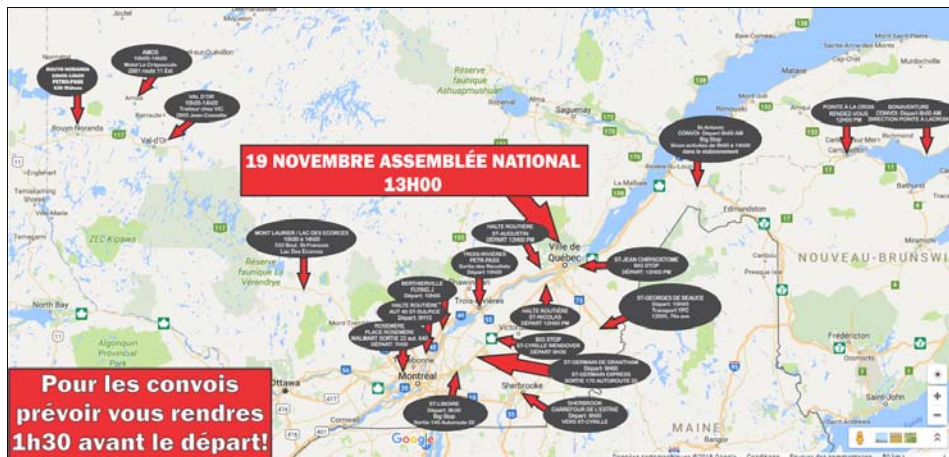


November 17, 2016

**Truckers Fight for Dignity and Rights**  
**Uphold the Dignity of Labour!**  
**Fight for the Rights of All!**

**Truckers' Rally at Quebec National Assembly**



Departure points for November 19 rally from across Quebec and New Brunswick  
(click to enlarge)

**Quebec City**  
**Saturday, November 19 -- 1:00 pm**  
**Facebook**

**Truckers Fight for Rights and Dignity**

- Rally at Quebec National Assembly
- Smash the Silence on Truckers' Living and Working Conditions! - *Normand Chouinard*

**Steelworkers Defend their Pensions and Fight for Pensions for All**

- The Importance of Having Defined-Benefit Pensions on the Balance Sheet - *K.C. Adams*
- Trudeau Government Legislation Introduces "Target Benefit Pensions"

## Attacks on Pulp and Paper Workers in Manitoba

- This Has to Stop!

## Fight for Mining Safety

- Companies' Criminal Negligence in the Workplace - Interview, Mike Bond, United Steelworkers Local 6500, Vale, Sudbury

## Opposition to Neo-Liberal Free Trade Agreements

- Vancouver Maritime Workers and Allies Rally Against Free Trade Agreement with European Union
- St. Catharine's Protest Against Trans-Pacific Partnership

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## Truckers Fight for Rights and Dignity

### Rally at Quebec National Assembly



Truckers and workers and owners at small transport companies will gather in front of the Quebec National Assembly in Quebec City at 1:00 pm on November 19 to oppose changes to the legislation governing transport of goods. The changes are being imposed by the Quebec Couillard Liberal government, the Ministry of Transport and the Société de l'assurance automobile du Québec (SAAQ).



A specific concern is the implementation of a new procedure called *ronde de sécurité* or safety rounds (RDS) that goes into effect on November 20. Previously, truckers had to conduct checks called pre-departure verification (VAD), consisting of a visual mechanical inspection of equipment and a report about any defects, before taking to the road.

Rally organizers say that preparations to implement the new regulations were totally

inadequate, and as a result, the vast majority of independent drivers and small transport companies will be unable to comply by November 20. For this reason, a main demand of the rally is for a new six-month buffer which would delay application of the RDS until May 26, 2017 to allow truckers and small and medium-sized companies to prepare.

Truckers report that during the six-month period between the announcement of the new RDS procedure and its implementation date, the government proceeded erratically and did not consult those affected such as truckers and small and medium-sized transport enterprises. Negotiations were conducted behind closed doors and only between the officials of the two ministries involved and the Quebec Trucking Association (ACQ), which represents large transportation companies.

The government and ACQ say the purpose of the new regulation is to standardize and bring the Quebec industry in line with several Canadian provinces and U.S. states. An official statement from the ACQ accuses "some people" of telling stories, and claims that truckers' opposition is "a tempest in a teacup." To this, truckers have replied that the new procedures are the straw that broke the camel's back. The unilateral action of the government and the ACQ is seen as dictate that has nothing to do with improving safety or the working and living conditions of the tens of thousands of drivers in Quebec.



Another demand of the rally is for federal recognition of the trucking trade. A petition is being circulated by truckers calling on the federal government to recognize truckers from all companies and provinces as professionals and implement Canada-wide standards. This struggle for the recognition of the trade is not new and the demand dates back to the 1950s and '60s.

The slogan for the rally is "United for the Cause -- Enough Is Enough." Organizers report that preparations are going well, and delegations and convoys of trucks will come from all over Quebec.



(Photos: L'heure juste du camionneur.com, I. Leveque.)





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# Smash the Silence on Truckers' Living and Working Conditions!

*- Normand Chouinard -*

The dissatisfaction of truckers who drive throughout North America to ensure the delivery of manufacturing products, natural resources, chemicals, agricultural products and everything essential to the functioning of the economy has been growing for several years.

Truckers' widespread discontent is in large part due to a significant deterioration in wages and the brutal working conditions. According to various independent and trade union studies, truckers' wages have declined by more than 40 per cent in Canada and the U.S. over the past 25 years. Working conditions have deteriorated in a similar manner.



Truckers' resistance to these attacks has been undermined by the continued deregulation of the industry from 1990 to 2000. Truckers have been continually divided into different categories and independent or semi-independent units. The state-organized violence against truckers' attempts to organize, such as under the government of Lucien Bouchard in Quebec, has also had its effect on truckers' defence of their rights. In the early 2000s the Bouchard government criminalized truckers exercising the freedom of association, striking or engaging in economic disruption such as blockading access

roads to the Port of Montreal or other roadways.

Renewing the efforts of truckers to organize in defence of their rights, beginning with the November 19 rally in Quebec City deserves the support of workers in Quebec and Canada. The difficult conditions faced by transport workers must be made known, and the November 19 rally is a step in this direction. The call of organizers is to again unite in defence of the rights of truckers to wages commensurate with the work they do and to conditions of work which defend their rights as human beings and the safety of all around them. This unity will restore confidence that a new direction is possible for the transportation sector. The trucking industry is an integral part of a modern economy's chain of production. The right of transport workers to ensure they have the working conditions they require must be guaranteed by law.

The central issues raised by the November 19 rally affirm the right of workers to a say over matters that affect their work, such as the new safety procedures. For truckers to form a defence organization that represents their interests and those of the transportation sector and have it recognized is a just and legitimate position. It is also required to put an end to the attempts of large manufacturing and transport companies to turn workers into beasts of burden who have to work endless hours just to make ends meet. What is the gain for society in putting in all the hours of overtime? There is none. It is for purpose of making obscene profits for the few. For workers to sacrifice, there must be a worthy social aim they agree with and unite their families to agree with. The profits of the few while families barely make ends meet and cannot live peaceful lives is not a socially acceptable aim.

On November 19, truckers will break the silence on the conditions that prevail in their industry and

defend their dignity and right to decide their future. They deserve the full support of the Quebec people.



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**Steelworkers Defend their Pensions and Fight for Pensions for All**  
**The Importance of Having Defined-Benefit Pensions on the Balance Sheet**

*- K.C. Adams -*

**Hands Off Our Pensions!**



**Hamilton**

**Rally at MPP Ted McMeekin's Office**  
**Friday, November 25 -- 3:30 pm**  
**299 Dundas St E, Waterdown, Ontario**  
<http://uswa1005.ca>

Local 1005 invites all members, retirees, salaried employees and families to join us for this important rally

***Keep Stelco Producing! No More Secret Deals!***

***Hands off workers' defined-benefit pensions!***

Company pension plans are not capable of meeting defined benefits during retirement without a constant flow of new value into the plans both from sufficient invested assets but more importantly from new realized production at the company. New value arises from the work-time of current workers. New value workers produce in the present is required to sustain the defined

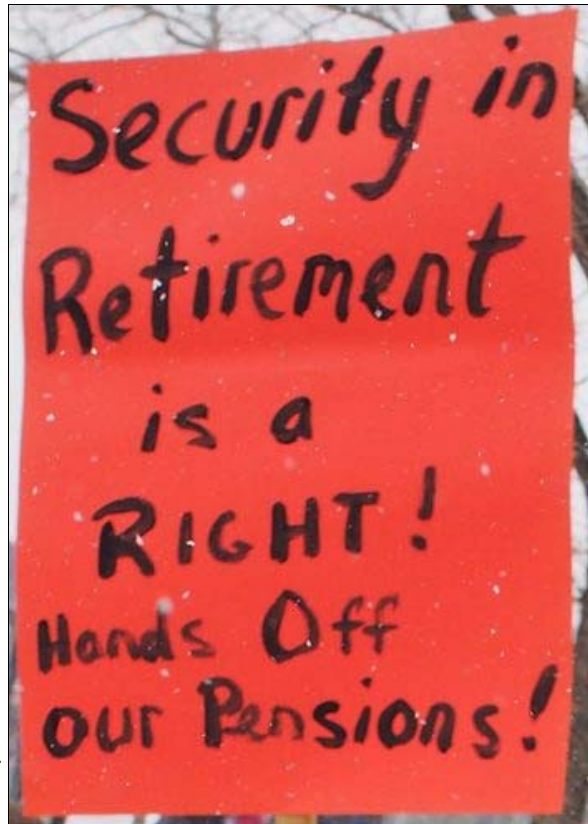
benefits of retirees. Moving defined-benefit pension plans (DBPs) off the balance sheet imperils the defined benefits.

New value produced in the present is the source of claims by workers, owners of equity and debt, and the state. Claims on the new value produced by the work-time of current workers are the source of wages, benefits, payments into the pension plans and profit in the form of equity profit, interest profit, and rent profit, and state claims on revenue through taxation.[1]

Taking DB plans off the balance sheet shifts new value away from the pension plans and into added-value claimed as profit. Preventing new hires from becoming members of an existing DBP has the effect of shifting the value workers produce away from new hires and into profit. The new value that would go into the DBP if new hires were members of the plan is claimed as profit instead.

Winding up DBPs while the company is still a going concern has a similar effect of shifting new value into profit and away from new hires. Also, if the company refuses to make the DB plan solvent and whole when winding it up, members of the plan lose a portion of their defined claim on new value, which instead goes towards profit rather than into making the plan solvent and whole.

Taking DB plans off the balance sheet is simply another term for winding them up. If the plans are to have any chance of meeting the defined benefits of current members, the plans must have secure assets sufficient to meet members' claims until all pass away. A wound up plan off the balance sheet must pay defined benefits using either new value claimed by the invested assets as revenue or from selling off the assets. New hires are denied membership in the plan as it no longer is connected with the company and a DBP is no longer a condition for the sale to the company of new hires' capacity to work.

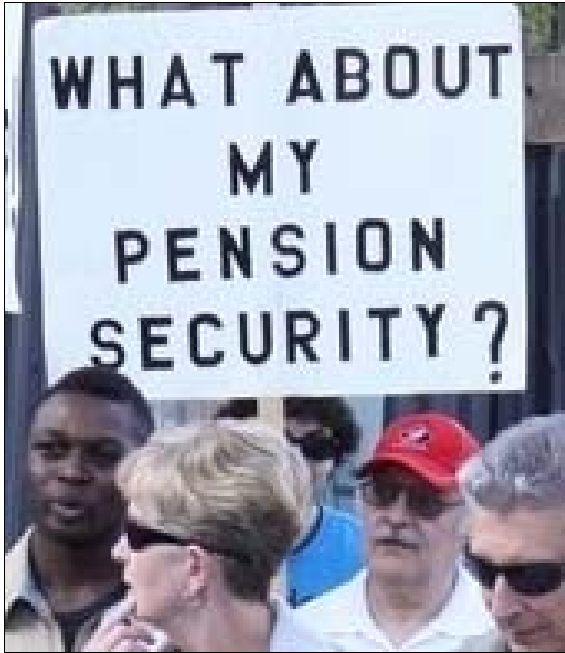


### **Public Sector Defined-Benefit Pension Plans**

Governments secure public sector DB pensions through a claim on new value Canadian workers produce in the present. This claim on value comes from the value workers produce at a crown corporation such as Canada Post or from taxation of the value workers produce generally in both public and private enterprises throughout the socialized economy. New value workers produce in the present guarantees public sector defined-benefit pension plans because the state uses its power of appropriation to claim new value.

If this state power of appropriation to claim new value to pay public sector defined pension benefits were extended to all workers in a universal state-organized DB pension plan then company and individual pension plans and their funds would no longer be necessary, including the Canada and Quebec Pension Plan funds. In this situation, the security of workers in retirement would become a state guarantee backed by the new value workers produce in the socialized economy and

the state power of appropriation.



An effective way to push for a universal state-organized DB pension plan for all is to defend the DB company plans that workers already have and fight to extend them to all major companies. This puts pressure on the financial oligarchy at particular companies with DB plans to look to a state-organized plan as a means to even out the claim for defined benefits on new value amongst all enterprises both public and private. Other pressure would be necessary from the workers front to declare and affirm defined benefit pensions as a universal right of all.

Fighting for the defined-benefit pensions workers have now in the present and refusing to have them turned into defined contribution or some other non-DB type, refusing to allow new hires to be disqualified from becoming plan members and refusing to have DB plans taken off the balance

sheet not only serves the interests of particular workers but generates pressure and movement towards a state-organized universal defined-benefit pension for all.

***Hands Off Workers' Defined-Benefit Pensions!  
Defend the Pensions We Have!  
Fight for Pensions for All!***

#### **Note**

1. Value transferred from machinery and material consumed in the production process and realized when production is sold is old value mostly cancelled out in the balance sheet with the necessity to buy that transferred-value in the first place. The congealed value in the machinery and material transferred into production is not new value and cannot be claimed as such. The transferred-value is old value previously put into material and instruments of production by other workers back up the value chain of production.



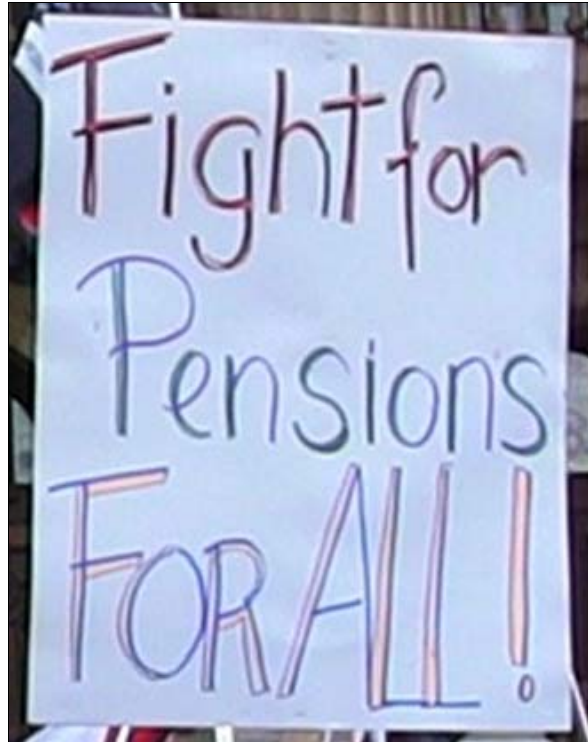
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## **Trudeau Government Legislation Introduces "Target Benefit Pensions"**

Minister of Finance Bill Morneau introduced Bill C-27, *An Act to amend the Pension Benefits Standards Act, 1985* on October 19. The bill creates a "framework for the establishment, administration and supervision of target benefit plans" for federally-regulated workers as well as for how existing defined benefit pension plans can be liquidated and converted into target benefit plans.



The National Association of Federal Retirees explains the difference between the two types of plan: "With defined benefit pensions, the employer or plan sponsor is usually wholly responsible to ensure the pension promise is fulfilled. ... Target plans usually link the pension benefit and indexing with plan performance, and allow benefit reductions; retirees become partially responsible for making-up plan funding shortfalls."



Morneau Sheppel, the Canadian pension and insurance consulting firm founded and operated by Morneau until he was made Finance Minister, has long been pushing for the introduction of target benefit plans and an end to defined benefit plans.

Unions have denounced the bill as a "betrayal," an "attack on pensions" and threatening retirees' financial security. They pointed out that the Liberals never discussed introducing any such changes to federal pensions, and cited a July 23, 2015 letter from Justin Trudeau to Gary Oberg, President of the National Association of Federal Retirees stating that defined-benefit pensions "which have already been paid for by employees and pensioners, should not retroactively be changed into [target benefit plans]."

Firms such as Morneau Sheppel hailed the introduction of the bill as "a positive step that could boost the development of these types of plans across the country" and hoped that it could lead provinces to take the same steps. Morneau Sheppel said, "The ability for DB plan sponsors to extinguish liabilities through the purchase of buy-out annuities will help federally regulated DB employers implement de-risking initiatives and possibly remove pension liabilities from their financial statements." Global law firm Dentons noted that a federally-regulated employer seeking to "re-evaluate or re-design your current pension and retirement savings program ... may want to consider target benefit plans."

Murray Gold of the law firm Koskie Minsky, commenting on Bill C-27 pointed out, "[T]here is no established way to accurately or precisely measure or manage the level of insecurity implicit in a TB promise. And it is easy to mislead people about the security of their retirement income."

## **Statements from Unions**

### **Canadian Labour Congress**

In a statement from the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) issued November 16, President Hassan Yussuff said, "This bill was announced without consultation or advance notice, though it directly contradicts election promises to stabilize and improve retirement security." The statement notes that the bill "removes employers' legal requirements to fund plan benefits, which means that benefits could be reduced going forward or even retroactively. Even people already retired could find their existing benefits affected, after paying in their entire working lives."



"The bill would also invite employers to establish inferior, less-secure target-benefit (TB) plans, and persuade individual members to give up their DB benefits in exchange for the new plan. [...]

"In 2014 Stephen Harper's Conservatives launched public consultations on a similar framework, but after overwhelmingly negative feedback from unions, retirees and other stakeholders, they scuttled the idea.

"This is very dangerous legislation that was even rejected by Harper's Conservatives, and I'm urging the current government to abandon it now,' said Yussuff.

"Yussuff noted the sole jurisdiction where employers are allowed to back out of promises to pay already-earned DB pensions is New Brunswick. Since 2012, when New Brunswick's Conservative government introduced their legislation, New Brunswick has seen class action lawsuits, constitutional challenges, and plummeting defined-benefit planned membership," the CLC pointed out.



**Demonstration outside New Brunswick legislature, November 6, 2013 against Conservative government's "pension reform" legislation backing out on contracted Defined Benefit pensions.**

### **Public Service Alliance of Canada**

In a statement issued October 26, the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) noted, "The other big difference is that target pension benefit plans shift the financial risk from the employer to employees and pensioners."

In 2014, when the Conservative government was consulting on whether to implement target benefit plans, PSAC pointed out that rather than helping workers without pensions, the aim is to "use target benefit plan provisions to convert good, defined benefit plans that provide secure and predictable benefits, into the much less secure form of target benefits."

### **National Union of Public and General Employees**

The National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE) issued a statement on Bill C-27 on November 14 noting that it will "mean major financial worries for workers after retirement if it isn't stopped." With target benefit plans, like defined contribution plans, "what is happening in the stock market can result in pension benefits being cut. Instead of the employer taking the financial risk, it's the workers."

NUPGE notes that the bill "enables employers to pressure workers to abandon defined benefit pension plans. Measures in Bill C-27 will make it a lot easier for employers wanting to abandon defined benefit pension plans. For the first time it will become possible to take pension benefits that people have already earned away from them."

NUPGE points out that unlike defined benefit plans, target benefit plans would not be governed jointly by workers and employers, but could be run by employers alone.



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## Attacks on Pulp and Paper Workers in Manitoba

### This Has to Stop!

*U.S. predators demand anti-worker, anti-social concessions to keep Manitoba mill open. A new direction must be found!*

The Canadian working class has once again been ordered to bear the burden of economic problems that stem from outmoded relations of production and the inability of the ruling imperialist elite to solve problems in favour of the people. On November 10, Tolko Industries Ltd. headquartered in Vernon BC announced that the pulp and paper mill it controlled in The Pas, Manitoba had been sold to "Canadian Kraft Paper Industries Limited," an entity which did not exist until it was set up by the American Industrial Acquisition Corporation (AIAC) to buy the former Tolko assets.

Tolko had announced in late August it would close the pulp and paper mill in The Pas, Manitoba complaining the facility is "no longer financially viable." Tolko centred its complaints not on any inability to produce high quality pulp and paper or find markets willing to buy its commodities. It said the unsolved problems arose mostly from an infrastructure incapable of moving material to and from the mill without adding a large amount to the price of production. The company told employees that all would be laid off when operations end December 2, 2016 unless a buyer could be found.



The decision put in jeopardy the livelihoods of 580 workers at the mill and surrounding forests. Many others in The Pas depend on the value workers produce in the mill to purchase in exchange the value they produce in goods and services. The mill is the largest economic unit in the town of 5,600 people located 630 kilometres northwest of Winnipeg and critical for the economic and social well-being of the people.[1]

AIAC, a predatory U.S. oligopoly almost immediately issued an offer to buy the Tolko mill if workers and Canadian state authorities made concessions. AIAC scours the world for facilities it may buy if workers and state authorities agree to concessions within a very short timeframe. Maximum pressure is put on workers and local authorities to accept concessions or lose livelihoods and their ongoing value of production, as no alternative is presented or discussed and certainly not in a calm atmosphere.

According to public statements, the town of The Pas is giving AIAC a three-year holiday on municipal taxes and together with the province will extend concessions dealing with environmental issues with the mill's tailings ponds. Details were not disclosed. The provincial government and mill workers approved a three-year postponement of pension solvency payments into their underfunded pension plans. Workers also voted to accept a 10 per cent rollback in wages for five years. No details of the purchase price were released or any other information other than the news of the concessions and that the mill would not cease operation.

Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister said the Conservative government is thrilled with the agreement and offered his "congratulations to all those who have worked so diligently to bring this deal to a close in the best interests of all Manitobans."



Many Canadians would not agree with the Premier. The deal was made under duress. The issues surrounding the difficulties a mill in the north faces were not discussed amongst the people so that positive opinion could be created to find a solution that favours the people. The mill has struggled with different ownership since 1966 with hundreds of millions of dollars of state funds poured in through pay-the-rich schemes directly to assist private ownership and control, and indirectly in the form of transportation and energy infrastructure. The government even pursued the original Austrian owner for theft of \$30 million in state funds and eventually settled with him for a guilty plea on

one count and a fine of \$1 million.

The boreal forest surrounding The Pas is reputed to be of excellent quality and the forest and mill workers are extremely experienced and productive. The problems in making the enterprise a going concern, which adds enormous value to the economy of Northern Manitoba, especially benefitting the Indigenous peoples who comprise a majority in the region, must be sorted out without prejudice or preconceived notions. Should it not be considered an important if not crucial nation-building project to make the mill a success in providing a solid economic base for the region and its peoples? The people are there; the forests are there; the expertise is there; the pulp and paper mill plus an idled lumber mill are there. The accumulated social wealth from production at the mill has been enormous and should be made available for investment to serve the people and their economy. The problem, as elsewhere in the country, is that the people directly affected lack control over their lives, work and the value they produce and are blocked from solving problems in ways that favour them and open a path forward for society.

An oligopoly from the U.S. demanding concessions whose aim is quick and large profits at the expense of the peoples of the north is not a solution. An alternative must be found and those blocking the attainment of a dream of the new must be deprived of their power to deprive the people of their rights.

## Note

1. The most recent available information says 332 workers at the mill reproduce \$37 million in annual direct wages. A 10 per cent reduction would be \$3.7 million in annual lost reproduced-value (wages). Most of this loss would be felt directly in the town. The 250 contracted



forest workers would lose a comparable amount in reproduced-value. This amount of annual new value workers produce as individual reproduced-value would mostly shift to become new value as added-value and be claimed as additional profit by the AIAC ownership group and spirited out of the local economy and country. The same is true for the amount of new value that the U.S. predators refuse to put into the pension funds. This is a shift of new value workers produce from social reproduced-value to added-value claimed by the new owners as profit. The elimination of municipal taxes is a direct loss of added-value for the community, which is transferred into profit for the foreign distant owners. This colonial arrangement is not a solution and unacceptable in modern Canada.

The total value from workers' production in new and old value is not publicly known as Tolko is a private company with its accounts considered secret even though the operation is completely social and affects the majority of people in the town. Workers manufacture kraft paper, used primarily for cement sacks. The high-strength and porous packaging paper is also used for flour, sugar, seed, potatoes and other agricultural purposes. Workers produce an annual capacity of 170,000 tonnes of kraft paper. A previously idled sawmill on the property has an annual potential capacity of 160 million board feet of lumber.

Besides the 332 employees who are directly employed by Tolko, an additional 250 workers are subcontracted to provide services and work in the forests managed by Tolko. The mill in The Pas has a management licence for 22 million acres of woodlands.

In 2014, the company shipped about 164,000 tonnes of paper, 15 per cent within Canada, 33 per cent to the U.S., 18 per cent to Mexico and 34 per cent to other markets.

Tolko purchased the mill in The Pas in 1997 for a reported \$47 million. Previously, the mill had been sold for \$132 million in 1989. These amounts changing hands, including the price AIAC will now pay to Tolko, do not remain in The Pas for use to renovate the mill or to make the workers' pension plans whole and solvent or benefit the local material and social infrastructure. This is a fundamental problem and deficiency of the current system of private ownership and control of social property on which the people depend for their well-being.

Over the years, both the federal and provincial governments have invested hundreds of millions in the mill and surrounding infrastructure for workers to bring timber to the mill, to connect The Pas with the south by rail and road to move material and people back and forth, and to provide energy.

In 2006, Tolko threatened to close the mill in The Pas. Gary Doer's NDP government responded with a state-organized pay-the-rich scheme providing millions through the Financial Stabilization Plan to help keep the mill running. Four years later, the federal government gave Tolko Industries \$2.26 million to improve its energy efficiency under the pulp and paper green transformation program. In 2012, the province gave Tolko an additional \$13.4 million under the "Green Transformation Program aimed to reduce steam costs."

No accounting is available as to where state funds have gone or if they are to be returned by Tolko or the new owner to the state treasury. The only detailed information on previous state amounts became available in the court case surrounding the previous Austrian owner Alexander Kasser charged with the theft of \$30 million of state funds. Kasser eventually pleaded guilty to theft over \$200 and paid a \$1 million fine while the state dropped 34 other charges.

Tolko announced on September 22 that it will also close permanently its mill in Merrit, BC putting 203 workers out of work amongst a population of 7,000.

*(With files from The Canadian Press and CBC)*



## Fight for Mining Safety

# Companies' Criminal Negligence in the Workplace

**- Interview, Mike Bond, Health and Safety Chair,  
United Steelworkers Local 6500, Vale, Sudbury -**

On October 24, mining giant Vale reached a plea-bargain deal related to the April 2014 death of Paul Rochette and life-altering injuries to Rochette's co-worker, Justin Stewart, at the company's Copper Cliff Smelter in Sudbury.

The tragedy happened when the men were working to free a large metal pin from the jaws of an ore crusher. The pin let go and flew off, hitting the two workers. The members of United Steelworkers Local 6500 at the Copper Cliff Smelter wanted the death and the injuries criminally investigated and prosecuted because their assessment was that criminal negligence by Vale and some supervisors contributed to the tragic event. In spite of this, Vale and the supervisors only faced charges of *Occupational Health and Safety Act* violations.



The deal saw Vale agree to pay \$1 million in fines and plead guilty to a reduced number of health and safety violations, in exchange for avoiding a trial.

The grieving families and the union strongly object to the fact that no criminal charges were laid. This case brings to mind a similar deal that was reached in 2013 when Vale agreed to about \$1 million in fines in exchange for avoiding a trial on most of the charges laid against the company and a supervisor for the 2011 deaths of two miners. In both cases, no criminal charges were pursued against Vale, despite the existence of *Criminal Code* provisions -- the so-called Westray Law -- enacted more than a decade ago to allow for criminal prosecution of corporations, their executives and managers in cases of workplace deaths and injuries.

Posted below is an interview with Mike Bond, the Health and Safety Chair of United Steelworkers Local 6500 at Vale.

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**Workers' Forum:** The Sudbury steelworkers took a strong stand against the death and injuries that happened at the Copper Cliff Smelter not being criminally investigated and prosecuted. Can you tell us more about it?

**Mike Bond:** We believe that a simple monetary fine is definitely not enough of a deterrent. In the mining world, companies simply pay minimal fines and then go on with business as usual, while in other jurisdictions, construction for example, they tend to hold people accountable. These big corporations have deep pockets and they have got their lawyers and the government is not in the spot to take on these big companies. They do not investigate them criminally. They investigate them under provincial legislation. We have had four fatalities in recent years and it is fines only. In

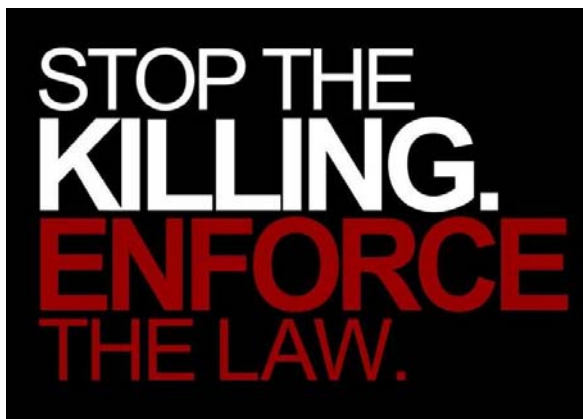
the case of the smelter, the workplace was in a bad spot. We investigated it and the Ministry investigated it and all the investigations showed wrongdoing. In our view, there was enough negligence there that management should have been held accountable.

There is a culture in some workplaces that is not conducive to safety. In three of our fatalities here in Sudbury, the culture was wrong. It was being left to the workers to manage safety. The culture was not where it should have been, where everybody is looking after safety. There was a lack of direction, a lack of leadership. The culture at the smelter for the Rochette fatality was very similar to the double fatality at the Stobie mine. The safety part of that workplace was not looked after. Management was not leading safety. It implements a behaviour-based safety model that allows the company to take one step back from diligence and puts the worker one step forward. It does not work when you drive safety from the bottom up. It has to come from the top down. It is a management style that is not conducive to safety over everything else. It says that we can do safety and we can do production. Sometimes that does not work. Safety has to be paramount.



**WF:** What is the main work of the Local at this time and what are your main demands for achieving safe workplaces in the mining sector?

**MB:** The steelworkers have taken on a couple of initiatives that hopefully will hold management to account when it comes to safety. We have changed our style a little bit. We are doing additional inspections. Our worker reps go out in the field a minimum of once every two weeks and write up a Ministry of Labour-style audit. They go and look at the workplace and they use the same template as the Ministry of Labour. We identify areas that are in good shape as well as areas that are not in good shape and we forward that to the manager of that plant. We felt we had to have more presence in the plant and we needed more documentation to prove our cases.



We also had numerous work refusals here at Vale. One of our mines was shut down a few months ago for several days because the 180 workers refused to work. They had enough of what was happening at the time in the plant. The Ministry of Labour came in because of the work refusal and they ruled that situation was likely to be dangerous so they put stop work orders on that mine.

Our demand is for companies to work very closely not only with the union but with the workers. The people at the plant are the experts in their workplace and the companies have to respect them, they have to involve them and they have to work with them for safety. You will not get safety unless that happens.

In the plants themselves we want management to be connected to the workers and across Canada and in Ontario we want the Westray Act to be looked at with a magnifying glass. We want



everybody to be aware of the criminal component of having negligent workplaces and we don't just want corporations, nameless faceless corporations to be held accountable and pay a small fine, we want people to be held accountable, management to be held accountable to their workplace.

We want workers to come home safe every night. That is the main issue as far as we are concerned.



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## Opposition to Neo-Liberal Free Trade Agreements

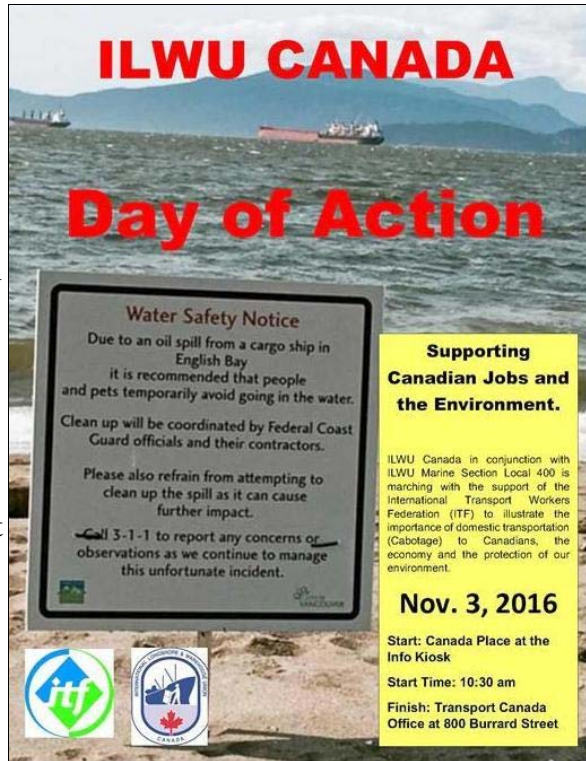
# Vancouver Maritime Workers and Allies Rally Against Free Trade Agreement with European Union



More than 300 workers marched from Canada Place to the Transport Canada office on Burrard Street for a rally against CETA on November 3. The march and rally were organized by the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU). Workers from the Seafarers' International Union, UNIFOR, BC Ferry and Marine Workers Union, the Vancouver and District Labour Council and other unions also participated.

In the call for the action, the ILWU said "Why is CETA such a bad deal for the ILWU and Canada? CETA will effectively destroy our cabotage laws which protects Canadian shipping companies and Canadian seafarers from foreign vessels trading within Canadian waters. CETA will allow foreign vessels to enter our waters and take over coastal trade within Canada using foreign crews whom they pay as little \$3 to \$4 per hour. The safety standards for these vessels are substandard putting our coastlines in jeopardy and displacing our Canadian seafarers costing our country thousands of jobs." Addressing the Investor-State Dispute Settlement system, the union said, "Under this program, if a government tries to change their laws or regulations to better run their country, a corporation that is affected by the change has the ability to sue the government thus taking away our rights to govern our own country, and could very well leave rulings in the hands of global corporations and a global court system."

Carrying placards and banners of their Locals and a lead banner that read "Stamp Out Union Busting," and shouting "Fair trade not free trade," the marchers were greeted with cheers and raised fists and other signs of support on their way to the Transport Canada office. Jim Given, President of the Seafarers International Union (SIU) Canada told the rally that there was a time when one would never see the two unions working together but, he said, they are working together now to defend maritime workers. He pointed out that CETA would open up the Great Lakes, dredging, the movement of containers, and that other transportation workers, including airline workers, are also under attack, that the recent announcement by the government that they will allow 49 per cent foreign ownership will drive wages down in the airlines. With CETA, he said, contracts at the federal and provincial and municipal levels are going to be opened up to foreign investment. Already, he said, in the last two years 2,100 maritime jobs have been lost to temporary foreign workers on ships who are here on waivers because the federal government is not enforcing the law. He warned that besides CETA there is the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA) and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) that the workers have to fight.



Rob Ashton, President of ILWU Canada also addressed the rally and commented that there were people there from all walks of life, all out for a common cause, to protect the way of life of "our brothers and sisters and comrades on the water." He noted that the workers at the rally were not on strike but were fighting for a social cause, for the future of the nation and that the maritime industry is key to winning this fight. He said that the seafarers on the vessels on the coasts and on the Great Lakes are watch keepers and know the





coasts and the waters. He condemned those who want to steal maritime workers' jobs and hire foreign workers and pay them slave wages.

All the speakers at the rally expressed the determination of maritime workers to defend their rights and that this rally was just the beginning, that there would be a major rally in early 2017 involving truckers, airline workers and workers throughout the transportation sector.



ILWU Local 519, Stewart, BC

(Photos: ILWU, S. Neatby, N. Coles, J. Woods)

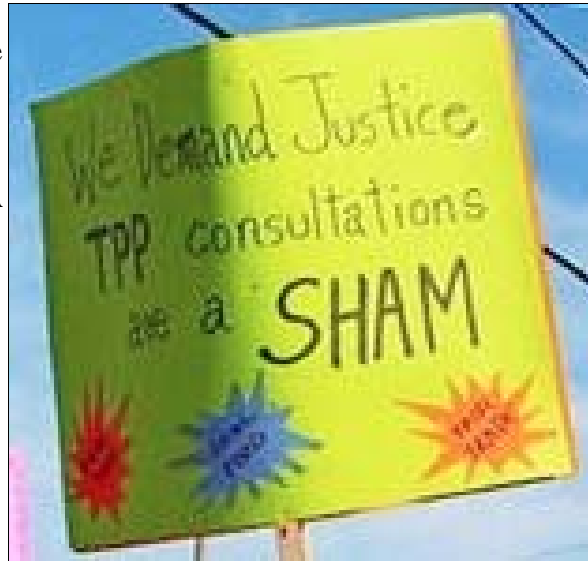


## St. Catharine's Protest Against Trans-Pacific Partnership





People from the Niagara region protested at the office of Liberal Member of Parliament Chris Bittle on November 5 to demand Canada not ratify the neo-liberal Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) trade agreement. Participants pointed out that the TPP would have the same destructive effects of NAFTA but on a far greater scale. They pointed out that the Niagara region has already been devastated by free trade controlled by the oligopolies and the only beneficiaries will be large private corporate and financial interests. Participants included representatives from the Niagara Regional Labour Council and the Council of Canadians.



A Town Hall was also held on October 22 by the Niagara Regional Labour Council. Bruce Allen, Vice-President of the Labour Council said at the meeting, "Faced as we are with a majority government in Ottawa led by a political party, the Liberal Party, with a long and very consistent track record of backing and implementing anti-worker trade agreements nothing less, if not much more, is going to be necessary to stop this government from ratifying the TPP. Stated otherwise, we must mobilize politically."



**Town Hall Meeting, October 22, 2016**

*(With files from St. Catharine's Standard, Niagara Regional Labour Council)*



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