



National Director's Update

NOVEMBER 2011

Honouring Jack's Request

The United Steelworkers has always been engaged in the political process, fighting for legislation and change on issues affecting workers, families, communities and our society as a whole.

Today, our commitment to political activism is as crucial as ever, as governments and corporations wage unrelenting attacks on our social programs, democratic rights and our living and working standards.

Early this year, well before the federal election, Jack Layton asked the USW to help build the New Democratic Party. We are now honouring Jack's request, by launching a national campaign to encourage individual Steelworkers to become NDP members.

Steelworkers in Districts 3 and 6 will soon be receiving information kits and membership forms. By joining the NDP you will vote to select a new leader to follow in Jack's footsteps. Together, we will build on Jack's momentum in the last federal election, help change Canadian politics and build a better world.

In October, Wayne Fraser, Stephen Hunt and I endorsed Brian Topp to lead the NDP. Brian has what it takes to beat Stephen Harper and to govern well with strong New Democrat values.

Of course, the USW has a long history of respecting the autonomy of our Quebec sisters and brothers. Given our

tradition, USW District 5 is undertaking its own political processes.

Steelworkers political activism in Quebec is featured in this edition of *National Director's Update*. A sustained campaign by District 5 has led to legislative changes to cut prohibitive licensing fees that were being imposed on unionized security guards.

Inside you also will read about the federal Orange Wave spreading to this fall's provincial and territorial elections. The trend includes the re-election of a fourth majority NDP government in Manitoba and major gains by New Democrats in Ontario, Newfoundland and Labrador and the Yukon.

Meanwhile, overwhelming membership solidarity at Highland Valley Copper in British Columbia has led to a landmark collective agreement for 1,100 members of USW Local 7619.

You can also read about the Steelworkers Humanity Fund contributions to food banks across Canada and aid across the globe.

Steelworkers can be rightfully proud of our unwavering commitment to solidarity, not only within our workplaces and communities, but also with those fighting poverty, injustice and joblessness around the world.



Landmark Deal At Highland Valley Copper

Steelworkers Local 7619 has negotiated a landmark collective agreement for its 1,100 members working at Highland Valley Copper in British Columbia.

Pension improvements, four-per-cent annual wage increases, an hourly bonus system and a \$10,000 signing bonus are

among the highlights of a five-year contract ratified by an 89-per-cent margin on October 16.

Highland Valley Copper, owned by Teck Resources, is located in south-central B.C. and produces copper and

See **HIGHLAND VALLEY COPPER** pg. 2



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Orange Wave Continues



Andrea Horwath, Leader of Ontario's New Democrats, with Ken Neumann, USW National Director.

Following last spring's federal NDP breakthrough, New Democrats have made gains in several provincial and territorial elections this fall. Steelworkers have renewed our commitment to the NDP and we are rightfully proud of our work to help elect more New Democrats.

- Federal – NDP becomes Canada's Official Opposition.
- Manitoba – NDP wins fourth majority government.
- Ontario – 70% increase in NDP seats.
- Newfoundland and Labrador – NDP more than doubles its seats.
- Yukon Territory – NDP doubles its seats, becomes official opposition.
- Saskatchewan – the lone setback this fall, NDP retains nine seats.
- Across the country – outpouring of love and support upon the passing of Jack Layton

HIGHLAND VALLEY COPPER from pg. 1

molybdenum, used in steel alloy. Success at the bargaining table was the direct result of members' unwavering solidarity, USW Local 7619 President Richard Boyce said, referring to a 99.5-per-cent strike-mandate vote in the late stages of negotiations.

"We began this process with a vision, and through our solidarity we reached our goal," Boyce told members after the deal was reached.

Membership support also helped the USW bargaining committee to resist a major concessionary demand from the company, that wanted to eliminate the workers' copper bonus.

"Don't kid yourself; had you not given us the great strike vote, Teck would have taken our copper bonus away," Boyce told members.

The average wage at the mine, currently \$31.07 an hour, will increase to \$37.81 by the end of the five-year contract. The copper bonus is expected to generate an additional \$16 to \$19 an hour over the term of the agreement.

The new deal also provides one of the best pension plans in the country. ■



Alvin Lukinchuk, Health and Safety Chair for USW Local 7619.

es for NDP in Provincial Elections

Manitoba

Greg Selinger led the NDP to a fourth majority government, with 37 MLAs including Steelworker Steve Ashton in Thompson. The NDP focused on a strong economic record, including 11 years of regular minimum wage increases, which was contrasted by the Conservatives' plans to privatize and cut.

Ontario

Seven USW members ran as NDP candidates, three successfully: Gilles Bisson (former Local 4440 member), was re-elected in Timmins-James Bay, Paul Miller (former Local 1005 member) was re-elected in Hamilton East-Stoney Creek and Michael Mantha (formerly with a USW job action centre) won in Algoma-Manitoulin. Leader Andrea Horwath ran a strong campaign focused on 'change that puts people first,' vaulting the NDP to the balance of power in a Liberal minority government.

Newfoundland and Labrador

In a historic breakthrough, the NDP jumped from one seat to six and tripled popular support to 25% from 8.5% in 2007. NDP leader Lorraine Michael was re-elected to the House of Assembly. Two Steelworkers ran as candidates: USW staff representative Tom Harris in Labrador West and Local 9342 member Clyde Bridger in Grand Falls-Windsor-Green Bay South.

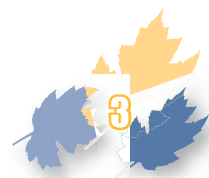
Yukon

Behind Leader Liz Hanson, the NDP increased its popular support to 32.5% and doubled its seat total to six, forming the official opposition in the 19-seat legislature. ■

A Strong Team of Steelworkers Run In Provincial Elections

USW Member	Riding	Province	USW Local
Cory Szczepanski	Spruce Woods	MB	USW Local 7913
Steve Ashton	Thompson	MB	USW Local 6166
Michael Mantha	Algoma-Manitoulin	ON	USW Job Action Centre
Brian Van Tilborg	Brant	ON	Steelworkers' Action Centre
Kathy Cornish	Elgin-Middlesex-London	ON	USW Local 4906
Ana Maria Rivero	Etobicoke Centre	ON	Retired, USW Local 1998
Paul Miller	Hamilton East-Stoney Creek	ON	USW Local 1005
PC Choo	Markham-Unionville	ON	USW Local 1998
Gilles Bisson	Timmins-James Bay	ON	USW Local 4440
Clyde Bridger	Grand Falls-Windsor--Green Bay South	NL	USW Local 9342
Tom Harris	Labrador West	NL	USW Staff Representative
Gord Bedient	Humboldt	SK	USW Local 7552

Green indicates elected candidates.





Preparing a meal at the Sault Ste. Marie Soup Kitchen Community Centre, one of the food banks supported by the Steelworkers Humanity Fund in 2011.

Steelworkers Humanity Fund

A Year of Vital Assistance Across the Globe

Contributions of \$107,800 to Canadian food banks highlight a year of vital assistance to communities across the globe by the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

“The Steelworkers Humanity Fund is committed to helping alleviate the hardship faced by thousands of poor and vulnerable Canadians,” said Ken Neumann, USW National Director for Canada and president of the Humanity Fund.

“It is unacceptable that in a country of such tremendous wealth, there is record demand for food banks in communities across Canada,” Neumann said.

“Our governments are failing to address a fundamental human rights issue that affects far too many Canadians. We need greater commitment and action, at all levels, to eliminate poverty in our society.”

The \$107,800 contribution from the Steelworkers Humanity Fund will be distributed to 55 food banks across the country.

On the international front, the Humanity Fund has provided \$181,000 this year to emergency relief efforts around the globe, including:

- \$40,000 to East Africa famine relief;
- \$27,500 to flood relief efforts in Quebec;
- \$27,500 to Manitoba flood relief;
- \$25,000 to flood relief in Saskatchewan;
- \$20,000 to tsunami relief in Japan;
- \$15,000 to Missouri tornado relief;
- \$10,000 to Guatemala communities struck by tropical storms;
- \$10,000 to New Zealand earthquake assistance.
- \$5,000 to typhoon relief in the Philippines;
- \$1,000 to Pedro River flood relief, Jamaica. ■

Confronting the Conservative Assault on Organized Labour

The Harper government appears intent on continuing its ideological assault on organized labour and unionized workers.

The latest attack has come from Conservative MP Russ Hiebert, who introduced Bill C-317 – a private member’s bill supposedly aimed at improving financial disclosure by unions. In reality, Hiebert’s bill was far more devious than advertised.

Before Hiebert’s bill could pass first reading, however, the Speaker of the House of Commons ruled on November 4 that the bill had to be withdrawn from the Order Paper. The Speaker’s ruling came as a result of procedural arguments made by New Democratic MP Joe Comartin,

Comartin also exposed the deceit of the Conservative bill. He noted that unions and labour organizations already disclose detailed financial information.

“They do so because it ensures they are accountable to their members and not just because they are driven by

legislation,” Comartin said.

After analyzing the implications of Bill C-317, the Canadian Labour Congress concluded that, “The real crux of the bill is the political activity of labour organizations.”

The bill was blatantly discriminatory against organized labour. It would have imposed onerous and costly regulations on unions while corporations are exempt from such requirements.

While Bill C-317 has been derailed, the Conservatives can be expected to continue their assault on unions and union members. Such attacks are part of the Harper government’s regressive, polarizing agenda that fosters inequality and an ever-shrinking middle class.

The USW, with our labour, social and political allies, will continue to resist this damaging agenda by Harper’s government and fight for the rights and interests of everyday Canadians. ■

Political Action Campaign Gets Results for Security Guards



Daniel Roy, USW District 5 Director, making the USW's presentation at the parliamentary committee of Quebec's National Assembly in September.

The USW and the thousands of security guards it represents fought for more than a year against prohibitive licensing fee increases. The campaign prompted two reductions in licensing fees, the second coming last month following submissions made to the parliamentary committee by USW and Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ) representatives.

The legislative changes call for a decrease in annual licensing fees from \$143 to \$123 in the first year of the new schedule. The fee will drop further, to \$67 annually, in subsequent years. The fees also will be non-taxable.

"The pressure we exerted obviously had an impact," USW District 5 Director Daniel Roy said.

The USW and FTQ jointly stated to the parliamentary committee that it was "indecent to ask workers rather than agencies to pay for the operating costs of the Bureau de la sécurité privée. Nobody should have to pay in order to work."

With the legislative changes, Quebec's private security agencies will pay a slightly higher share than security guards to fund the provincial regulatory body. ■

A USW political action campaign has succeeded in reducing licensing costs for security guards in Quebec.

The USW campaign included an appearance in September before a parliamentary committee studying the issue of requiring security guards to cover the operating costs of the provincial body that regulates and oversees private security agencies and services.

Locked-Out Resort Workers Win Gains in New Contract



Media reporting from the picket lines during the Manoir Des Sables resort lockout.

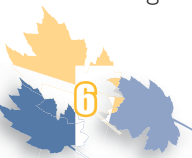
The new agreement provides for wage increases of 14.5 per cent over five years for the members of USW Local 9400.

Quebec's anti-scab legislation was a contributing factor in the settlement. In fact, after an investigator with the province's labour relations commission found the employer had hired replacement workers, management suddenly became more open to negotiation.

"Our wages are now on par with those earned by workers in other establishments in our region," said USW staff representative Guy Gaudette.

The new deal allows workers to catch-up with other gains already won by their peers in comparable hotels in the area. The contract calls for the employer to assume a higher share of the cost of the employees' group insurance plan, while workers also will receive two additional paid holidays. ■

Manoir des Sables resort in Orford, Que., ratified a new collective agreement with significant wage increases and other gains.



“Spirit of ’46 Alive and Well” at USW Local 1005

Contract agreement reached, court case against U.S. Steel continues

“It is written on our flag. Local 1005 – Proud Steelworkers,” Rolf Gerstenberger, President of USW Local 1005, said at an August meeting. “The resounding vote in support of the negotiating committee shows that at Local 1005 the spirit of ’46 is alive and well.”

In 1946, Steelworkers fought the company, then the Steel Company of Canada, for the very right to have a union. The strike lasted two-and-a-half months until Stelco was forced to bargain with the union and USW Local 1005 was founded.

This time, the lockout at U.S. Steel lasted 11 months. Members of USW Local 1005 can be proud of their principled fight – standing up for 9,000 retirees, maintaining solidarity throughout the lockout and earning consistent support from the local Hamilton community and the broader labour movement.

“If this experience has given us anything at all, it is the confidence that Hamilton Steelworkers can proudly and confidently exercise an informed vote, fully aware of the situation they face and of their responsibilities towards not just themselves and their families, but also towards the retirees, the future generations of workers, their union and their community,” the local’s information meeting notice to members stated.

After almost a year on the picket lines resisting race-to-the-bottom concessionary bargaining, more than 600 members of USW Local 1005 took part in a ratification vote on a new contract, accepting the bittersweet deal that ‘nobody liked’ by 61% on October 15.

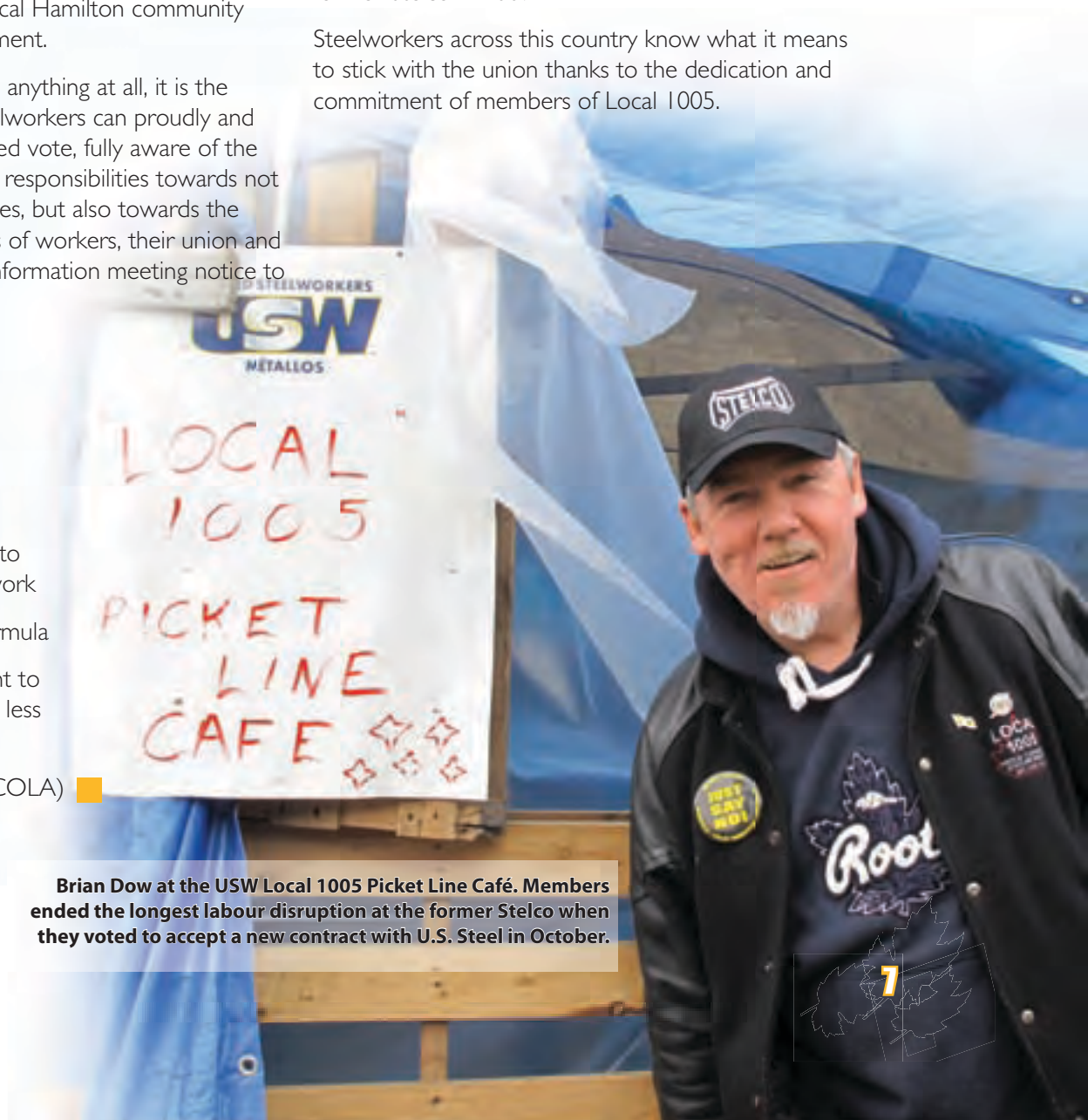
While the lockout has ended, the court battle continues with its most recent victory. On October 6, U.S. Steel lost its third round at the Federal Court of Appeal. In November, 2010, the Federal Court ruled that U.S. Steel will have to pay monthly fines set out in the *Investment Canada Act* should it lose the lawsuit the federal government is pursuing. The government’s lawsuit claims that U.S. Steel broke the promises it made around production and employment levels when it purchased the former Stelco in 2007.

Steelworkers across this country know what it means to stick with the union thanks to the dedication and commitment of members of Local 1005.

Contract Highlights

- 3-year agreement
- no decrease in wages
- \$3,000 ratification bonus to employees returning to work
- updated profit-sharing formula
- lump sum \$1,000 payment to retirees/spouses receiving less than \$1,500 a month
- cost of living allowance (COLA)

Brian Dow at the USW Local 1005 Picket Line Café. Members ended the longest labour disruption at the former Stelco when they voted to accept a new contract with U.S. Steel in October.



Airport Screeners En Route to a More Secure Future

Following a successful six-month campaign by security screeners in airports across Canada to re-sign Steelworker union cards, applications for certification have been made to the Canada Industrial Relations Board.

As of November 1, airport screeners are now employed by one of three companies that won a year-long bidding process to provide security services.

There are no union successor rights in federal labour law covering this change in service providers. The USW campaign to sign union cards became the centrepiece of ensuring that screeners would retain the Steelworkers as their bargaining agent.

"This means a more secure future and our members' continued right to union representation," says USW National Director Ken Neumann. "Our members showed

great support for their union and the desire to protect their rights."

Prior to November 1, security providers were assigned on an airport-by-airport basis. In August, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) announced that four companies would do the job regionally: G4S Secure Solutions in the Pacific Region; Aeroguard in the Prairies and Northwest Territories; Garda Security Screening in Central Canada, and Securitas Transport Aviation Security in Quebec and Atlantic Canada. Subsequently, Garda bought the Aeroguard contract.

The USW has filed applications for certification for all 34 airports. Meanwhile, security screeners are covered by collective agreements negotiated earlier this year and are preparing for coming negotiations. ■

This means a more secure future for our members.

– Ken Neumann

Infinity Rubber Workers at Occupy Toronto



More than 800 activists closed streets in Toronto's financial district during a solidarity rally for the Occupy Toronto movement on October 27. The rally featured support for Infinity Rubber workers, taking aim at BMO's financial support of the rubber manufacturer. www.usw.ca/infinityrubber