



INFORMATION UPDATE 2010 #29

September 6, 2010

MOTION TO SUPPORT 8300 PENSIONERS AT STELCO TO BE PRESENTED ON SEPTEMBER 15 AT HAMILTON CITY COUNCIL

It was recently announced that Ward 4 Councillor Sam Merulla will be presenting a motion at City Hall on September 15, 2010 at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers. The motion states **“Whereas, the families of the Pensioners are affected by US Steel’s decision on indexing; and whereas, this impact is felt city wide; and whereas, Hamilton City Council wishes to call on US Steel to live up to their commitments to the people of the city of Hamilton; Therefore be it resolved: The Hamilton City Council express its concern to US Steel and request a reversal of their decision to not pay the indexing for the 8300 pensioner families.”**

One of US Steel’s demands from Local 1005 during this round of bargaining is they want the union to agree that the pensions for 8300 pensioners no longer be indexed. With indexing, a pensioner receiving \$1000 a month in 1991 when indexing began is now receiving \$1366 a month. To eliminate indexing would result in financial difficulty for pensioners, especially with daily surprises, such as the HST, the increases in hydro rates, etc. Rather than deal with this issue seriously, US Steel unilaterally stopped indexing pensions as of August 1, 2010, when the contract expired.

Local 1005 are calling on all its members and pensioners and the community to come to Hamilton City Hall on September 15 at 7:00 p.m. to call the Hamilton City Council to support this motion and to oppose U.S. Steel’s attempt to attack the pensioners and to oppose the wrecking of the Canadian economy.

FURTHER ATTACKS AGAINST THE STELCO WORKERS

Another issue in dispute in the current set of negotiations between Local 1005 and US Steel is the question of indexing for the active workers. US Steel has a demand that they want to change the base of the COLA calculations from 1971=100 to 2002=100. What this means in real terms is that a worker working in the plant would only receive about 20% of what he/she would receive if the base stayed the same. In those thirty years the COLA provided over \$12.00 an hour in increases. **Without COLA, the Stelco worker (at Level 2 or the old job class 7) would be making \$14 an hour instead of over \$26.00 an hour for this job level.**

U.S. Steel’s demand to give up the pension plan for new hires, to eliminate indexing for pensioners, to eliminate or seriously erode the COLA, to stop covering the health benefits for workers or spouses who have exhausted their \$70,000 limit shows that U.S. Steel is demanding that Stelco workers give up victories during the last one hundred years and accept less, and they want the workers to sit idly by while the manufacturing base is wrecked and the social fabric of the country is destroyed.

What directly benefits U.S. Steel makes our lives worse. We started the fight for security in retirement in 1946. It took us a decade of struggle to win a defined benefit pension plan and another 45 years to get our pensions indexed. We do not think anything will be solved by going backwards. We want to go forward to security in retirement for all Canadians with a government guaranteed defined benefit

pension plan. This means going beyond company defined benefit plans to government benefit plan that guarantee the same income workers had during their working years. That is what Local 1005 means by nation-building—going forward, solving problems in a pro-social way, not wrecking gains that have been made and leaving Canadians to fend for themselves within the economy and society. While the economy is completely socialized, it is controlled by a privileged elite disconnected and unconcerned with the interest and well-being of the people, which is shown clearly when the indexing of 8300 pensioners is attacked. We do not intend to go backwards to the crazy insecurity of a savings plan where your only insecurity is to die before your savings run out.

U.S. STEAL

BY

BILL MAHONEY, LOCAL 1005 PENSIONER

***They stormed across the border and proudly raised their flag,
“We now own your steel mill”, they so liked to brag;
They want to cut our pensions, our benefits, our pay,
Now they own the steel mills, they want things their own way.***

***They said that buying Stelco, would be our countries gain,
But all they brought to Canada, is misery and pain;
When they speak of workers, their voice is full of hate,
What we call social justice, they call a welfare state.***

***They think we should keep working, as long as we’re alive,
That no one should retire, before their ninety-five;
Many of our pensioners, worked over forty years,
Left behind widows, drowning in their tears.***

***They need every cent, just to hold onto their home,
But they are the kind of people, U.S. Steel won’t leave alone,
We must protect our workers, our pensioners, our ill,
For U.S. Steel, will show them no good will.***

For your information:

Local 1005 holds weekly information update meetings every Thursday afternoon at 3:30 p.m. at 350 Kenilworth Ave. N where we provide the latest information on developments in negotiations, the state of the economy or political affairs, followed by discussion. All are welcome.

Local 1005 USW also holds a weekly picket and leafleting session every Monday at 3:30 p.m. at the corner of King and James. This is also an excellent opportunity to find out what is happening.

We also invite everyone to come to City Hall on September 15, 2010 to oppose U.S. Steel’s attacks on the Stelco pensioners. The City Council meeting begins at 7:00 p.m.

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