

April 25, 2023 - No. 23

155,000 Federal Public Service Workers on Strike
Keep the Support Coming for Striking
Public Service Workers!



Picket line in National Capital Region on first day of PSAC strike, April 19, 2023

- **More Unions Express Support for Striking Workers**

Windsor Salt Strike Enters Week 11

- **Active and Retired Teachers and Education Workers of Windsor-Essex Step Up Their Support**
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Annual Meeting of Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan

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United Steelworkers

- **National Policy Conference Convoked in Toronto April 23-28**

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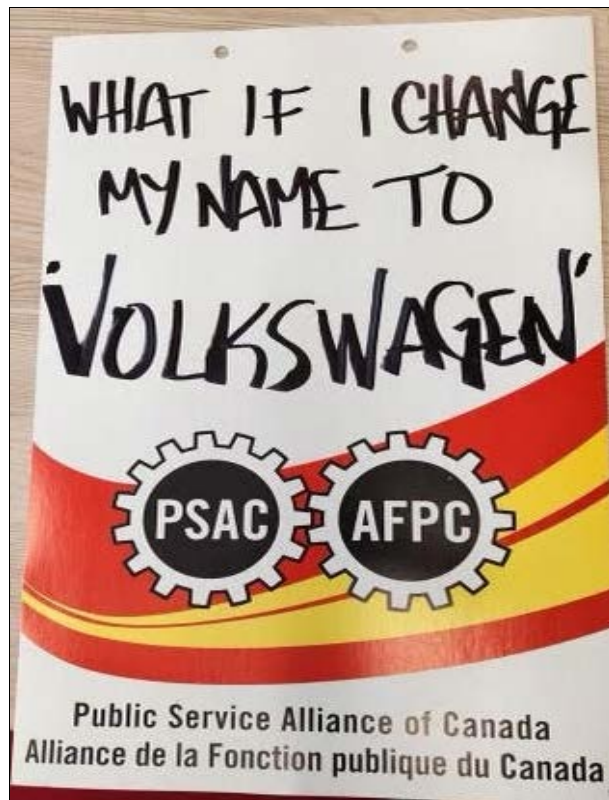


Many unions join PSAC on the picket line in Calgary, April 21, 2023

Reports from across the country and the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) confirm that there is a mass participation of over 110,000 of the 155,000 striking workers on the picket lines in more than 200 locations across the country. These workers bring supporters with them and, along with the participation of workers of other unions on the picket lines and members of communities across the country, the President of PSAC Chris Aylward reports that this mobilization is having a good effect on negotiations. Aylward makes it clear that it is the determination of the PSAC workers to get wages and working conditions that they deem acceptable for themselves and to enable the delivery of services that has produced motion at the bargaining table.

This week PSAC is expanding its strike actions to ports and other federal infrastructure. The aim is to step up the pressure on the federal government to force it to meet the just demands of the workers. On April 24, the Port of Montreal, the Port of Vancouver and the Port of St. John's in Newfoundland and Labrador were shut down by the workers for part of the day. Through their picket lines, they are showing the important work they do and all the federal infrastructure they contribute to operating which creates immense value. Far from being a cost, these workers are showing the vital role they play in the economy of Canada.

On Thursday, April 21, outside of an announcement in which Prime Minister Trudeau unveiled a \$700 million handout to a subsidiary of Volkswagen to build an electric battery factory in St. Thomas, Ontario and \$10 billion more in production based incentives over 10 years, striking PSAC workers upheld the dignity of labour by showing how the Trudeau government's talk about supporting the "middle class" is a fraud. They showed clearly that when it



comes to actual workers, governments claim poverty and to be reasonable because they want to use public funds to pay the rich in various ways. The government's claim that PSAC workers are being unreasonable or are going beyond what is "competitive" must be rejected. What is unreasonable is that billions are being handed out every day to the rich in the name of "greening the economy" with no end in sight in order for the U.S. to be so-called competitive, while the workers who create all the value and provide all the services in both Canada and the U.S. are told to limit their demands, to be reasonable and competitive! It is absurd and the stand of PSAC workers to say *No!* punctures the Trudeau government's arrogance.

It is only after the union served its strike deadline that Treasury Board moved from its wage offer of just over eight per cent over four years to nine per cent over three years. This is still an unacceptable offer, the union says. Without the mobilization of the workers, the situation at the table was at an impasse over this issue and other issues as well. In a TV interview on April 24, the President of PSAC said that the union started the negotiations with a demand of a 13.5 per cent increase over three years, against a rate of inflation of 13.8 per cent over the same period. The union made a move on its demand recently, he said, but the government's current wage offer will not produce an agreement.

The union maintains that a wage settlement that would be acceptable to PSAC workers would give an impulse to similar demands of other public service workers as well as private sector workers in the country, including non-unionized workers, against what PSAC calls the wage repression by governments and employers against all workers.

There is also some motion on the part of Treasury Board on the issue of remote work, which the union wants to include in the collective agreement. The union maintains that remote work is now part of everyday life for many workers. Experience during the pandemic has shown that public service workers can be as effective working remotely as they are in the office. According to the union, it is time to look to the future by negotiating remote work protections into the collective agreement instead of Treasury Board imposing a mandatory return to offices in ways that violate workers' collective bargaining rights.



PSAC picket line in Montreal, April 24, 2023

In an April 23 update, Aylward writes:

"You may have seen the headlines this weekend – things didn't get off to a great start.

"We made some progress in the end, but we're not there yet.

"I can report that at the Treasury Board common issues table, we made some headway on remote work language, and both sides have moved in order to get closer to a resolution on wage increases.

"At the CRA bargaining table, talks continue but without a new mandate from the employer, things haven't moved much further.

"So we're not at the finish line yet, but I know that we can get to a fair deal for all 155,000 PSAC members thanks to the strong strike mandate you've delivered and the incredible solidarity you've shown from coast to coast to coast."



Now is the time to keep up and step up support for the striking public service workers on the picket lines. They are fighting for the dignity of labour of all workers which contributes to inspiring all workers to do the same. The government seems to have money to pay the rich for all kinds of schemes but when it comes to increasing the wages of public sector workers, it pits this against the delivery of services, saying there is no money to pay for both. Clearly, it has its priorities mixed up at a time all Canadians know that it is cutbacks and the anti-social offensive, including privatization, which affect the delivery of services in a very negative manner.

Make your opposition to the anti-social offensive known by stepping up support for the members of the public service!

Find the nearest picket line using PSAC's picket line finder tool: workerscantwait.ca



National Capital Region, April 23, 2023



St. John's, Newfoundland, April 22, 2023

(Photos: WF, PSAC)



More Unions Express Support for Striking Workers



CUPE members on the picket line with PSAC in Grand Falls-Windsor, Newfoundland, April 24, 2023

More unions are posting statements in support of the strike of the 155,000 PSAC federal public service workers.

International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers

On April 20, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers wrote:

To All Our PSAC Striking Union Siblings,

The 'Fighting Machinists' of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) stand in solidarity, and strong support as you fight for your rights and livelihoods. The decision to strike is never taken lightly, but when pushed to the brink, it is a last resort, and know that the IAMAW stands alongside you offering our support in any way that helps.

The IAMAW represents thousands of workers across North America in multiple sectors, and over the last two years, several of our own locals were out on picket lines as you are. We know firsthand the hardships and bitter struggles to fight for what workers deserve. We know all of the strategies employers use to push unions to the brink during a strike. It is unacceptable that the federal government has allowed its employees, those who ensure public services and goods are available to us, to work without a contract for two years. Two years, that have for the most part, been the most trying period our country has seen.

It is shameful that employers, those in the public and private sector, expect workers to ride out the inflation crisis, or worse yet, pay for the inflation crisis, which isn't ours to solve. While profits and revenues rose for many employers, workers have continuously fallen behind for decades. While we're told to ride out the inflation crisis, our employers are reaping profits as a result of the work we do. Rather than doing the right thing, they use every excuse possible and strategy available to agitate workers. Asking for a fair deal and fair compensation is not unreasonable, ignoring needs of workers who provide us with some of the country's most critical services is. Workers can't and shouldn't wait, and we add our voice to yours in carrying that message.

This is why your fight matters; because it's a scenario that plays out too often, and because the government must be held accountable to set a fair bar for all workers. Your fight is our fight, and you have our support getting a fair deal. United and in solidarity we will show them the labour movement is strong and will not back down.

We have your back, in both support and voice.

In solidarity,

David Chartrand
General Vice-President
IAMAW Canada

Unifor

On April 19, Unifor posted the following statement:

During this crucial period, we stand alongside PSAC's 155 000 sisters and brothers of the Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) in their conflict with the Treasury Board and the Canada Revenue Agency. We wish to express our unwavering solidarity on behalf of 315,000 Unifor members and our support for all PSAC members who are confronted with the necessity to strike in order to obtain the respect they deserve. We understand the challenges you are facing and we stand by you in this fight.

Our struggle is the struggle of Canada's entire working class. A struggle for respect and dignity. Skyrocketing inflation rates over the last few years have affected wage earners. The erosion of purchasing power is felt every day and workers are completely within their rights to demand decent wages that will enable them to live a good life.

During the pandemic, the members of PSAC were on the frontlines to support Canadians. They showed their professionalism by implementing, in record time, essential programs that benefited the population of Canada. Many Unifor members were able to afford groceries in the spring of 2020 because the members of PSAC were working and running these programs. We have not and will not forget your contribution.

The federal public service is a pillar of Canada's social fabric. In carrying out their daily missions,

federal civil servants enable Canadians to live in a country that is safer, more fair and more equitable. They often work in the shadows, but are no less essential. The Treasury Board and the Canada Revenue Agency must acknowledge the crucial role these workers play and ensure working conditions that are equal to their contribution to Canadian society.

As Canada's largest union in the private sector, we share a common struggle with the public sector unions and, today, with the members of PSAC. Our objective is the same—to ensure Canadian workers get the fair and equitable conditions they deserve.

In solidarity,

Lana Payne, National President

Len Poirier, National Secretary-Treasurer

Daniel Cloutier, Québec Director

Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions

On April 18, the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions wrote:

'What federal public sector workers are asking for isn't unreasonable: fair wages that keep pace with inflation and training to build a more inclusive public service,' said Linda Silas, President of the Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions (CFNU). 'Their message to the Treasury Board and Canada Revenue Agency is simple -- they won't be taken for granted, they won't fall further behind, and they won't back down.'

For over two years, Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC) members have been working in good faith without a contract while negotiations have been ongoing. Now, more than 155,000 Public Service Alliance of Canada members are in a strike position -- setting the stage for one of the largest strikes in Canada's history.

The CFNU urges the federal government to ensure public service workers have the fair deal they deserve.



Windsor Salt Strike Enters Week 11

Active and Retired Teachers and Education Workers of Windsor-Essex Step Up Their Support

As the strike at Windsor Salt now enters its 11th week with negotiations ongoing but moving slowly, support continues to grow for the workers and their cause, especially amongst active and retired teachers and education workers whose pension fund is implicated in the strike through its investments in the owners of Windsor Salt, Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. (SCIH).

The stepped up support for the striking workers comes on the heels of the Annual Meeting of the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) at which the provincial president of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association (OECTA) and the President of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF) District 9, Greater Essex, both expressed the demand that the OTPP stop going against the values of teachers and education workers concerning workers' rights with its investments. The response of OTPP's president that they could not do much despite even having a seat on the company's management board is clearly not being accepted.



On April 24 a joint letter was sent to SCIH from the presidents of five unions of teachers and educations in Windsor-Essex, most of whose members pay into the OTPP. Those signing were: Erin Roy, President, OSSTF, District 9; Mario Spagnuolo, President, Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario (ETF), Greater Essex; Jody Meloche, President, OECTA Secondary and Occasional; Adriana Palamides, President, OECTA Elementary and Occasional; Mike Hinch, President, Association des enseignantes et des enseignants franco-ontariens (AEFO) Unité 63. Copies were also sent to the unions' Provincial Executives that represent them on the Ontario Teachers' Federation (OTF), expressing the unified stand of the unions that their Pension Plan must make a contribution to affirming workers' rights in their community and that claims that it is just business as usual are not acceptable.

The letter from the Presidents states: "It is our understanding that the commitment to bargain with the labour union representing the workers (Unifor), in good faith, is hollow and that the intended goal of the company is to outsource the work to contract companies. The refusal to bargain unless deep concessions are agreed to is counter to how the bargaining process works.

"As representatives of education labour unions in the Windsor-Essex community, we stand with the workers of Windsor Salt. We are also representatives of teachers in our community and our pension plan (the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan) is a large investor in the company that owns Windsor Salt.



"Our members do not want their dollars to be used to harm neighbours in our community. We have all voiced concern to the OTPP and will continue to do so. The OTPP is one of the largest pension plans in the world and is supposed to uphold ethical and social justice investment practices that align with the values of the members who they are entrusted to represent.

"As labour leaders who stand united with the workers of the Windsor Salt Company, we ask that the company get back to the bargaining table, in good faith, to bargain a fair collective agreement."

On April 24 a delegation of retired teachers and education workers, members of the Greater Essex

OSSTF Active Retired Members (OSSTF-ARM Chapter 9) joined Windsor Salt workers on their picket line. Given that many members of OSSTF-ARM are also members of the OTPP, the organization's executive decided to make a financial donation and to make their concerns known about the use of their pension funds in this way and to issue a statement.

At the line, Bruce Awad, president of ARM Chapter 9 and a former governor of the OTF which co-sponsors the plan on behalf of Ontario teachers, presented the workers with a \$500 donation to their strike fund along with a copy of the letter the group sent to the head of the Teachers' Pension Plan calling on it to use its influence with the U.S. owners to negotiate with the workers in good faith towards a collective agreement they can accept instead of trying to break their union.

The letter from the retirees to the Pension Plan's President and CEO Jo Taylor reads:

"ARM Chapter 9, Greater Essex (Active Retired Members of OSSTF) represents many retired teachers and education workers in Windsor and Essex County, many of whom are members of the OTPP.

"On February 17 members of Unifor locals 1959 and 240 who work in the salt mine, evaporation facility and offices of the Windsor Salt Company in Windsor were forced to take strike action after the company's U.S. owners, Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. refused to even begin negotiations unless they agreed to the contracting out of their work and other unacceptable concessions. The company is known to be working with a U.S. law firm that specializes in 'union avoidance' and has been engaged in what can only be called union busting as, despite finally agreeing to engage in negotiations with the unions, it has continued to try and break the strike using provocative tactics and continuing to insist that the workers accept the contracting out of their jobs.

"We and the entire labour movement in our communities and beyond know that the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan is a key investor in Stone Canyon, even having one of its asset managers sitting on the holding company's eight-member Management Board.

"Over the years as active members of OSSTF we fought tooth and nail in defence of our rights and for the rights of all workers in Ontario against successive Ontario governments. Teachers and education workers today are having to do this all over again against the Ford government which is going outside the constitution to try and dictate and not negotiate. We cannot now be silent when our pension monies are being used by an anti-union U.S. company to attack Canadian workers and their unions right under our noses in our own community where Windsor teachers led the fight in the 1970s for union rights!

"OTPP's investments in Stone Canyon are not 'leaving a lasting, positive impact on the world,' which is a stated aim of our pension fund. It is deliberately harming the future of our friends and family members at Windsor Salt that it has forced to fight for the very existence of their union! We call on everyone who can to speak out now to help bring Stone Canyon into line so that it stops its union-busting activities in Canada and starts engaging in serious negotiations with the workers' unions aimed at reaching a collective agreement acceptable to both parties. I would appreciate a response as to what you and the OTPP could do to encourage Stone Canyon to stop the anti-union tactics and instead bargain in good faith."

(Empower Yourself Now. Photos: EYN)



Hamilton Steelworkers Visit Striking Windsor Salt Workers' Picket Line



On April 20, United Steelworkers Local 1005 President Ron Wells, Vice-President Jim McColl as well as retiree and former President Rolf Gerstenberger, joined the striking Windsor Salt workers' picket line in Windsor, Ontario to deliver a donation of \$1005 and to bring the support of their members. The donation was approved by a general membership meeting of the Steelworkers held on April 12, following the initial visit to Windsor of retired steelworkers and others from Hamilton, who joined the rally on International Women's Day.

The steelworkers, striking salt workers and a number of retired salt workers shared their common experiences dealing with arrogant U.S. companies that think they can do as they please in Canada. All emphasized the importance of taking a stand to say No! and that this is the only way to find a way forward and also make these companies -- and the governments that back them up -- think twice about attacking workers.

The active and retired salt workers explained their experiences with Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. whose *modus operandi* is to issue ultimatums and dictates and then act friendly at the last moment in the hopes of disorienting the workers. They also explained the process of production, what life is like working in the mine, and the support they have gained from the community and across the country.

The steelworkers explained how they waged some of their battles against U.S. Steel. In their case, they rejected the company's attempts to provoke a strike which they could use to lay workers off but the steelworkers did not fall for that. The company then locked them out and the workers were able to prove that it was in fact a layoff. They also explained how they built support amongst their community, and always put their struggle within the context of Canadian nation-building. By the end, U.S. Steel "had two friends in the whole city," the steelworkers said.

Below is the letter of support that went with the donation:

Dear Windsor Salt Workers,

We are writing to express our support for you as you fight for job security and to stop outsourcing. It takes a lot of courage and determination to stand up for what you believe in, and your efforts have not gone unnoticed. You are an inspiration to all workers who are fighting for fair treatment and respect. Your demands for job security and an end to outsourcing are more than reasonable. All workers have the right to job security, and outsourcing only serves to undermine that security. It is important that companies like Windsor Salt recognize the value of their workers and provide them with the protections, wages and benefits they deserve. Your strike sends a powerful message to management and to the broader community that workers will not be taken advantage of. Your determination and unity have shown that workers can make a difference when they come together and demand fair treatment.

We stand with you in your fight for job security and to stop outsourcing. I hope that your efforts will lead to a positive outcome that benefits all workers.

Sincerely,

USW Local 1005



(Photos: WF)



Annual Meeting of Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan
Teachers Raise Concerns About Having a Say
Where Pension Funds Invested

On April 13, in Toronto, the Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan (OTPP) held its annual meeting for shareholders -- all those holding a valid Ontario teaching certificate who are employed either as classroom teachers or in other positions by an Ontario board of education, designated private

school or designated organization. The meeting was held in-person at the Toronto Reference Library and virtually with at least 300 people attending altogether.

Outside the meeting a number of groups gave out information to participants about their views on the Plan's investments. This included 150 leaflets distributed by Empower Yourself Now about the Plan's investments in Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc., a U.S. company that is engaged in union-busting in Canada.

The chair of the OTPP board, Steven McGirr presided over the meeting while its President and CEO, Jo Taylor, as well as a number of other officers, addressed the meeting on the plan's performance in the last year, both from the standpoint of the returns it delivered as well as its provision of services for plan members.

The plan currently has 183,000 working members contributing to it, and 153,000 members collecting a pension. The average plan member collects a pension for 32 years. In 2022 the plan grew by four per cent and had assets of \$247 billion at year end, an increase of \$5 billion from the year before. It is fully funded for the 10th year in a row and has had a 9.8 per cent growth rate since its inception in 1990. In 2022 the plan paid \$7.2 billion in pensions and benefits, compared to \$6.9 billion the previous year, and has increased its pension benefits by 6.3 per cent to provide inflation protection to its members – something that was recognized by plan members in the audience as an important mechanism to ensure pensioners' incomes are maintained.

In 2022 the plan opened offices in San Francisco and Mumbai in an effort to broaden its international reach. It sees being in San Francisco as a way to put it at the head of advances in technology, and in Mumbai as a means to invest in a growing India and what it calls its "family-run businesses." One such "family-run business" is the Mahindra Group, an Indian multinational conglomerate which has operations in over 100 countries, with a presence in aerospace, agribusiness, aftermarket automotive components, construction equipment, defence, energy, farm equipment, finance and insurance, industrial equipment, information technology, leisure and hospitality, logistics, real estate, retail and education.[1][2]

Throughout the presentations, officers emphasized diversification of their portfolio holdings as a means to weather global storms. This theme came up on a number of occasions to justify its global expansion as well as its investment in what are called risky ventures as well as industries which are large carbon emitters.

OTPP President and CEO Jo Taylor addressed the concerns of many about the plan's investment in a now defunct cryptocurrency exchange, FTX, as well as large fossil fuel companies and the growing presence of representatives of oil and gas monopolies on its Board of Directors. The Board is appointed by the Ontario Teachers' Federation and Ontario government which jointly manage the pension plan.

Taylor presented the OTPP's loss of \$95 million in FTX as an experiment by its Venture Growth team in the field of cryptocurrency. Despite OTPP doing its due diligence and the use of outside consultants, FTX kept information hidden, he said. According to him, the OTPP's experiment was a means to gain entry into the cryptocurrency markets and learn about their functioning. They are learning from their mistake, but own the decision, he said.

Concerning investments in fossil fuels, Taylor presented the investments not as something that contributes to increasing carbon emissions, but as a means of influencing large carbon emitters by using the pension fund's power and influence to get them to reduce their carbon emissions. He cited natural gas generation in particular as a "transitional fuel" which will contribute to transitioning to the "green economy." In this respect he emphasized that the fund was investing \$5 billion in "high carbon transition assets." All of this, he said, was a better strategy than divesting and would make a

real world impact rather than passing the problems on to others to solve.

Following the presentations, questions submitted in advance and from the floor were taken. A number of questions responded to the assertion that the fund should maintain its investments in fossil fuels as well as permit representatives of some of the biggest polluters to sit on its board. Concerns were also raised about the plan's need to ensure that all its investments comply with the right of Indigenous Peoples to free, prior and informed consent regarding what is done on their lands. The OTPP's officers re-iterated their position about investing to influence emitters and cited as examples of their work with Indigenous Peoples investments in the privatization of Chile's public utilities, especially its water supply, whose infrastructure transits through Indigenous territories.



Erin Roy, President of OSSTF District 9, Greater Essex, speaks at Pension Plan meeting

The same argument about influencing the companies they invest in was not forthcoming when it came to the plan's investments in the union-busting holding company which is not negotiating in good faith with the workers at Windsor Salt in Windsor, Ontario. Both the President of the Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, Barb Dobrowolski, and the President of District 9 of the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation in Greater-Essex, Erin Roy, raised pointed questions about why the plan was not using its influence from its seat on the Management Board of Stone Canyon Industries Holdings Inc. and its 15 per cent stake in the company to uphold the values of plan members in the face of the company's union-

busting activities in three provinces in Canada. Both noted that they have received many concerns from plan members about the actions of Stone Canyon and their pension monies being invested in union-busting.[3]

The response from the plan officers was that because they were not owners of the company, they could not really direct its management to do business differently, but that they would "have a conversation" about the matter. They did not respond to the question about why they were investing in a company that goes against the values of the plan's members in the first place, nor the clear double standard in how they say they are using their investments in fossil fuels to influence companies to comply with their obligations to reduce carbon emissions, but are unable to intervene when it comes to workers' rights. The silence in response to these concerns was not appreciated by those present.

A number of questions raised concerns about the plan's global investments, with some advocating for greater investments in Canada and Canadian entities. A number of members raised concerns specifically about the state of the world and its bifurcation, and in one case, the increasingly lawless actions of the U.S. and NATO in unilaterally freezing assets of countries like Russia, and of individuals, and that this could also become something applied to Canada and Canadians. Concerns were raised about whether the plan had investments in Russia and how it justified its investments in India. Concerns were raised about the plan's participation in the World Economic Forum alongside global elites who comprise the very richest people on earth and rule the world in various ways.

OTPP representatives explained that the best response to global uncertainty and what they called the threat to the functioning of society was diversification of their portfolio. The plan's Chief Investment Officer made it clear that they have little to no investments in Russia, and that the plan feels that, "despite concerns," it can gain returns on infrastructure development and the growing

population in India.

Overall, the concerns raised show the consciousness of the OTPP's members -- that they want the investments of their pension plan to reflect their values as teachers and educators of the younger generation. The fact that their role is limited to a once-a-year annual general meeting in which they get to ask 60 second questions for one hour and do not really have a way to direct their pension fund in a meaningful way was obvious, as no real way yet exists where they can participate in deliberation on their pension plan and its role and make their views known. This is a challenge facing all workers in Canada with respect to their pension funds. The aim of the pension industry to make the highest returns irrespective of where the members' money is invested, and that "business is business," does not meet with the expressed desires of the majority of teachers.

To view a video of the teachers' call on the pension fund to help stop union-busting at Windsor Salt [click here](#).

Notes

1. Mahindra Group Revenue – US\$ 19 billion (2022)

Owner: Anand Mahindra

Number of employees: 260,000+ (2022)

Subsidiaries

Mahindra & Mahindra

Tech Mahindra

Mahindra & Mahindra Financial Services Limited

Mahindra Defence

Mahindra Aerospace

Club Mahindra Holidays

Comviva

Mahindra Lifespace Developers

Mahindra Ugine Steel

Mahindra Susten

Mahindra Agri Business

Mahindra Heavy Engines Ltd

Mahindra EPC Irrigation Ltd.

Mahindra Water Utilities Ltd.

Bristlecone

Mahindra Systech

Mahindra Logistics

2. According to Wikipedia, the Chairman Emeritus of Mahindra & Mahindra, Keshub Mahindra, was Managing Director of Union Carbide India Ltd. when its negligence caused the Bhopal Disaster on the night of 2-3 December 1984, considered the world's worst industrial disaster. Union Carbide made pesticides. More than 500,000 people were exposed to the highly toxic gas methyl isocyanate (MIC) that leaked from the plant. Estimates vary on the death toll, with the official number of immediate deaths being 2,259 and the number reported by residents much higher. Only in 2008 did the government of Madya Pradesh pay token compensation to the family members of 3,787 victims killed in the gas release, and to 574,366 injured victims. A government affidavit in 2006 stated that the leak caused 558,125 injuries, including 38,478 temporary partial injuries and approximately 3,900 severely and permanently disabling injuries. Others estimate that 8,000 died within two weeks, and another 8,000 or more have since died from gas-related diseases.

Union Carbide India Ltd. (UCIL) was majority owned in the United States, with Indian government-controlled banks and the Indian public holding a 49.1 percent stake in it. Between 1986 and 2012, civil and criminal cases against Union

Carbide Corporation (UCC) filed in the United States were repeatedly dismissed as the U.S. courts focused on UCIL being a standalone entity of India. In 1989, UCC got away with paying \$470 million (equivalent to \$907 million in 2021) to settle litigation stemming from the disaster.

Civil and criminal cases were also filed in the District Court of Bhopal, India, involving UCC, UCIL, and the CEO of UCC, Warren Anderson. In June 2010, seven Indian nationals who were UCIL employees in 1984, including the former UCIL Chairman Keshub Mahindra were convicted in Bhopal of causing death by negligence and sentenced to two years imprisonment and a fine of about \$2,000 each, the maximum punishment allowed by Indian law. All were released on bail shortly after the verdict. An eighth former employee was also convicted, but died before the judgment was issued.

All Mahindra paid was a fine of Rs1 Lakh, equivalent today to \$1,631.73 Canadian.

3. "Teachers' Pension Plan Major Investor in U.S. Company Attacking Windsor Salt Workers," Empower Yourself Now, March 9, 2023



United Steelworkers

National Policy Conference Convoked in Toronto April 23-28



Youth panel at National NextGen Conference, April 24, 2023

The United Steelworkers Canada (USW Canada) is holding its National Policy Conference from April 25-28 in Toronto. Prior to it, the National NextGen Conference took place on April 24 for Steelworker activists 35 and under. The promo says it is "a chance for younger Steelworkers to build networks, and to prioritize and discuss action items most relevant to NextGen." The one-day event will include speakers, panels and workshops. Also on Monday, April 24, for the second time, USW is holding a conference for members in national locals and federally regulated sectors to address issues "from anti-scab legislation, building cross-district bargaining strength and other issues relevant to federally regulated members," the unions says.

The National Conference of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) is also taking place over two days "to discuss and plan their many upcoming actions and activities," USW says.



Delegates to the National Conference of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees, April 24, 2023

Policy and Issue Discussions and Resolutions

The union informs that the following policy areas will be debated at the conference followed by a debate about the union's direction over the coming years:

- Organizing in new sectors
- International trade
- Member engagement
- Anti-racism
- Advancing Indigenous rights
- Environment and decarbonization
- Maintaining our health and safety priorities
- Building international solidarity
- Equity caucus meetings

The organizers say that the conference agenda "will include time for all of our equity caucuses. These will be held over the lunch hour on two conference days to ensure strong participation and access for all delegates from equity-seeking groups."

This year's conference theme is "engage, mobilize, organize." USW National Director Marty Warren told members in a letter convoking the conference that this theme "is so relevant as we have seen so many organizing victories and bargaining successes over the past several years, we need to build on a re-energized labour movement."

All sessions and activities are taking place at the Sheraton in downtown Toronto.

(Photos: United Steelworkers)



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