

January 21, 2016

January 30 Day of Action in Hamilton
Together Let Us Stand Up for the
Rights of All!

Saturday, January 30 -- 1:00 pm
Keep Stelco Producing! Steel not Steal!



"The People vs U.S. Steel," Hamilton Day of Action, January 29, 2011.

Hamilton City Hall, 71 Main St. W.
*For information: Local 1005 USW 905-547-1417
or Local 8782 USW at 519-587-2000.*

January 30 Day of Action in Hamilton

- **Together Let Us Stand Up for the Rights of All!**
- **Breaking New Ground in the Fight for the Rights of All - Presentation by Rolf Gerstenberger, January 29, 2011**

January 30 Day of Action in Hamilton

Together Let Us Stand Up for the Rights of All!

Hamiltonians and workers from different sectors of the economy from different cities in Ontario are joining steelworkers and pensioners in Hamilton to make the Hamilton Day of Action on January 30 a success. The last day of action was held in Hamilton five years ago, on January 29, 2011, at a time when U.S. Steel had imposed a phoney lockout to extort concessions from steelworkers. To its credit, Local 1005 USW launched a campaign under the theme *The People vs. U.S. Steel* to uphold the interests of the Stelco workforce and pensioners as well as Hamilton and Canada itself.

In this issue, *TML Daily* is reproducing the speech delivered five years ago by then president of Local 1005 USW Rolf Gerstenberger at the Hamilton Day of Action.

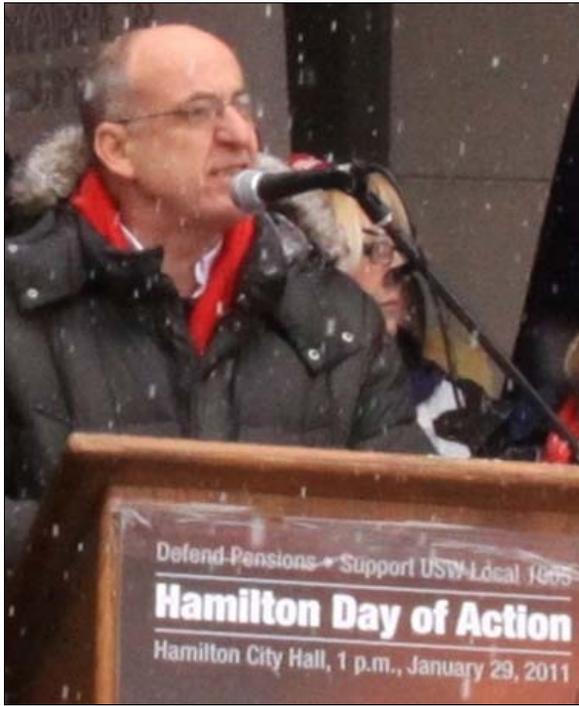


Breaking New Ground in the Fight for the Rights of All - Presentation by Rolf Gerstenberger, January 29, 2011 -



Local 1005 sincerely appreciates everyone's presence here today. We consider this a historic gathering which makes a historic statement of the determination of Canadian workers and people to resolve the crisis in their favour, not in the favour of the rich, and to say that governments are duty bound to uphold public right not monopoly right.

We are gathered here for this day of action to defend and affirm our rights. In the modern world people have rights by virtue of being human. All governments and those who employ humans must recognize those rights and guarantee them. Those rights include the right to a livelihood and security in retirement. Our rights at this time can be broadly expressed as public right. A problem for Canadians to confront and resolve is not only the recognition of our rights but more importantly how to affirm and guarantee them in practice.



In opposition to our rights, the monopolies, including the big banks and other private financial enterprises and the governments that are their representatives and serve them, have their own view of rights and more importantly they have the political and economic power to enforce their rights and crush public right. Their view is that the people's rights by virtue of being human are merely privileges only to be granted if they serve the narrow interests of the monopolies. This can be expressed as monopoly right.

Last December, we witnessed the most disgusting example of the politics of monopoly right trampling the politics of public right in the events surrounding the national meeting on pensions in Kananaskis, Alberta. The Harper government without warning reversed its pledge to strengthen the indexed defined benefits of the

Canada Pension Plan and instead promoted yet another registered savings plan so loved by the private financial enterprises. That is a betrayal of the federal government's social responsibility to guarantee indexed defined-benefit pensions for all.

The bankruptcy protection of Nortel Networks and the all-out assault on the retirement, disability and other benefits of Nortel workers stand as a grievous example of monopoly right using this method to trump public right. Countless other companies have used and are using bankruptcy protection, including some of the richest monopolies, to skip out on their pension and other social obligations. This is unjust and governments must do their duty and stand up for Canadians and public right in opposition to these companies and monopoly right.

The assault on the security of all in retirement includes dark suggestions that the next target will be the defined-benefit pensions of municipal, provincial and federal public workers. The most pro-monopoly neo-liberal forces have seized power in the federal government and many provinces and big cities such as Toronto. They are determined to privatize public services such as the Post Office and municipal, provincial and municipal services. This attack includes the negation of the right to security in retirement for all and the very conception of a modern society that guarantees the rights of all, where public right is defended in opposition to monopoly right as a primary responsibility and duty of government.



The people's struggle versus U.S. Steel closely mirrors that of the people versus the global mining monopoly Vale. These global monopolies and others such as Xstrata pledged employment and production levels when they seized Stelco, Inco and Falconbridge and quickly broke those commitments. U.S. Steel specifically entered into a pension agreement with the Ontario government wherein it guaranteed steelworkers' indexed defined-benefit plans. The global

monopoly has already destroyed the agreement on employment and production levels, wrecked the pension plan at Lake Erie Works and now dictates the same for Local 1005. It must not pass and will not pass!

These monopolies are abusing and pushing Canadian workers too far. With this Day of Action, workers are warning all the global monopolies and the politicians who do their bidding that this abuse has got to end! Workers are the producers of all wealth and the providers of all services. We are the source of the wealth that you rich and monopolies so covet and enjoy. Workers warn you not to bite the hand that feeds you; this Canadian working class should not be underestimated.



Workers' social consciousness includes the conception that security does not lie in a Canada annexed to the U.S. Empire, a false security that serves monopoly right, is out of the people's hands and essentially out of control. Workers' social consciousness believes the security of all lies in the fight to defend the rights of all and for a sovereign Canada with a diverse self-reliant economy based on manufacturing and meeting the needs of the people and general interests of society, engaging in trade for mutual benefit and being a factor for peace, not war. We wish the same for the workers and people in the United States, Mexico and other countries.

We have gathered here today because we dare to break new ground in our thinking, organizing and resistance to the monopolies. We are the inheritors of our forebears who broke new ground after World War Two. Our duty is to do the same within the new conditions of neo-liberal globalization and the unprecedented power and dominance of the rich and their monopolies. Our duty is to break new ground especially in the realm of holding governments to account. Do your duty! Uphold Public Right not Monopoly Right. We can defend our pensions, wages, livelihoods, security and way of life if we depend on our own efforts and the people and break new ground in affirming our political rights as the producers of all wealth and the providers of all services. We are the backbone of the socialized economy. We must become the backbone of decision-making as well.

***Public Right Yes! Monopoly Right No!
Whose Economy? Our Economy! Whose Politics? Our Politics!
Whose Country? Our Country! Who Decides? We Decide!
Sovereignty Yes! Annexation No!
Keep Stelco Producing! Keep Hamilton Producing!
Keep Canada Producing!***



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