



# INFORMATION UPDATE #42

## November 24, 2011

### **Steelworkers and Rail Car Workers Call Demonstration in Support of Canadian Wheat Board**

**Wheat Board's Public Monopoly Yes! Nation-Wrecking No!**



**Friday, November 25 – 4:00 pm**  
**Federal Building, 100 Bay St. N.**  
**Hamilton**  
**Organized by: Local 1005 USW**  
**(905-547-1417) and Local 7135 USW**  
**(905-544-3554)**

We are demonstrating on Friday against the Harper government's wanton destruction of the Canadian Wheat Board (CWB). His actions to railroad through Parliament Bill C-18, the *Marketing Freedom for Grain Farmers Act*, even though the majority of Prairie farmers oppose it, has significant ramifications for the livelihoods and way of life of not just prairie farmers but also the rest of us. Because of the

Canada-Europe Free Trade Agreement (CETA) and now the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) the plan is to also dismantle all marketing boards. This will profoundly affect Ontario and Quebec farmers and the way of life of all Canadians. All those who work in industries related to food processing and the agricultural sector will also be affected, as will everybody because we all eat food.

#### **The CWB Provides Food for Millions in Canada and Around the World**

- Getting rid of the publicly-controlled CWB will hand control of the \$5.2 billion Canadian grain trade to the private agri-monopolies such as Viterro, Richardson, and Cargill. The Australian Wheat Board, founded in 1939, was privatized in 1999, the single desk removed in 2008 and is now owned by U.S.-based Cargill, the world's largest private corporation.
- The CWB also provides employment for thousands of workers, e.g., at the Ports of Vancouver and Churchill, CWB

headquarters in Winnipeg and many more jobs created by economic "spin-offs." These include more than 1,000 workers at National Steel Car in Hamilton who produce rail cars used by the Wheat Board which are replaced about every 10 years.

- The CWB has long been a positive example for all sectors of the economy in solving the problem of private monopoly control of prices and preventing the anarchy, chaos, and economic crises that ensue.

#### **Global Monopolies Behind Harper's Nation-Wrecking Agenda**

The global monopolies are behind the destruction of marketing boards which protect the farmers' interests. Following the May 2 election, John Manley, a former deputy prime minister and now chief spokesperson for the monopolies as the CEO of the Canadian Council of Chief executives, congratulated the Harper government on its nation-wrecking. "As a demonstration of Canada's strong commitment to trade liberalization, we endorse your plan to reform the marketing practices of the Canadian Wheat Board. Consistent with that, we believe the time is right to phase out the national supply-

management system for eggs, dairy products and poultry, which penalize consumers and have seriously damaged our country's reputation as a champion of open markets."

An October 2011 report by the CCCE, entitled "Canada, China, and Rising Asia: A Strategic Proposal," argues that Canada must join the TPP or else miss the boat on trade with the countries of the Asia-Pacific. The CCCE claims such trade is possible "only if Canada is prepared to enact reforms in two areas where we are widely seen as being out of step with global standards: our supply-management systems that ... / 2

#### **Local 1005 USW "Christmas Night"**

##### **Dinner Dance**

**Friday, December 16, 2011**

**Michelangelo Banquet Centre,**

**1555 Upper Ottawa St., Hamilton**

**\$5 per ticket, first come first served**

**Doors open @ 6:00pm, Cash bar @ 6:30pm,**

**Dinner @ 7:00pm**



*New billboards up around Hamilton*

restrict imports of milk, poultry and eggs, and our relatively lax enforcement of intellectual property rights.”

“How long can Canada’s archaic system hold the national

interest hostage? The TPP provides a golden opportunity to phase out such programs in return for concessions in other areas, from the United States and others,” the report says.

### **At Stake in Ontario**

In Ontario’s agricultural industry 60 per cent of agricultural production is sold by marketing boards. There are 21 provincial marketing boards and four producer associations that market \$5 billion in farm commodities, including fruit, vegetables, dairy, poultry and pork.

Farming and agriculture and related industries contribute more to the GDP than even the auto sector. In the Greater Toronto Area alone, 53,000 jobs are in food processing, making it Toronto’s largest manufacturing industry. It is also one that has expanded in recent years, despite the broad

decline in manufacturing overall.

**In Quebec**, the Union des producteurs agricoles points out that “Supply management is an equitable model of agriculture, which encompasses 14,500 Quebec producers of milk, poultry and eggs.” This supply-managed sector makes up \$2.5 billion in farm revenue or about 40 per cent of all agricultural production in Quebec. The Quebec Department of Agriculture estimates that 61,000 jobs in Quebec depend directly or indirectly on milk production, 10,500 on poultry production and 1,000 on egg production.

### **Get Informed!**

We call on workers to get informed about the experience gained by CWB and other supply management marketing boards for farm commodities. This experience proves that these boards show a way forward towards public control over the wholesale sector of all commodities and must be protected.

Furthermore, providing information about the CWB and what is at stake is an important place to start to hold the Harper government to account. It permits people to come to an informed decision and ultimately puts the lie to Harper’s widespread but unsupported assertions. These include:

- The claim that because the Harperites form a majority government they have a license to do anything they want. Even though only 24 per cent of eligible voters voted for a Harper government, according to the self-serving logic, the Harper majority government represents a majority of Canadians and its values are synonymous with Canadian values.

- The claim that dismantling the Wheat board is about “freedom” – it is called freedom of choice even though in the face of monopoly dictate there is neither freedom nor choice.

- The claim that the farmers will do better without the Wheat Board because all individual farmers are rugged entrepreneurs who can successfully compete against giant monopolies in the so-called free market (unsuccessful individual competition is why farmers formed the CWB);

- The claim that “middlemen” eat up the profits farmers make from higher grain prices obtained by the CWB. No figures are provided to support this. On the contrary, the expenses of the Wheat Board are financed by its own activities for which it renders account to the farmers themselves who elect their representatives to the farmer-run Board.

- And the claim that the recent plebiscite where the majority of western grain farmers voted to retain the CWB does not represent what farmers want or think. But the Harper government does!

### **Get Involved!**

Local 1005 USW is calling on you to hold the Harper Government to account as this issue is already on our doorstep and will soon take on even greater dimensions when the trade deals Harper is signing force our municipal governments to privatize all public services as well. His destruction of the Wheat Board is part of a broader nation-wrecking

agenda. His actions are very dangerous. They do not in fact represent what Canadians want.

How to hold his government to account has become an urgent matter which cannot wait for the next election. Workers have to do it now. Join us to say NO! to nation-wrecking!

***Wheat Board Yes! Nation-Wrecking No!  
Manufacturing Yes! Nation-wrecking No!***

### **Hamilton and District Labour Council Resolution in Support of Canadian Wheat Board**

**Whereas** the Canadian Wheat Board has conducted an internal plebiscite of members that found 62% of farmers in favour of keeping the existing system at the Canadian Wheat Board.

**And whereas** the Conservative government has tabled Bill C-18, an act that would include reorganising the Board away from elected produc-

ers to government appointees.

**And whereas** pre-existing legislation governing the Board stipulates any structural changes must be ratified by a vote by producers.

**Move that** Hamilton and District Labour Council call on the CLC and affiliates to: support in words and resources the legal challenge lodged against the government by the Canadian Wheat Board for

violating Section 47.1 of the *Canadian Wheat Board Act*, work with the CLC and affiliates to mobilise a call for the federal Agriculture Minister, Gerry Ritz to recognise the rights enshrined in *Canadian Wheat Board Act* and further call on the Minister to respect the plebiscite results from the Wheat Board announced September 12, 2011.

*November 17, 2011*

**To contact USW Local 1005: Call 905-547-1417 or e-mail [info@uswa1005.ca](mailto:info@uswa1005.ca).  
Visit the website: [www.uswa1005.ca](http://www.uswa1005.ca)**