Lewis's deconstruction of Justin Trudeau

In a stirring, nationally televised address to the federal NDP Convention, Stephen Lewis reminded Canadians why he is considered our country's greatest living orator.

Despite last fall's crushing electoral setback, Lewis said he is "insufferably buoyant" that New Democrats will rebuild support across Canada as the only party that truly stands up for working people,

for equality and for economic and social justice.

Lewis delivered a masterful deconstruction of Justin Trudeau's Liberal government, "whose flimsy

CLIMATE CHANGE

"The position of the Prime Minister is no position at all ... There is instead a superfluity of twaddle and rhetoric.

"Oh yes, the Prime Minister went to Paris, and shared in the celebratory jamboree. But the bitter truth about Paris that is so hard to acknowledge, given the public relations frenzy, is that it was a failure. Everything that was agreed on is voluntary. Every target is voluntary ... There's not a single mandatory requirement except to report every five years.

"We don't have five years ... Where Canada is concerned, our targets still reflect the bogus figures set by the neanderthals who stalked the political landscape for the last 10 years.

"I'm kept awake at night thinking of what our grandchildren will face."

BILL C-51

"This piece of hoked-up anti-terror legislation, so excessive in tone and content, so contemptuous of civil liberties ... is apparently sticking around."

Trudeau "didn't mistakenly support the bill. The Prime Minister truly and fundamentally agrees with the bill and will offer only the most cosmetic shifts in wording and nuance.

"You have to smile, a grim tight-lipped smile. Liberals never disappoint."

FEMINISM AND CHILDCARE

Trudeau "unselfconsciously calls himself a feminist," but steadfastly opposes a national childcare program.

"We have a message for the Prime Minister: feminism is a vacant construct without a childcare program across Canada ... The use of feminism has a hypocritical ring when the women of Canada, who play the central role in the raising of children, are denied the childcare to which they are entitled as of right."

HEALTH CARE

The Liberal budget contains "no provision for a re-designed funding formula for health care into the future.

"It is now finally understood, worldwide, that resources for health are the sine qua non of a civilized society and the foundation of economic growth ... The Liberal pledge for homecare appears to have been abandoned and universal pharmacare is nowhere to be seen. Those are programs that we must pursue as though life depended on it because, in fact, life does depend on it."

EDMONTON 2016

yth

Justin Trudeau's "progressive" government

veneer of progressive politics will evaporate before the next election."

"The test comes on policy, not aesthetics. And predictably, the Liberals are already shuffling

backwards into the precincts of ignominy, where they so comfortably reside," he said.

With his trademark candour and unrivaled vocabulary, Lewis cited

numerous regressive policies that refute the progressive Liberal myth, or as he put it, "the folderol of sunny ways and sunny days." Below are a few choice excerpts.

ELECTORAL REFORM

"There's an ominous, unprincipled cloud emerging," with the Liberals manœuvring to adopt a ranked ballot system that "will protect and benefit the government ... The sonorous sounds of desirable change will mask the self-serving manipulation of desirable change."

ARMS SALES TO SAUDI ARABIA

"The arms sale shows an astonishing contempt for human rights."

The Saudi regime has been "excoriated by the United Nations for ... the wholesale and indiscriminate slaughter of civilian populations" in Yemen and its "beheadings of dissidents rivals the madness of ISIL."

The Liberals' justification for endorsing the contract amounts to "nonsensical claptrap: What kind of twisted logic is it that says we should cozy up to murderers because if we don't, others will?"

"There's an additional matter that I wish someone would put to the Prime Minister one day in Question Period: what kind of feminism is it that sells weapons to a government steeped in misogyny?"

GLOBAL TRADE DEALS

"Is there anyone in this hall who thinks the TPP (Trans-Pacific Partnership) won't be formally endorsed by the government of Canada? Of course it will."

"The TPP ... results in a possible loss of 60,000 jobs for Canada. And the Investor State Dispute Provisions put at risk Canada's autonomy as a democratic state."

"There is an even more pernicious aspect at work ... For the pharmaceutical industry, these trade agreements are a financial bonanza. For impoverished citizens of developing countries ... they can be, and often are, a disaster. For countries like Canada, they will inevitably mean an increase in prescription drug prices."

"No government of Canada, in this day and age, should embrace the discordant siren song of free trade." ■



Pensions Improved for Potash Workers

Local 7552's 600 Agrium Vanscoy Potash workers in Saskatoon negotiated a three-year term with an 8% wage increase, a \$3,000 signing bonus and pension improvements.

Terminal & Cable Get Better Wage Grid

Local 9414 members at Terminal & Cable in Carignan, Que. ratified a contract including wage increases, pension improvements, an improved wage grid and a greater share of insurance and benefit premiums assumed by the employer.

Late-shift Premiums in Nanticoke

Local 8782-02 members at Harsco Services in Nanticoke, Ont., negotiated a five-year deal increasing wages by 12%. The improved benefits include a retroactive pension plan increase, 10¢ shift premium increase for afternoons and nights, employer-paid training and improved scheduling language with an overtime provision.

First Contract at Kelowna Airport

In their first contract, **Local 1-423's** 22 maintenance and janitorial workers at Bouygues in Kelowna, B.C.'s airport, ratified a two-year agreement including a 2.25% wage increase, vacation, leave provisions and a benefit package.

Safety Boots Coming to Hamelin

Local 2008's Hamelin Industries workers in Saint-Jérôme, Que., boosted wages by \$2.95/hour, increasing safety boot payments and introducing better weekend schedules for mechanics including a \$2/hour premium.

Employer Pays Garda Disability Plan

Local 1976's 253 Garda security screeners negotiated a three-year deal at Ottawa International Airport, with a 6.7% wage increase, higher cost-of-living allowance and an employer-paid disability plan

BARGAINING SUCCESSES

Breakthrough Language on Domestic Violence

In Surrey, B.C., members of **Local 2009** at Kwantlen Policy Interest Research Group negotiated a three-year deal with breakthrough language on domestic and family violence.

Increased Pensions at ArcelorMittal

Steelworkers at ArcelorMittal operations in Contrecoeur-Est (**Locals 6586** and **8060**) and in Longueuil (**Local 8897**), Que., achieved major gains including improvements to their defined-benefit pension plan, 2.5% annual wage increases, improved benefits and increased shift premiums.

10.75% and Apprentices at Frito Lay

Local 4610's 350 Frito Lay workers negotiated a five-year deal, including a \$1.5 million investment in its operations in Cambridge, Ont. The agreement provides a 10.75% wage increase, drug cards for members, enlarged pensions and a trade apprenticeship program.

Louisiana Pacific Retools for More Jobs

Local 7106's 200 Louisiana Pacific members negotiated investments for re-tooling production in Swan River, Man. The five-year deal includes a 2.5-3% per year wage increase, trades adjustments, improved safety language and Steelworkers Humanity Fund participation.

Rio Tinto Firefighters Sign First Contract

A first collective agreement was reached by Garda firefighters in **Local 8922** at Rio Tinto Alcan's plants in Arvida and Laterrière, Que. The new contract includes significant wage and premium increases as well as improvements in conditions of work.

A Welcome Change in Climate in Alberta

*USW Working with Alberta
government on climate, jobs*

Just one year into its first mandate, Rachel Notley's NDP government in Alberta is working closely with Steelworkers to protect jobs and taking action on environmental issues. After Conservative governments ignored the reality of climate change for decades, the new Alberta government is consulting and carrying out a Climate Action Plan.

The plan has been called the "single-most important step any Canadian government has taken on climate change." It involves a carbon tax, a cap on oil sands emissions, reducing methane emissions by 45% by 2025 and the phase-out of coal-fired electricity by 2030.

The phase-out affects USW Local 1595's 600 members, who mine coal near Wabamun, Alta., to supply TransAlta's Keephills

generation facility. Working with District 3, the local has been meeting with the government and is helping lead a group of unions and the Alberta Federation of Labour that have formed the Alberta Coal Transition Coalition.

The unions were aware of potential changes in the industry long before Notley became premier last year, with most of the province's coal-fired electrical facilities set to be decommissioned before 2030 under existing federal regulations. Keephills and two other facilities were scheduled to continue beyond 2030.

"The difference with the Alberta NDP government plan is that they have built in consultation with labour and communities, as well as with industry. And there are funds attached to that," said District 3 Director Stephen Hunt.

"Our goal is to keep the mine operating as long as possible, employing our members, and when industry moves to other energy production, those jobs need to be available to Alberta workers in those communities. It's a difficult situation, but we are pleased that there is a process, that we are participating in that process, to help the government ensure that workers and communities don't pay the price for years of government and industry failure to plan for these issues."

At the recent National Policy Conference, the union passed USW Local 1595's resolution to support its members during the "phase-out and transition away from coal power generation in Alberta," and to support the work of the Coal Transition Coalition. ■

NDP Delivers for USW



NDP MP Sheila Malcolmson

MP Sheila Malcolmson, the NDP Critic on the Status of Women, is vowing to ensure that hundreds of postcards signed at the recent USW Women's Conference get the attention they deserve in advance of the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women.

"These postcards represent a strong commitment by trade union women to protect all women from violence in its many forms," said Malcolmson.

The postcards also demand a National Action Plan on Violence against Women based on the blueprint developed by the Canadian Network of Women's Shelters and Transition Houses. ■

Test for the New Liberal Government

Karine Trudel, a former member of the Canadian Union of Postal Workers and the NDP's Deputy Labour Critic, introduced anti-scab legislation as the NDP's first Private Member's Bill. The legislation introduces measures similar to those in Quebec and British Columbia.

"When employers hire scabs during a strike or lockout, it's unfair to workers and undermines

their right to bargain collectively," said Trudel. Research and experience has shown that anti-scab legislation results in fewer strikes and lockouts.

"We must show leadership when it comes to respecting workers. This bill is an opportunity for the Liberal government to prove that the tone in Ottawa has really changed," said Trudel. ■

Steel Caucus Reinstated



NDP MPs Scott Duvall and David Christopherson

As the crisis in Canada's steel industry deepens, NDP MPs have helped pull together a broad-based group of MPs for regular meetings to address this urgent situation.

Informally labelling themselves the Steel Caucus, the group is open to all MPs, who are interested in keeping steel industry issues "front and centre."

With U.S. Steel in Hamilton and Nanticoke and Essar Steel in Sault St. Marie currently in bankruptcy protection, the situation for workers, pensioners, communities and Canada's entire manufacturing sector is dire.

Steel Caucus members NDP MPs David Christopherson and Scott Duvall met in mid-April with USW Local Presidents Gary Howe and Bill Ferguson and District 6 Director Marty Warren to discuss how best to ensure the union's role in public policy decisions.

Steel manufacturing is still an important \$14-billion-per-year industry in Canada supporting 20,000 jobs directly and 100,000 indirectly.

Canada needs a strong, domestic steel industry to provide our manufacturing sector with the steel to build cars, buses, trains, wind turbines, energy projects and infrastructure essential for a strong, modern economy.

The federal government has shown no willingness to rebuild Canadian manufacturing or to work to save our stressed steel companies. ■