

USW@Work

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A Powerful Voice for Workers

On July 15, 2019, historic leadership changes occurred on the United Steelworkers (USW) International Executive Board (IEB) as four top officers simultaneously stepped down, paving the way for a new leadership team to be installed at a ceremony held in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the home of the union's headquarters.

This followed the announcement on May 29, 2019, that USW International President Leo W. Gerard, Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson and Vice Presidents Carol Landry and Jon Geenen would retire.

The International Executive Board then unanimously passed a resolution approving a plan to fill their vacancies so the union could seamlessly continue its work and its tradition of service and advocacy on behalf of USW members and workers everywhere.

USW International Vice President Thomas M. Conway elected by the IEB to succeed retiring International President Leo W. Gerard.

Leo W. Gerard served the USW for more than 50 years and has spent his lifetime fighting to preserve and create good, safe, union-wage jobs for USW members and their families. As the leader of the largest industrial union in North America, Gerard

HISTORIC CHANGES in USW Leadership



International President Thomas M. Conway and retired International President Leo W. Gerard stand in solidarity to celebrate the historic changes in USW leadership.

unflinchingly took on the fight against economic injustice and greed even when it meant standing up to powerful political interests, rich multinational corporations, and trade-cheating countries like China.

The son of a union miner and activist, Gerard, learned about the labor movement as a young boy at home in Sudbury, where nickel mining and related industries dominated the economy.

He would sit on the basement steps of the family's company house listening to union shop steward meetings. At age 11, he handed out leaflets on the eve of a strike, and at 13 accom-

panied his father on an organizing drive. At 18, after graduating from high school, Gerard went to work at an Inco nickel smelter in Sudbury, unclogging furnace tuyeres with a sledgehammer. After a few years, he decided to attend night school for economics, thinking he might eventually like to be a professor.

While working, he studied economics and political science at Laurentian University, where he later received an honorary Doctorate of Laws degree. He has also been awarded honorary degrees from Brock University and the University of Guelph in Canada.

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ACA — Neither Demon Nor Savior



BILL PIENTA
SOAR President

In my past, I have negotiated with employers and insurance carriers over health care benefits and the cost associated with them. I also sat on the advisory board of a health care provider for seven years. Now, I seem to be a constant consumer of health care services. Over the years, it has become clear to me that the Affordable Care Act is neither the demon nor the savior that many have claimed.

Over the years, many insurance companies have limited or eliminated providers, and providers have refused to accept the insurance from certain insurance companies. These things happened prior to the ACA and continue today. I also remember dealing with double-digit increases in premiums, way before anyone talked about the ACA.

In reviewing my bill from my most recent stay in the hospital, it surprised me to see a charge of \$2,200 for a service provided and an amount of \$379.28 that Medicare approved. I hope we can all agree that there is an issue of overcharging or underpaying and we are caught in the middle. Another disturbing piece of information is that seniors are the fastest-growing group of people filing for bankruptcy in the U.S. and health care costs are listed most frequently as the reason!

Health care is clearly an issue that both the active and retired members can agree needs attention. Retirees are having medical costs eat up more of their limited incomes and active members are seeing employers trying to shift more of their health care costs to them. SOAR stands ready to assist or lead in the discussion with our political leaders on this important issue.

FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

Get What You Paid For! Don't Believe the Hype. Join the Fight!



JULIE STEIN
SOAR Director

I recently came across an op-ed written by Max Richtman, President of the National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, where he explained that Social Security is a “compact between the generations.” This compact exists because the contributions workers are making right now in monthly Social Security taxes are being doled out to retirees, widows and widowers, children of deceased workers, and others who meet the criteria established under the Social Security Act of 1935. All told, more than 61 million Americans are currently receiving some sort of benefit.

Referencing a recent survey, Richtman also noted that although Americans have strongly opposed efforts to erode the program, 80 percent of millennials believe they won't be able to receive any Social Security benefits when they retire. In my opinion, it is up to retirees like you and me (at least partially) to help millennials see through the false narrative that destroying Social Security will somehow save them (young people) money.

We know this is one of many lies being peddled by a select few Americans with the privilege of a lavish trust fund or offshore bank account. Let's get our facts straight. Social Security is NOT bankrupt. In fact, the program is fully-funded until at least 2034; and, with small changes, it can be solvent for years to come.

In 2018, Social Security taxes capped at 6.2 percent of the first \$128,400 of income. Any amount of income over

\$128,400 was not taxed for Social Security. Based upon that calculation, the maximum amount any American paid in SS taxes for last year was \$7,961. Therefore, anyone with an income of \$500,000 paid only 1.6 percent of their annual pay to Social Security.

Upon reading this, I'm sure many of you had the same thought I did when I first heard this statistic: “Why should I pay a higher percentage of my income in SS taxes than someone who makes 16xs more than me in annual pay!?”

However, we won't build a stronger future for Social Security by arguing average wage-earners pay less. This would result in a lesser-funded Social Security Trust Fund. Therefore, the USW has long-advocated for common-sense reforms that would strengthen Social Security without placing an undue burden upon the middle class. For example, the USW supports the Social Security Expansion Act (S. 427 & H.R. 1114). The legislation would ensure that Social Security could pay every benefit owed to every eligible American for the next 61 years, increase cost-of-living adjustments by more accurately measuring the spending patterns of seniors and raise the cap on contributions by those making over \$250,000 a year.

Join with us, as we continue the fight to protect and enhance the quality of life of our retirees and working families. We are stronger together!

Sources: <https://truthout.org/articles/we-must-fight-to-preserve-social-security-for-millennials/>

https://www.usw.org/get-involved/rapid-response/resources/2018-conference/2018_Retirement_Security.pdf

District 2 SOAR Volunteer for Community Emergency Food Assistance Program

By Jay McMurrin, SOAR Executive Board Member, District 2

Thanks to their union-negotiated pensions and health insurance benefits, most USW retirees don't have to worry about where their next meal will come from or how they will pay for life-sustaining medication. Unfortunately, that's not true for every American. For some, making ends meet is a never-ending struggle. Thankfully, there are volunteer organizations working to provide assistance for those less fortunate. And many times it is union volunteers making those organizations work.

That's the case of the Emergency Food Assistance Program in River Rouge, Michigan. The Program, which is coordinated by long-time USW Local 1299 member Jim Krueger, provides monthly allocations of food commodities for over 100 families in this aging steel mill town just south of Detroit, Mich. Recently, Jim, who is also Vice President of his Local Union's SOAR Chapter (29-1), reached out to retired members to get involved in the food program. SOAR

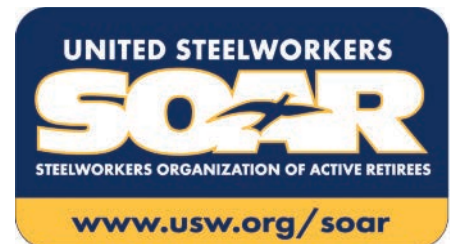
activists responded to Krueger's call and have been volunteering at the River Rouge Community Center preparing boxes and bags of food for distribution.

Milio "Mimi" Rinna, a retired USW International Staff Representative, is one of the SOAR members who answered the call. He said, "As a Union member I received good wages and benefits that allowed me to save and plan for a good retirement. Now that I am retired I enjoy coming out to help people who are as blessed as I am. It feels good to give back."

Tony Pascarella is also a retired USW Staff Representative and President of USW Local 2659's SOAR Chapter (29-4) in Southgate, Mich., another working-class town just south of Detroit. Pascarella stated, "The steel mill I worked at for years closed over 25 years ago. The shutdown caused a lot of hardship for a lot of good people. Just like the communities came together to help Steelworkers overcome the loss of the plant, the Emergency Food Program is helping citizens of River Rouge overcome their challenges. It is a great program."

Each month the City of River Rouge receives a shipment of food items from Wayne County. Volunteers

gather at the Community Center to divide the items equally and box them up for distribution. The food packages generally include a couple of meat products, dairy, vegetables, beans, and other nonperishables. They are then distributed to River Rouge families the following day. According to Krueger, "The packages play a vital role in helping families get by. For some, it frees up money to make other necessary purchases."



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From left to right: Ceasar Randazzo, Chapter 29-1 President; Robert Heinz, River Rouge Commodities Coordinator; Jim Krueger, Chapter 29-1 Vice President; Milio "Mimi" Rinna, Chapter 29-1 Recording Secretary; Anthony Pascarella, Chapter 29-4 President; Harold Jones, Chapter 29-1 member; and Olive Roberts, River Rouge Food Pantry Director.



HISTORIC CHANGES in USW Leadership

continued from page 1

In 1977, the union offered Gerard a job doing fieldwork from Toronto. It was the first of a series of assignments that eventually led to him becoming the union's International President. Prior to his election, Gerard served as Director of District 6 in Ontario (1986-1991), as National Director of Canada (1991-1994), and finally the union's International Secretary-Treasurer (1994-2001) before ultimately getting elected as the International President.

The International Executive Board appointed Gerard as International President on February 8, 2001, to succeed the late George Becker. That November, Gerard was elected by acclamation in union-wide elections. He was re-elected without opposition in 2005, 2009, 2013, and 2017.

The second Canadian to head USW after Lynn R. Williams and occupy the USW's highest office, Gerard assumed the presidency amidst a global crisis. The North American steel industry was devastated with mass layoffs, plant shutdowns, bankruptcies, and liquidations. He immediately embarked the Union on a course of renewed activism, demanding—and winning—government action to halt an unprecedented flood of illegal imports and negotiating precedent-setting labor agreements that positioned USW as the decisive force for a humane consolidation of the industry. Gerard also secured a prescription drug benefit for the retirees of liquidated steel companies, financed by hundreds of millions of dollars of VEBA contributions negotiated with the new companies.

As the Int'l President of the USW, Gerard was instrumental in the formation of the Industrial Union Council of the AFL-CIO, and in February 2003, was appointed to serve on the AFL-CIO's Executive Committee, as well as serving on its Executive Council.

The USW grew in the United States and Canada under Gerard's leadership through both organizing and strategic mergers. In 2005, the USW merged with the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical, and Energy Worker's International Union (PACE). With the PACE merger, the USW officially became the United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union.

Generally known by its abbreviation, the United Steelworkers, or its acronym, the USW, it is the dominant union in paper, forestry products, steel, aluminum, tire and rubber, mining, glass, chemicals, petroleum and other basic resource industries. Additionally, the union has a growing membership in the health care, higher education and the service sectors.

In late 2014, the USW and the National Executive Council of the Telecommunication Workers Union (TWU) signed a historic merger agreement that brought together

12,000 TWU members with the USW's 225,000 members in Canada.

In 2016, the Glass Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union (GMP) voted overwhelmingly to merge with the USW.

To build bargaining strength, Gerard led the creation of the world-wide networks of labor unions at multinational companies that employ USW members. One of his signature achievements was establishing an alliance with Unite the Union, the largest labor union in Great Britain and Ireland. That partnership resulted in the formation of the first trans-Atlantic union, Workers Uniting, which counts 3.4 million active and retired workers as members.

In 2012, Gerard took part in the historic founding convention of IndustriALL Global Union, a federation that includes more than 50 million workers in 140 countries in all sectors of the economy.

He has championed other alliances and global networks such as those with Unite; IG Metall, the German metalworkers' union; the Australian Workers' Union (AWU); CFMEU, Australia's Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union; CNM-CUT (Brazil's equivalent of the AFL-CIO); and SNTMMSRM or Los Mineros, the National Union of Mine, Metal, Steel and Allied Workers of the Republic of Mexico.

Under Gerard's direction, the USW has been an unwavering advocate for fair trade that supports workers over multi-billion-dollar corporations. He has led campaigns against unfairly traded imports, often testifying before congressional committees that handle issues related to trade and industry.

The union has filed more trade law complaints than any other union or any single company, putting a stop to illegal government subsidies and the dumping of products, saving USW jobs in steel, paper, tire and rubber, among other sectors.

As International President, Gerard has repeatedly stood up to China over its predatory trading practices and use of government subsidies as incentives to overbuild capacity in steel, aluminum and other products.

The USW also has stood against a wave of misguided "free trade" deals from NAFTA to the "fast track" proposal for the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

Gerard's support for manufacturing and middle-class family-supporting jobs is unflagging no matter which political parties hold power in Washington or Ottawa.

The USW's political efforts have over the years opened doors in Washington, D.C., and helped to give USW members a voice in the halls of the White House, the Capitol, and statehouses across the country.



Thomas M. Conway is sworn in as the USW's 8th International President by his predecessor Leo W. Gerard.

wishes to enjoy time with his family, and hopefully many sunny days at their camp on Nepewassi.

Thomas M. Conway was sworn in as the USW's 8th International President by his predecessor Leo W. Gerard in an installation ceremony that marked the largest uncontested transition of union leadership in at least 50 years.

Conway, who served as USW Vice President since 2005, began his career as a millwright at Bethlehem Steel in 1978, and then worked as a staff representative and as well as the secretary of the USW's Basic Steel Conference.

He comes from a union family in New Jersey. His father was an active member of the International Union of Operating Engineers, and his mother worked in a brush factory, where she successfully organized a union and negotiated labor contracts.

During his 14-year tenure as International Vice President, Conway became the union's most experienced contract negotiator in steel, mining, aluminum, tire and rubber, oil, and other major industries where USW members work, often directing bargaining during crises.

Conway has led the charge on trade issues affecting these sectors, including the union's efforts in trade enforcement. He also spearheaded the USW's efforts in fighting to bring change to the nation's trade and manufacturing policies.

In addition to serving on the governing board of the Institute of Career Development and the board for the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM), Tom has been instrumental in building and guiding the USW staff training program while helping to develop the union's leadership development program.

Conway's position as International Vice President is filled by former District 1 Director David McCall.

McCall first joined the union's international executive board in 1998. Beginning his career as a millwright, he has held many union positions, including serving as a staff representative, assistant director and director with more than 40 years of union experience.

McCall has many years of bargaining experience across the union and has chaired major negotiations in steel, paper and other sectors. He also serves as secretary for the USW Constitution Committee.

Donnie Blatt, former assistant to McCall, became Director of District 1, which encompasses the state of Ohio.

Former President Barack Obama appointed Gerard in 2013 to serve on the Advanced Manufacturing Partnership Steering Committee, charged with helping the president find ways to create good jobs and enhance the nation's competitiveness.

After the 2016 U.S. election, Gerard pledged to work with Republican President Donald Trump to advance the interests of USW members by creating jobs, revitalizing manufacturing and rebuilding communities devastated by unfair international trade.

In an open letter to the USW membership, Gerard said the union will work with the new Trump administration on trade and job creation yet "disagree where we must" on other important issues.

In 2013, Gerard helped the AFL-CIO chart a new course when it decided to embrace all workers and allow for new forms of membership, positioning itself as a force for all working people. Gerard co-chaired the committee that led the way on that policy change.

The USW under Gerard was a founding member of the BlueGreen Alliance (BGA) in the United States and the Centre for Research and Occupational Health and Safety (CROSH) at Laurentian University in Canada.

The BGA, a national partnership of labor unions and environmental organizations, is dedicated to expanding the number and quality of jobs in the green economy.

After retirement, Gerard plans to continue his work with CROSH, the sole health and safety research center in Northern Ontario. CROSH aims to solve critical workplace challenges by including workers, workplaces, communities, government, and safe work associations in field research.

He intends to remain active in the labor community but has mostly decided to enjoy his well-earned retirement, ultimately settling back in his hometown of Sudbury with his high school sweetheart, Susan, their children, Kari-Ann and Meaghan, and grandchildren, Elyssa and Liam. He

HISTORIC CHANGES in USW Leadership

Stan Johnson's position as International Secretary-Treasurer was filled by former District 4 Director John Shinn.

Johnson has served the USW as Secretary-Treasurer since 2009. He began his union career at a URW tire plant in 1975 as a tire builder. He has held many union positions throughout his career at the District and International levels.

As the union's CFO, Johnson brought stability, strength and confidence to the union's finances. He oversaw the union's crucial Rapid Response program and chaired the union's Rubber and Plastics Industry Conference, leading negotiations with some of the nation's largest tire makers as well as chairing bargaining within the paper industry.

John Shinn, prior to assuming the position of Secretary-Treasurer, served as the director of USW District 4, which encompasses the Northeast corridor states and New England, as well as Puerto Rico.

He joined the USW executive board in 2012 and has aggressively promoted job creation within his district. Shinn chairs the Inter-Union Gas Conference and various committees within the union's paper conference.

Shinn joined the labor movement in 1974 as a member of the United Glass and Ceramic Workers International Union (UGCWIU), which later merged to become the Aluminum, Brick and Glass Workers (ABG). He served as a staff representative in the ABG and as a sub-director in the USW before becoming director.

Del Vitale, former assistant to Shinn, became Director of District 4.

International Vice President at Large Carol Landry has also retired. Carol joined the USW executive board in 2008 as the first woman to ever serve on the board, bringing with her years of experience as an activist and negotiator.

Landry began her career in 1986 and held many union positions. She has been responsible for the union's nuclear and chemical sectors and served as co-chair of the USW's

Next Generation program. She also served as Vice President of the IndustriALL Global Union and spearheaded programs encouraging women to take leadership roles in the union.

Landry's seat was filled by Roxanne Brown, who served as the USW's Legislative Director in Washington, D.C. She will continue to oversee legislative, public policy and political matters while remaining based in the capital.

Roxy began working for the USW legislative department in 1999 and has a broad base of experience working for legislation that supports USW members and all working people. She also worked with the various companies and associations that are impacted by regulations and laws under consideration in the nation's agencies and Congress.

Leeann Foster takes over for former International Vice President Jon Geenen.

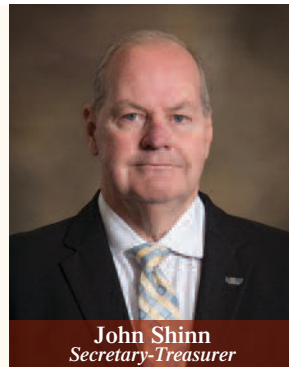
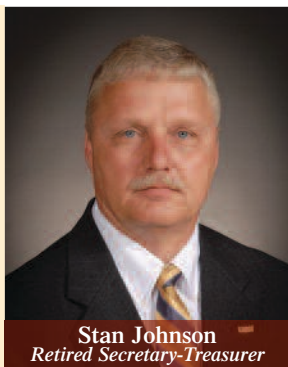
An International Vice President since 2008, Geenen oversaw bargaining, trade issues and public policy related to the domestic paper industry.

Geenen began his career in 1977 as a journeyman maintenance tech in the pulp and paper industry and becoming a member of the United Paper Workers International Union (UPIU), which later merged to become the Paper Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE).

Since then, Geenen has worked to guide USW paper workers through a maze of mergers and acquisitions, to develop a coordinated pattern of labor agreements within the industry and to improve contract language and strengthen the voice for members.

Jon served as a staff representative in the UPIU and as the National Director of Paper Bargaining in PACE. After the USW merged with PACE in 2005, the IEB appointed Geenen as director of the former PACE Region X and in August of that year, he was appointed the director of District 2 before becoming vice president.

Leeann Foster, who served as an Assistant to the International President and Associate General Counsel



International President Thomas M. Conway administers the oath of office to new leadership of the USW International Executive Board.

since the 2005 USW/ PACE merger, replaces Geenen.

Foster works as the lead bargainer with many companies in the paper sector, as well as leading the union's Women of Steel leadership program. She also serves as the Co-Chair of the IndustriALL Global Union working group for the pulp and paper sector. Together with Geenen, Foster has led the USW paper industry through difficult bargaining and has worked to develop a safety strategy within the sector.

Throughout these changes, the USW remains a progressive and powerful voice for workers in the United States and Canada and around the world.

"Our union is changing and becoming more diverse," said Gerard. "We represent more different kinds of workers in more and more sectors, and our board is changing to reflect that growth. The USW is committed to bringing forward the next generation of labor leaders and to providing the tools, training, and opportunity they will need to succeed.

"These changes in leadership do not mean we are shrinking from any of our longstanding commitments. Rather, these new leaders are redoubling our promises to them and to our mission to always fight for the working class. The new team brings vast experience and knowledge of our industries and issues and will continue the proud traditions the union has always stood for."

"While we will miss our colleagues," said Conway, "we recognize their desire to move into new phases of their lives, and we wish all the best for them. They have left behind a solid and stable union, and for that, we thank them."



Unfortunately, the highlights mentioned above about our outgoing leaders merely recap their career and barely touch upon the many noteworthy achievements each of them has brought to the union. Collectively, all their accomplishments have aided to build the strong, resourceful powerhouse of a union that the USW is today. For that, we say, well done.

On behalf of the entire SOAR organization, we congratulate our newly-appointed leaders as they assume to their new positions of the USW executive board. We look to the future with optimism and confidence as the USW continues its mission to improve the lives of all working people.

We also extend to those who are retiring our best wishes for a long, happy, healthy, and much-deserved retirement. We are especially delighted to welcome our new SOAR members to the organization.

You may obtain additional coverage of the historic changes that took place in USW leadership inside the USW@Work publication.



David McCall
Vice President



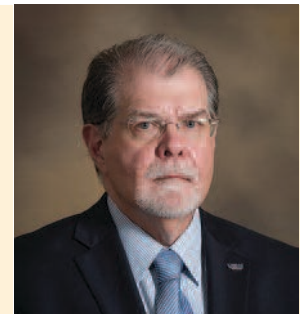
Roxanne Brown
Vice President



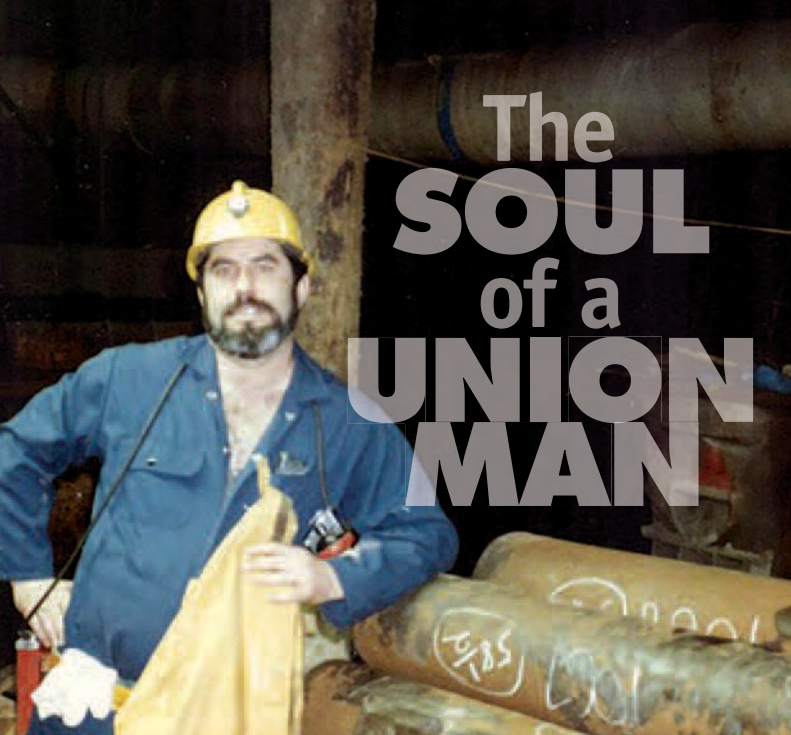
Leeann Foster
Vice President



Donnie Blatt
District 1 Director



Del Vitale
District 4 Director



The SOUL of a UNION MAN

By Leo W. Gerard
Retired USW International President

I was raised in a company house in a company town where the miners had to buy their own oilers—that is, rubber coveralls—drill bits and other tools at the company store.

That company, Inco Limited, the world's leading producer of nickel for most of the 20th century, controlled the town of Sudbury, Ontario, but never succeeded in owning the souls of the men and women who lived and worked there.

That's because these were union men and women, self-possessed, a little rowdy and well aware that puny pleas from individual workers fall on deaf corporate ears.

As I prepare to retire in a couple of days, 54 years after starting work as a copper puncher at the Inco smelter, the relationship between massive, multi-national corporations and workers is different.

Unions represent a much smaller percentage of workers now, so few that some don't even know what a labor organization is—or what organized labor can accomplish. That is the result of deliberate, decades-long attacks on unions by corporations and the rich. They intend to own not only workers' time and production but their very souls.

I'd like to tell you the story of Inco because it illustrates the arc of labor union ascendance and attenuation over the past 72 years since I was born in Sudbury.

When I was a boy, the Inco workers, about 19,000 of them, were represented by the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers. The union was gathering strength. My dad, Wilfred Gerard, was among the rabble rousers. We lived just a few miles from the mine, and workers would gather at the house. Someone would bring a case of beer, and my mom would make egg salad or baloney sandwiches.

Conditions in the mine were terrible, and these workers were organizing to achieve change. I recall them talking about a work stoppage over safety glasses. I was amazed that they would have to take action like that to get essential work equipment. The company, I thought, should voluntarily take this simple step to ensure workers were not unnecessarily injured on the job.

I learned two important lessons from sitting on the steps and listening to those meetings. One was that the company would do nothing for the workers unless forced by collective action. The other was that labor unions were instruments of both economic and social justice.

I started work in the smelter at age 18 after graduating high school. My mother told my girlfriend, Susan, my future wife, not to let me get involved in the union because if I did, I would be gone all of the time. For a few years, I resisted union activism. Still, I carried a copy of the labor contract in my pocket, pulled out just high enough so the boss could see it. I knew what it said, and I wanted him to know I knew.

In 1967, when I was 20, the International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers merged with the United Steelworkers (USW), and I became a USW member.

It didn't take long for the guys at the smelter to see that I had a big mouth. And in 1969, they petitioned for me to become a shop steward. That was the beginning. My mom was right. It did mean I was gone much of the time.

I got myself demoted so I could work day shift and attend college at night. On day shift, I noticed the company was using a bunch of contractors. Many were performing work that was supposed to be done by union members. Other contractors sat in their trucks parked behind the warehouse doing nothing. So I got about six guys to help me track and record the violations every day.

Then we would file grievances against the company. We could not win because the contract language was weak at that point, but we took it through all the stages of grieving, and it cost Inco money. That made the bosses furious.

So they took it out on me. You have to be prepared for that if you are going to be an activist. They made me rake rocks that had fallen off the mine trucks onto the road. They made me pick up trash in the parking lot. They tried to humiliate me. But I always found a way to comply without bowing to them.

The advantage we had in those days was that they thought they were smarter than us. They didn't understand that we were a team and we stuck together, so there was no way they were going to own us.

That was the 1960s, a different time. Union membership in the United States rose through 1965, when nearly one in three workers belonged. In Canada, the rise continued through 1985, when the rate was 38 percent. The drop off in the United States was fairly slow until 1980, when it plummeted to 23.2 percent. It has now fallen to 10.5 percent. In Canada, the decline was steady, but much slower. The rate there remains 30.1 percent, close to the all-time high in the United States.

The difference is that in the United States, corporations and conservatives engaged in a successful campaign, beginning

in 1971, to seize power from workers and propagandize for what they euphemistically called free enterprise. Really, it's cut-throat capitalism. The upshot is that U.S. workers have more difficulty forming unions than Canadians, and U.S. corporations can more easily lock workers out of their jobs and hire strikebreakers. The intent is to enable corporations to own their workers, lock, stock and soul.

Lewis Powell, the late U.S. Supreme Court justice, launched this drive to crush labor, the left and environmentalists in the United States with a memo he wrote in 1971 for the U.S. Chamber of Commerce and distributed to corporate leaders.

Powell told the Chamber that it had to organize businesses into a political force because, he claimed, corporations and the free market system were "under broad attack," and in "deep trouble." He inveighed against regulations sought by car safety activist Ralph Nader, by environmentalists petitioning for clean air and water and by unions demanding less deadly mines and manufacturing. He castigated those on the left pursuing a fairer, safer and more humane society.

Businesses must cultivate political power, and wield it, Powell said, to secure "free market" advantages, such as tax breaks and loopholes specifically for corporations and the rich.

Powell also told the Chamber: "Strength lies in organization, in careful long-range planning and implementation, in consistency of action over an indefinite period of years, in the scale of financing available only through joint effort, and in the political power available only through united action and national organizations."

That is exactly what the Chamber achieved. It catalyzed a business movement, funded by wealthy conservative family and corporate foundations, including those of Coors, Olin, Scaife and Koch, to name a few. The foundations sponsored conservative professors at universities and right-wing "non-profits" such as the Heritage Foundation, the Cato Institute, Americans for Prosperity, and the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), which provides junkets for right-wing lawmakers at which it encourages them to champion anti-union and anti-worker legislation. These groups bankrolled conservative candidates and secured appointment of conservative judges.

Between the end of World War II and 1970, during the rise of unions, workers' incomes rose with productivity. Income inequality declined, and North America became home to the largest middle class in history. After 1970 and the Chamber effort to implement the Powell manifesto, unions declined and workers' wages stagnated. Virtually all new income and profits went to CEOs, stockholders and the already rich. The middle class dwindled as income inequality rose to Gilded Age levels.

This occurred at the same time that corporations expanded, becoming massive multinationals, with facilities sprawled across the world and without allegiance to any country. This happened to Inco. Vale, a Brazilian corporation, bought it in 2006, and now Vale is a true multinational with facilities worldwide.



The March 2010 international rally in Sudbury to support the USW members on strike against Vale.

Multinationals spurned their obligation to serve workers, consumers, communities and shareholders. Instead, they focused only on shareholders, the rest be damned. They closed factories in the United States and Canada and moved them to places like Mexico and China, with low wages and lax environmental laws. They exploited foreign workers and destroyed North American workers' lives and communities.

As far back as the 1970s, the USW, the AFL-CIO, as well as the textile, shoe, steel and other industry leaders, warned Congress about what this trend, combined with increasing imports, meant for American workers and their neighborhoods. In 1973, after the United States experienced its first two years of trade deficits in a century, I.W. Abel, then president of the USW, urged Congress "to slow the massive flood of imports that are sweeping away jobs and industries in wholesale lots."

Congress' failure to heed this alarm resulted in the collapse of the U.S. textile and shoe industries and many others. It very nearly killed the steel industry, which has suffered tsunami after tsunami of bankruptcies, gunpoint mergers and mill closures. Tens of thousands of family-supporting jobs were lost and communities across both the United States and Canada hollowed out. In 1971 and 1972, the trade deficit totaled \$8.4 billion. Last year it was \$621 billion. Every imported toy, shoe, bolt of cloth and ingot of steel means fewer U.S. factories and jobs and more struggling towns.

The USW presidents who followed Abel—Lloyd McBride and Lynn R Williams—escalated the battle against offshored factories and unfairly traded imports. The USW even filed suit to try to stop the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) because Williams, like independent Presidential candidate Ross Perot, saw that it would suck Canadian and U.S. factories and jobs south of the Mexican border.

The late USW President George Becker and I agitated for change, confronting and cajoling presidents and prime minis-

The SOUL of a UNION MAN



ters and members of Congress and Parliament. The USW marshalled all of its forces, including activists in its Women of Steel and NextGen programs, the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, and its Rapid Response coordinators. Tens of thousands of workers rallied, camped out in Washington, D.C., harangued lawmakers and sent postcards.

Working with allies in the community, such as environmental and human rights groups, faith and food safety organizations, together we have won some short-term relief measures. These include the tariffs on imported steel and aluminum imposed last year and the defeat of the proposed new trade deal, the Trans-Pacific Partnership that would have extended NAFTA problems across Pacific Rim countries.

In the decades that the USW battled bad trade, I moved through the ranks, from staff representative, to District Director to Canadian National Director to USW Secretary-Treasurer. Among my goals was to forge international workers' alliances to combat the corporate cabals that always got seats at the table to write the trade deals that worked against workers. When I was elected USW president in 2001, one of my top priorities was expanding the union's coalitions.

Now the USW participates in three global unions, which together represent more than 82 million workers in more than 150 countries worldwide. The USW and partner unions also created more than two dozen global councils of workers, including those for workers at ArcelorMittal, BASF, Bridgestone, DowDuPont and Gerdau. These employers quickly learned that taking on workers at one factory meant taking on workers at all of their workplaces internationally.

In 2005, the USW and the Mexican miners' union known as Los Mineros formed a strategic alliance. And the USW gave Los Mineros General Secretary Napoleon Gomez

sanctuary in Canada when he was unjustly accused of wrongdoing by a Mexican government intent on shutting him up after a mine disaster.

In 2008, the USW joined with Unite the Union, the second largest union in the U.K and Ireland, forming Workers Uniting to fight exploitation and injustice globally. And the USW formed alliances with union federations in Australia and Brazil, where the organization is known as the CUT.

This international brotherhood and sisterhood stood with Canadian mine and smelter workers for a year beginning in July, 2009.

During its first negotiations with the USW, Vale, the Brazilian corporation that bought Inco, demanded harsh concessions from its thousands of Canadian workers. Though Vale was highly profitable, it said it wouldn't even bargain with the USW unless the workers first accepted the cuts. That forced them out on strike.

I started talking regularly with the head of the CUT in Brazil to strategize and plan joint actions. Brazilian workers and community groups wholeheartedly supported their Canadian brothers and sisters. They demonstrated in front of the Vale headquarters and threw red paint —symbolizing blood—on the building. They shut down traffic with all sorts of street actions. They protested at the Vale shareholders meeting, inside and out.

They also traveled to Canada, in force with flags, for a rally in Sudbury in March of 2010, when the strike was eight months old and banks were repossessing some workers' cars and foreclosing on homes. By then, Vale had 100,000 workers in mines and smelters across the world. Supporters from many of those communities—in Asia, Africa, Europe and Australia—joined thousands of Canadians who marched through the streets that cold day.

Vale could see that its Canadian workers, in Sudbury, Port Colborne, and Voisey's Bay, were not alone. They had allies from around the world willing to stand up to the giant multinational.

The strike ended 12 long months after it started. We didn't get everything we wanted, but we certainly didn't accept Vale's concessionary demands. Vale failed to accomplish its mission, which was to spread to all of its operations worldwide the authoritarian, top-down, nasty management practices that it had honed in Brazil. The proof of that is the next round of negotiations with Vale went fairly well, and we got an honorable settlement.

Now, for labor to secure gains, in the United States or Canada or anywhere, workers must mobilize. We have to bring everyone together, women, men, poor people, people of color, gay people—all working people. None of us is big enough or developed enough to win this fight alone.

If we fight together, I can't guarantee we will win. But if we don't fight for justice, I can guarantee we will lose.

Since none of us is willing to owe our souls to the company store, we're going to have to find ways to continue building coalitions robust enough to confront capital and win the battle for economic and social justice.



Remembering the Republic Steel Memorial Day Massacre of 1937

By Scott Marshall
SOAR Executive Board Member District 7

This year District 7 USW and District 7 SOAR held a special Commemoration of the 1937 Republic Steel Massacre in Chicago. On Memorial Day in 1937, ten people, including strikers and supporters, were killed by Chicago police. Republic Steel workers were peacefully assembling in front of the factory gates demanding equal wages, proper working conditions and union recognition. Similar to the demands of those who won a strike at US Steel a few months prior. Many were wounded and severely beaten, while still facing wrath from the police. Steelworkers and supporters alike were arrested for their efforts to hold Republic Steel accountable, including some mortally wounded men who

had been hospitalized. Over one-hundred men had been injured by gunshots to the back, and some were left with dents in their skulls from fatal blows of a baton. The bravery demonstrated by these men has remained an invaluable feat for workers' rights.

Many participants in this year's march had just returned from Lazaro Cardenas Mexico. There we joined with thousands of Los Mineros Union workers and supporters in welcoming their President Napoleon Gomez Urrutia home from exile in Canada.

District 7 has been helping to organize solidarity with Los Mineros for several years now; after two Los Mineros Workers were murdered by Mexican police in 2006 and forty-one more were seriously beaten and left wounded at, what is now, ArcelorMittal plant.

President Napoleon Gomez sent special guest, Oscar Alzaga, Los Mineros' lawyers who has been instrumental in fighting the Mexican government's

efforts to destroy the union. Mexico's newly elected President López Obrador stopped the attacks on Los Mineros and the threat to arrest Gomez. Even before Gomez made it back to Mexico, he was elected to the Mexican Senate.

The District 7 Women of Steel have always played a great role in the commemorations. They typically begin the procession in Black mourning veils while ringing bells. This year they decided to not only commemorate, but also celebrate, the bravery of the ten men, women and children who met their fate on Memorial Day in 1937. As opposed to wearing black, they all chose to wear white in honor of the wonderful memories shared between the men who had passed and their families. Each of the ten women who carried the names of our brothers also spoke to the audience about the legacy each man left behind. It has become an honor to remember our brothers in solidarity, and we will never forget the sacrifice they made for the labor movement and our organization.



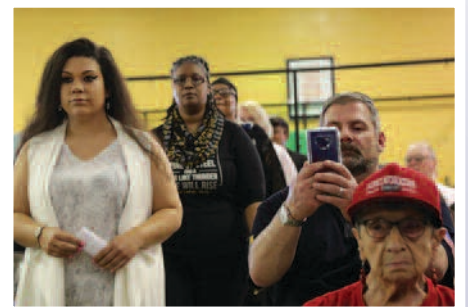
District 7 President Scott Marshall and President of Los Mineros Union Napoleon Gomez Urrutia.



Oscar Alzaga, Eric Alcantar (D7 main organizer of trips to Mexico) and Megan Marshall (translator).



Jake Cole (helped organize the event for D7 USW) and D7 Director Mike Millsap (welcomed Alzaga and remarks).



Jessica Ritter leader of the Women of Steel (WOS) procession and in lower right corner Bea Lumpkin one of the main organizers of the event.

SOAR/ORME Stood in Solidarity With Courageous ABI Workers

SOAR chapter 6-01 members travelled over eight hours by bus with members of the Steelworkers Toronto Area Council to join the Grand Solidarity March in Trois-Rivieres, Quebec, to support locked-out Steelworkers at the ABI aluminum smelter.

The May 25 march drew thousands of supporters from unions across Canada and around the world who rallied for the 1,030 members of USW Local 9700 who had been locked out since Jan. 11, 2018.

Aluminum giants Alcoa and Rio Tinto, which co-own the facility, prolonged the dispute for nearly 18 months by engaging in bad-faith bargaining and continually increasing demands for concessions from the workers. Alcoa owns 75 percent of the ABI smelter and Rio Tinto owns the other 25 percent.

Returning from a meeting in Brussels of leaders of IndustriALL, which represents more than 50 million workers worldwide, USW Canadian Director Ken Neumann told rally



participants that Alcoa's assault on workers had damaged its international reputation.

On July 2, after waging an exemplary battle for their rights, dignity and solidarity, the members of Local 9700 voted to ratify a contract offer from ABI, bringing an end to one of the longest private-sector labour disputes in Quebec history.

BUSTING MYTHS About the Canada Pension Plan

Back in the late 1990s, there were serious concerns about how long the Canada Pension Plan (CPP) would be able to continue paying benefits. Indeed, the Office of the Chief Actuary of Canada projects the CPP Fund is sustainable for the next 75 years.

Hard work was done to fix this, including creation of the CPP Investment Board to invest contributions. But 20 years later, a majority of Canadians still believe the CPP Fund is running out of money and won't be there for them.

Public trust has stayed low and people's perceptions remain 20 years behind the times.

That's troubling and CPP Investment Board's public awareness effort, which includes this website as well as some digital and television advertising, aims to help demystify some common misconceptions.

Here at CPP Investment Board, we take our work seriously.

We're proud of the work we do, every day, to help ensure the CPP will be there for you when you retire – and for your children, and their children.

So, let's look at a few of those more common myths:

Myth — CPP is bankrupt, or will be soon.

Reality — Two decades ago, the CPP was unsustainable. But federal and provincial governments made changes, including creating CPP Investment Board, to fix that. Today, the CPP is sustainable and secure for future generations.

Myth — The government tells CPP Investment Board how to invest.

Reality — In fact, CPP Investment Board operates independently of government on an arm's-length basis. Our investment teams make decisions about what goes in our portfolio based on CPP Investment Board's statutory mandate, which requires us to invest in the best interest of CPP contributors and beneficiaries.

Myth — CPP contributions can be used by the government for purposes other than CPP.

Reality — The money you pay into CPP can only be used to fund the CPP and pay CPP benefits. It cannot be used for any other purpose, such as building roads or funding cultural programs.

Myth — CPP will pay for my whole retirement.

Reality — Right now, CPP pays up to about one-quarter of an average worker's salary — and in coming years, that will increase to one-third. In 2016, federal and provincial governments decided to enhance the CPP to create a stronger foundation for Canadians' retirements. As the investment manager of the CPP Fund, CPP Investment Board is responsible for prudently investing the additional contribution amounts arising from the enhancement to the CPP. Other government pension sources include Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement. Personal savings, including Registered Retirement Savings Plans and Tax Free Savings Accounts, as well as workplace pensions, are the other most common sources of retirement income.

Source: CPP Investment Board

Think Carefully about Your Vote!

By Doug Macpherson
SOAR Canadian National Coordinator

As we move closer to the federal election in October, it is increasingly important that we, as union retirees think critically about how we use our vote.

Over the course of the last year or so we have seen a trend in provincial elections away from centre left governments toward decidedly right wing governments, Quebec, New Brunswick, Saskatchewan, Alberta, Manitoba and Ontario. By far the majority of Canadians today are governed provincially by conservative leaning governments. In some instances these changes in governments were motivated by an attitude that change was necessary because the sitting government had been in power too long or their policies were unpopular. However, change for changes sake alone, is not always good, and certainly not a good way to use your vote!

That's particularly true in Ontario where the liberals, after 12 years in government had become complacent, only to be replaced by the Ford Tories. The Ford government, only in power for a little over a year has caused great upheaval and uncertainty in almost every aspect of our daily lives. From health care to children's services, funding for the arts, tree planting, transportation, municipal transfer funds, stem cell research, the

size of local governments, the proposed amalgamations of cities, and boards of health, ambulance services, class size and sexual education curriculum and more. The list is endless and growing bigger each day. All in the name of supposed fiscal efficiencies, Ford daily tells us he inherited a financial mess from the liberals and the province is a failed bankrupt state. But even his friends in the conservative business press are calling him out, the Globe and Mail on May 22 had an editorial titled "The Doug Ford government is peddling a fiscal fantasy", calling him out on the unnecessary austerity. Each and every cut has a negative effect on services that people need and require. None of the changes work to the advantage of working people, it does mean longer wait times for services, in some cases increased costs to you and I through downloading of costs from the provincial government to municipal government. Remember Ford's first act as premier was to freeze and delay increases to the minimum wage, which were already adopted. Premier Kenny in Alberta mimics Ford with reductions to student wage rates and proposed changes to labour law to make organizing unions more difficult. These changes in legislation are in fact attacks on you and I as retired union members. I'm simply making the case that the Tories are all cut

from the same cloth whether they are provincial or federal. Andrew Scheer, the conservative leader is simply a Harperite with a smile. Do not be fooled as the voters in Ontario were.

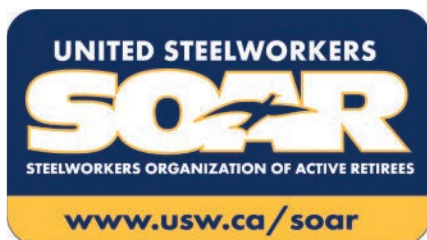
We cannot allow complacency or a desire for change to simply determine



Federal New Democratic Party Leader Jagmeet Singh (right) talks to SOAR members

our vote. We need to think critically about the issues which are important to us as working folks, what policies are going to make our daily lives better, and our country better, for us, our families and grandkids. For me the choice is easy I believe the New Democrats have the best policies to make my daily life better, to make Canada a fairer and more equitable society and that's what I will be voting for. Only you will really know how you voted.

***Use your vote wisely;
it's the only one you get!***



CHANGES ANNOUNCED TO SOAR EXECUTIVE BOARD

Harry Hynd

Appointed SOAR Vice President, Emeritus

In April, International President Leo W. Gerard honoured SOAR Vice President Harry Hynd for his considerable contribution to the growth of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, and to the many years of service to our union, by appointing him to the position of SOAR Vice President, Emeritus.

Harry's union career began in 1951, in the Scottish coal mines with his early membership in the National Union of Mineworkers where he was a steward. He immigrated to

Canada in 1957. In 1958 he was hired on at Stelco in Hamilton where he became an active member of Local 1005 as plant grievance chairperson.

Harry has a wide range of experience in the labor movement. He joined the Steelworker staff in 1971 where he served members in Hamilton, Vancouver, the Niagara Peninsula and Toronto.

Throughout his career in the labor movement, education was always a priority for Harry. He was an instructor in the Steelworkers' education

program for many years, served on the Mohawk College Board of Governors, and was a member of the Ontario Federation of Labour's (OFL) Education Committee. He was the Education Coordinator for the Steelworkers' District 6 for six years prior to his appointment to Director. As a retiree, Harry was often called on to teach, passing his skills on to another generation of Steelworkers.

Harry served as the Assistant to then-District 6 Director, Leo Gerard, and became the District 6 Director in 1991 when Leo became Canadian National Director.

Harry's reputation was always as a skilled negotiator and troubleshooter, skills that added to his leadership throughout his years as director. Following his 1991 appointment,

he was elected to a full term in 1993 and again in 1997. He retired at the end of that term in March 2002.

In 2005, USW International President Leo W. Gerard appointed him SOAR Vice President, to fill the vacancy created when Ken O'Neal stepped down due to health concerns. Harry was then elected SOAR Vice President at the following International SOAR Conference and subsequent elections thereafter.

Harry and his wife, Margaret, are both active in the New Democratic Party. They reside in Hamilton, Ontario and have two daughters and three granddaughters.

Doug MacPherson

Appointed SOAR Vice President

In June, Doug MacPherson was appointed by International President Leo W. Gerard to fill the vacancy of SOAR Vice President created by the appointment of Harry Hynd to SOAR Vice President, Emeritus.

Doug was born in Perth, Scotland and immigrated to Canada in 1965. Doug began his union career in Scotland as a member of the Plumbers Union, and attended his first union education, when he was 18 years old, at a Trades Union Congress (TUC) school, held at the ancestral home of Sydney and Beatrice Webb, founding members of the Fabian society, fore runner of the British Labour Party.

Doug joined the Steelworkers in 1968 when he hired on at Stelco, Parkdale Works, in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada, USW Local 5328, where he quickly became active in the union's affairs. Elected as steward, mechanical department chief steward, trustee, negotiation committee member, and ultimately president of the local. Doug was the first president to be elected from the mechanical department in the local's history. He also served as secretary of the Hamilton Steelworkers Area Council for a number of years.

Graduating from the Labour Studies Program of Hamilton's McMaster University in 1982, Doug was appointed to the USW staff in 1985 and assigned to the Peel-Halton office of the union. In 1989 he was appointed by then-District Director Leo Gerard, as Area Coordinator for the same area. In 1991 Doug was transferred to the District 6 office to be the assistant to District Director Harry Hynd where he served until December 2000.

In January 2001 Doug moved to the Canadian National office as assistant to then-National Director Lawrence



Harry Hynd



Doug MacPherson

McBrearty, and in September of that year was seconded by the Canadian Steel Trade and Employment Congress, (CSTEC) to be Executive Director. CSTEC is a joint labour management sector council, monitoring steel trade and providing education, training to the Canadian steel industry.

Returning to the National office, and upon the retirement of Rod Bezo, Canadian SOAR

Coordinator, Doug was appointed to fill that position to work on increasing the membership of SOAR. Doug was elected to fill the position of District 6 SOAR Board member on the resignation of Dan McNeil, emeritus member, and had been re-elected at subsequent SOAR conventions.

Doug and his wife, Una, reside in Burlington, Ontario and have two surviving children and five grandchildren.

Doug will continue to serve the Canadian National office in his role as the Canadian National SOAR Coordinator.

Lena Sutton

Appointed to SOAR Executive Board

Then in June, International President Leo W. Gerard appointed Lena Sutton District 6 SOAR Executive Board Member to fulfill the remaining term of office vacated by Doug MacPherson.

Lena began her union career in 1974 when she hired into the office of a phosphorus plant, ERCO Industries, in her hometown of Long Harbour, Newfoundland and Labrador; and became an active member of USW Local 7711, which represented the office and technical workers.

Lena became a shop steward for the office workers, and it is also where she first witnessed the injustice of worker rights in the workplace. Lena was elected recording secretary and also served as chair of the health and safety committee while continuing her role as steward. In 1988, she was elected to the local's bargaining committee in contract negotiations.

Lena's workplace closed in 1989, a casualty of the NAFTA Free Trade agreement, and she found employment with Newfoundland Telephone. After her probationary

period, Lena got involved with Communications Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada—CEP Local 410, serving on the balloting committee and a delegate to the local Labor Council of which she became Recording Secretary.

Lena then moved to Ontario in 1993 and became actively involved with the unions in her various workplaces, such as RWSteel. Through her union involvement, she spent a lot of time working in the New Democratic Party election campaigns, including the Obama election in 2008.

Lena then became a member of SOAR Chapter 10 in 2003, serving as Recording Secretary, Vice President and currently as President, since 2006.

She is a member of the Hamilton Steelworkers Area Council, a member of Women of Steel, special events committee and a USW delegate to the Hamilton Labour Council. Lena is also a member of the District 6 PAC.

Lena received the Lynn Williams Award in 2016 and the USW Jefferson Award in 2017. In 2018, she was elected to the National Executive of the Canadian Congress of Union Retirees.

Lena and her husband Bob reside in Hamilton, Ontario, with their dog Kasey. They enjoy spending time with Bob's three adult children, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild.



Lena Sutton

On behalf of SOAR, we congratulate each of them on their newly appointed positions; and, we welcome Lena to the SOAR Executive Board and look forward to working with them as we continue our mission to protect and enhance the quality of life for retirees and working families.

House Passes BUTCH LEWIS ACT

Tens of thousands of USW members and retirees will face an uncertain financial future unless Congress acts to address the crisis facing financially-troubled multiemployer pension plans. The impacted plans are victim to a perfect storm of hardships including plant closures from bad trade policy, a massive loss of assets due to the Great Recession, and structural challenges impacting industries. While the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) would typically replace some of the amount owed to retirees, the number of plans at risk of insolvency has put the PBGC's multiemployer guarantee program at risk of running out of funding.



Pictured L to R: George Piasecki, USW District 10 Rapid Response Coordinator; Stephannie and Dave McLimans, both members of SOAR Chapter 7-4.



Those who are impacted deferred wages for the promise of a pension. Our union is fighting to make sure that promise is kept. We support the Butch Lewis Act (H.R. 397), legislation named for an Ohio union activist who died of a stroke four years ago. Lewis' multiemployer plan fell into financial trouble, and his widow's pension payout collapsed. The bill would establish a long-term loan program to prevent this from happening to others.

Members Rally, Lobby, and Attend a Committee Session on Capitol Hill

On July 10, USW members and retirees traveled to Washington, D.C., to take part in a packed committee markup session. This is the stage of the legislative process where committee members debate and amend bills. While on Capitol Hill, they also rallied and held meetings with Representatives, thanking those who have been supportive and urging action from those who have not.

Roger Ross, a retiree from Local 13-1331 in Louisiana, joined in the day of action along with Cedric McClinton, the President of the local.

"When we sit down with our lawmakers and tell our stories, it makes a difference. This issue will impact me personally. I worked hard for my pension. I need it to continue to be there."

Over the course of the day, Ross had a chance to tell his story to multiple lawmakers and staff, underscoring the need for action.

Retiree Dave McLimans, along with his wife, Stephannie, also took part. They spent their time going from office to office to talk with the staff of Pennsylvania Representatives. Dave serves as the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) Executive Board Member for District 10 as well as the SOAR Rapid Response Coordinator for the District.



Pictured L to R: Cedric McClinton, President of Local 13-1331 and Roger Ross, retiree from Local 13-1331 meet with a staff person of a Louisiana Representative, to discuss the Butch Lewis Act (H.R. 397)

"I understand the importance of a pension and the need for predictability in retirement. When you work hard your whole life, you deserve that security. As a member of the USW for 44 years, and an active retiree for seven more, I have seen retirees lose so much when pension plans go belly up.

The insurance company that held my terminated pension plan was on the verge of insolvency. Fortunately, the government got into the mix and straightened out the situation.

We need the government to act now for this situation and pass the Butch Lewis Act."

The Steelworkers who came to D.C. today weren't just fighting for their futures, they were fighting for everyone who is impacted. It was government decisions that helped create the problems. Now it's time for government to act on a solution.

Full House Votes

Late in the evening on Wednesday, July 24, the House voted on the bill. As cheers rang out from the onlookers in the House Gallery — which included Steelworker members — the final vote tally was announced. There were 264 Representatives voting in support, with 169 opposing. The outcome was bipartisan: 29 Republicans joined all Democrats for the affirmative vote.

Please stay tuned as the bill moves to the Senate!



“MADE IN CHINA 2025” PLAN Jeopardizes American Transit Manufacturing

By Jeff Bonior

It was Chinese state-owned companies that were largely responsible for the decline of the United States steel industry during the past 20 years. These mammoth Chinese mills were able to produce an overcapacity of products and then sell their poor-quality steel into the U.S. market at prices that were below the manufacturing costs of American steelmakers.

The American steel industry and the USW membership suffered greatly.

The tide has turned since the President imposed heavy tariffs on imported Chinese steel. Mills have reopened and thousands of jobs have been created.

But China is not going to give up on its “Made in China 2025” plan without a prolonged fight.

The communist Asian nation has been successful in trying to corner the market on building rail and bus infrastructure in America’s major cities. It’s a similar scenario to China’s attempt to dominate the worldwide steel industry.

China’s goal isn’t to make money, as companies that operate in a free and open market would. It wants to dominate all the rail and bus transportation purchased in America and eliminate its worldwide competitors. This is an American security risk and could potentially eliminate many of the 90,000 well-paying jobs in the U.S. that depend on transit production.

China’s goal is to garner total control of U.S. transit manufacturing no matter the financial costs. The Chinese government is more than happy to pick up the tab for further American access.

Two companies that are owned and controlled by the Chinese government—China Railway Rolling Stock Corporation (CRRC) in rail production and Build Your Dreams (BYD) in electric bus manufacturing—are well on their way to creating a monopoly in these industries. They have underbid competitors for contracts to build railcars and buses in major American cities like Chicago, Los Angeles, and Philadelphia with the use of federal funding.

This maneuvering must stop, and Congress has once again begun to act to level the playing field for all rail and bus manufacturers.



There is bipartisan legislation moving through the House and Senate called the Transit Infrastructure Vehicle Security Act that would prevent American tax dollars from being used to purchase transit from Chinese state-owned enterprises like CRRC and BYD.

Alliance for American Manufacturing President Scott Paul testified before the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and wrote to members of Congress about the critical impact of CRRC and BYD who are “having a profoundly negative impact on established private-sector U.S. firms and jeopardizing supply chains that employ tens of thousands of American workers.”

Added Paul: “It is vital that the United States act to prevent the destruction of the U.S. competitive landscape for rolling stock manufacturing before it is too late. America’s tax dollars should not be used to support Chinese state-owned firms seeking to undermine market competition.”

Once again, like the illegal dumping of Chinese steel into the U.S., it’s not just about trade, it’s about fair trade. And there is nothing fair about these Chinese companies that are government-owned and receive unlimited financial subsidies.

We at AAM urge you to support our union manufacturing brothers and sisters by contacting your members of Congress and ask them to support the Transit Infrastructure Vehicle Security Act. You can reach them at their district and state offices or call the Capitol switchboard at (202) 224-3121 and you will be connected to their Washington, D.C. offices. You can also visit www.americanmanufacturing.org and click on “Take Action” at the bottom of the home page to get a message to your representative.

Jeffrey Bonior is a staff writer for the Alliance for American Manufacturing.

Granite City Chapter Blazes Trail to Reduce Single-Use Plastic and Styrofoam Items

By Virginia Woulfe-Beile
Piasa Palisades Group, The Sierra Club

The Granite City SOAR Chapter (7-34-2) is composed of dedicated and determined members, who routinely turn out 150 attendees at their monthly meeting potlucks which, up until this past April, meant serving lunch from stacks of Styrofoam plates and sleeves of disposal cups, not to mention thousands of pieces of plastic cutlery. Ironically, many of the members are actively engaged in environmental and social justice issues. SOAR members are committed to the labor movement, but also feel strongly about matters surrounding clean air and clean water, and were champions of the Illinois Future Energy Jobs Act that was signed into law in 2017.

This past spring, Chapter president, Jeff Rains approached SOAR ally and Sierra Club staff person Virginia Woulfe-Beile, to help him initiate a campaign to minimize the chapter's use of single-use items, in turn doing their part to divert plastic and Styrofoam waste from our landfills and landscapes.



Woulfe-Beile declared the campaign an early success as she observed many members arriving at the May meeting with reusable dinnerware in tow. To follow, the summer picnic and July meeting demonstrated even more adopters of the cause. It has also proved to be helpful that the Chapter Vice President, Dennis Barker, does his part by adding a gentle reminder to the meeting announcements.

The goal of the campaign is to educate and encourage folks to learn new habits to protect the environment.

There are no judgments here. If you are unable to bring along your own dinnerware, the chapter is happy to provide eco-friendly alternatives for attendees to use. The SOAR chapter has many allies attending their monthly meetings. Those include the UCM

(United Congregations of the Metro East), Teamster retirees, Granite City Cool Cities and other grassroots charities located in the Metro St. Louis area. These alliances often result in topics undertaken by the SOAR chapter being adopted by those allies, as well. One such event recently occurred when Dave Meinell, President of the Missouri Alliance for Retired Americans (MARA), attended the July SOAR meeting. There, Meinell committed to using all recyclable products at an upcoming meeting for MARA, which is expected to have more than 150 people in attendance. This initiative will go a long way toward educating the public about the importance of being environmentally friendly.

Granite City SOAR sends out a friendly challenge to all SOAR chapters to do their part in being good stewards of the environment—one plastic or Styrofoam item at a time.



Retirees Celebrate Medicare and Medicaid's 54th Anniversaries

Birthdays Come as Drug Prices Continue to Skyrocket

Recognizing the critical role that Medicare and Medicaid have played in enabling older Americans to live healthier, longer and more financially secure lives, members of the Alliance for Retired Americans are hosting dozens of events nationally to educate the public about the importance of the programs on their 54th birthday, July 30.

The events are part of the Alliance's Anniversary Summer campaign, calling attention to the continued importance of Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security to the well-being of older Americans. The anniversaries offer an opportunity to strengthen and preserve the programs for future generations.

"Prescriptions drug prices are the biggest driver of Medicare costs," said Richard Fiesta, Executive Director of the Alliance. "Allowing Medicare to negotiate prices would reduce out-of-pocket costs for seniors and would save taxpayers \$16 billion a year. The Veterans Administration and Medicaid negotiate drug prices today. Medicare must, too."

Eleven percent of Americans, many of them seniors, have skipped doses or delayed filling a prescription because of the cost.

"Allowing the safe re-importation of drugs from other countries would also go a long way in lowering prices, to the advantage of Medicare beneficiaries and all taxpayers," added Fiesta.

Alliance members will be celebrating the anniversaries from coast to coast with events that commemorate the signing of Medicare into law by President Lyndon Johnson on July 30th, 1965.



The Butch Lewis Act Can Save Multiemployer Pension Plans

By Robert Roach, Jr.

If lawmakers do not take dramatic action, economists predict that more than 100 pension plans will become insolvent within the next few years. That means massive benefit

cuts and increased financial insecurity for millions of retirees who earned pension benefits through a lifetime of hard work. If nothing is done, many pension plan participants could see their benefits decrease by 50 to 75 percent.

The issue affects more than just pension plan participants. It is also a critical source of revenue for communities across the country. The multiemployer pension system generated \$14.7 billion in federal, state and local taxes, and added \$50 billion in value to the GDP in 2016, according to a study by the National Institute on Retirement Security.

However, it is possible to put the brakes on this crisis. The Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act, also known as the Butch Lewis Act, would allow the Treasury Department to issue loans to save multiemployer pension plans from insolvency.

On July 24, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 397 with a bipartisan vote. This is an important step, but

we need to pressure the Senate to pass this critical legislation so that it becomes law.

H.R. 397 would protect about 1.3 million pension plan participants for at least 30 years and save the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation \$65 billion. These government-backed loans would stabilize the pension plans and protect those whose retirement depends on them.

It is only fair for Congress to take action on behalf of workers and retirees whose pensions are at risk through no fault of their own. There is a precedent: the government spent more than \$700 billion bailing out Wall Street during the financial crisis. It is time for elected officials to take action on behalf of their constituents and communities before we have a national disaster.



Robert Roach, Jr. is president of the Alliance for Retired Americans. He was previously the General Secretary-Treasurer of the IAMAW.

For more information, visit www.retiredamericans.org.

A Future With or Without Social Security

A bill that would increase monthly Social Security benefits and strengthen this program for the future just got a major boost in Congress!

The “Social Security 2100 Act” (H.R. 860), introduced by Representative John Larson (CT-01), is poised to take another historic step as the full House Ways and Means Committee plans a hearing this month on the bill, followed by a debate in September. Social Security must be improved and updated — through minor and sensible adjustments contained in the “Social Security 2100 Act” — to meet the needs of current and future beneficiaries. It doesn’t need to be cut or privatized!

The “Social Security 2100 Act” would go a long way toward strengthening the social safety net for older Americans by increasing the average monthly benefit by about 2 percent, improving the Social Security Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA) formula and assuring future generations that the program will be solvent for decades to come. And it would pay for these adjustments by requiring millionaires and billionaires to pay their fair share into the Social Security program — which currently they don’t do.

This bill, which has already garnered 210 cosponsors in the House, represents a bold step on behalf of seniors and all Americans by strengthening and safeguarding Social Security for future beneficiaries while at the same time making important improvements in the adequacy of the benefits the program provides.



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