



IAMAW Journal

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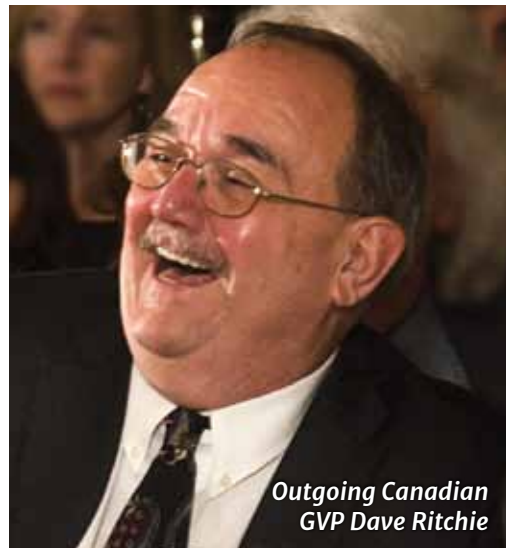
2016: The Year in Review

A change in command

Toronto, ON – What do you say to someone who always had your back, who always returned your call, who always answered your question to the best of his ability, who always told you where you stood with him on an issue whether you wanted to hear it or not, and above all who was always honest with you? Two words will suffice if you're Dave Ritchie: Thank you!

Somehow that doesn't seem enough for someone who has left his mark on the Machinists Union on both sides of the border. Forty-two years as a member, 38 years as an elected official — the last 20 as Canadian General Vice President — and senior member of the Grand Lodge Executive Council. Dave Ritchie said it was a privilege to serve the membership. "Dave Ritchie may have received the accolades but it was the people he worked with that made it all possible," he explained. "We work collectively, and together we accomplished great things for our membership." Reflecting upon his many years of service, Ritchie concluded by stating, "Did I make mistakes during my 38 years as an elected official of this union? Sure I did, but you show me someone making mistakes and I'll show you someone who's doing something. If you say you have never made a mistake, it's because you weren't doing anything!"

For a man who wore his passion for the labour movement on his sleeve, he was given a union sendoff befitting someone who has given so much to others over his career. Following his last Canadian staff conference, friends, family, IAM International Presidents and General Vice Presidents past and present, current and retired IAM Canadian staff as well as sundry active and retired IAM members gathered at Toronto's Sheraton Centre on June 3 to bid Dave a happy retirement. The master of ceremonies was his successor, Stan Pickthall, who has spent the past two years as Dave's Chief of Staff. He brings to the job more than 20 years of experience as a Business Representative and Directing Business Representative of IAM District Lodge 250 in British Columbia.



*Outgoing Canadian
GVP Dave Ritchie*



*Dave's successor,
Canadian GVP
Stan Pickthall*

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International President
Robert Martinez, Jr.
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

General Secretary-Treasurer
Dora Cervantes
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

General Vice Presidents

GVP (Midwest) Phillip J. Gruber
1733 Park Street, Suite 100
Naperville, IL 60563

GVP (Western) Gary Allen
620 Coolidge Drive, Suite 130
Folsom, CA 95630

GVP (Transportation)
Sito Pantoja
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

GVP (Southern) Mark Blondin
1111 West Mockingbird Lane,
Suite 1357, Dallas, TX 75247

GVP Diane Babineaux
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

GVP (Eastern) James Conigliaro
135 Merchant Street, Suite 265
Cincinnati, OH 45246-3730

GVP (HQ) Ricky Wallace
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

GVP (Canada) Stan Pickthall
18 Wynford Drive, Suite 310
Toronto, ON M3C 3S2

GVP Brian Bryant
9000 Machinists Place
Upper Marlboro, MD 20772-2687

Editor: Bill Trbovich
IAMAW Communications
Department
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Canada Pension Plan expansion: What it means for you



By Aurélie Sarrazbezolles
IAM Canada Research Director

On June 20, 2016, the Federal Government and the finance ministers of eight provinces agreed to expand the Canada Pension Plan (CPP), starting on January 1, 2019, and to be fully implemented by 2025. The provinces of Quebec and Manitoba did not sign the agreement.

Here is a brief overview of the reform.

Major Changes

- Both the employer and the employee will increase their CPP contributions by 1% over the five-year period, from the current rate of 4.95% to 5.95%
- The maximum income covered by the CPP goes from \$54,900 to \$82,700
- The retirement replacement rate goes from 25% to 33%. Currently, CPP pays retired workers 25% of their preretirement earnings. Under the new system, workers earning \$54,900 a year would get a maximum annual pension of about \$17,500 when they retire, an increase of \$4,390 a year according to Department of Finance Canada
- The enhanced CPP contributions will be tax deductible

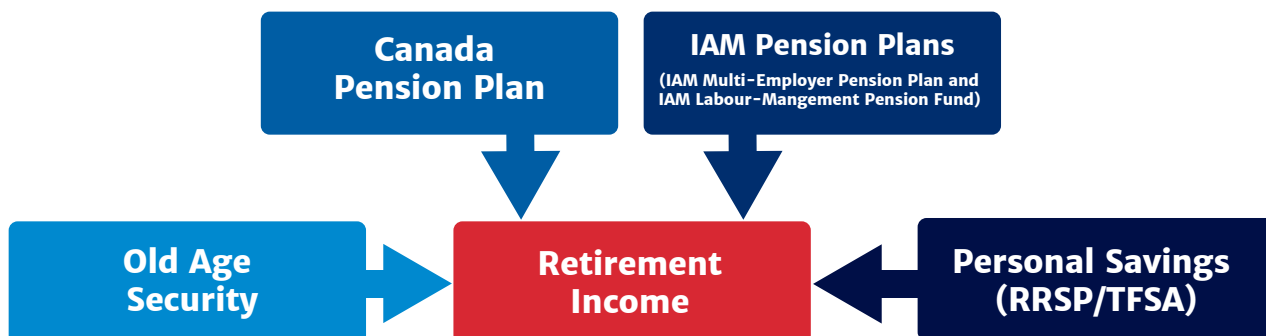
Benefits for you

Depending on your age group, your benefits will differ. Please note that in order to earn the maximum benefit, a worker will have to contribute the maximum amount for 40 years, once the new system is fully phased in after 2025.

- Workers under 16 YO: 100% of benefit
- Workers between 25 – 45 YO: 40 – 90% of benefit
- Workers between 45 – 65 YO: an average of less than 20% of benefit
- Retirees over 65 YO: zero benefit

Overall, these changes are good because they will help lower income workers when they retire. The priority of the IAM is to pursue the fight for better pensions for our members and for all the workers.

Canada's Pension System applied to IAM Members



A feel-good convention



Chicago, IL — The 39th Grand Lodge Convention in Chicago September 5 – 9, 2016 was unique in a number of ways. It marked the largest percentage of first-time delegates at any Grand Lodge Convention on either side of the border — a whopping 79 percent. The oldest delegate was 63 years older than the youngest delegate, and this convention created a new revenue source for the Machinists Non-Partisan League (MNPL) and other IAM-related charities.

International President Robert Martinez opened the convention by telling delegates he and the IAM Executive Council are committed to fiscal responsibility, transparency and accessibility. He emphasized the need to put the Union's financial house in order and outlined the steps he and the Executive Council have taken since January 1, 2016 to make that happen. With organizing new members an essential task to grow and sustain the IAM, Martinez spoke of the Union's new approach to bringing in new members. "We must be bold enough and confident enough to come up with new organizing strategies," said Martinez. "Our lifeblood and our future depend on organizing."

To better service members at the negotiating table, he announced a program to deliver the union's negotiations prep training to the field for locals and districts that are unable to travel to the Winpisinger Center. This was in direct response to requests from the membership, a sign that the leadership is listening to its members. It put the convention on a firm positive foundation from the beginning.

"One of the best suggestions from members has been to make our negotiations prep training available to more bargaining committees," said Martinez. "It's also designed to strengthen the critical link that shop stewards play in the bargaining process.

Stewards are truly the backbone of this union."

Traditionally at each convention, the night before the convention convenes, the coveted IAM railway bell — a symbol of our union's roots since 1888 and a fixture at every convention — is hijacked and held for ransom. For the duration of each convention, there are daily reports on the search for the bell and donations for its return are offered. Once the bell is recovered, these donations are bestowed upon the MNPL. At this year's convention the 1400 delegates in attendance — including 114 Canadians — zeroed in on the neckties of the Executive Council as a revenue source. Beginning with Robert Martinez, delegates offered hundreds, sometimes thousands of dollars for an executive tie. Once the bell was returned, the practice continued for other IAM charities — Canadian GVP Stan Pickthall's tie fetched \$950 for the Guide Dogs of America.

The convention ended with a record number of resolutions handled by the Law Committee and passed by the delegates. The spirit of cooperation and solidarity among the membership was apparent and plans are now underway for the 40th Grand Lodge Convention in San Diego, in four years' time.

Pressing the flesh: Face-to-face takes time but it's worth it

They're Air Canada baggage handlers in Montreal, Toronto, Vancouver, Calgary and Edmonton, or perhaps automotive technicians at Cullen Diesel in Surrey, BC, millwrights at the Vancouver shipyards or heavy-duty mechanics at Finning International in Red Deer, Alberta. They all have one thing in common — they're members of the IAM and they have had a face-to-face conversation with their General Vice President.

Since taking over the reins of the Canadian Territory on May 1, 2016, Stan Pickthall has crisscrossed this country in an effort to meet in person with as many IAM members as possible. "This is something I strongly believe in," said Pickthall. "I did this when I was the DBR for District 250 and I will continue to do so on a national basis as Canadian General Vice President."

The face-to-face visits began with a tour of Pearson International Airport in Toronto. There Pickthall talked with baggage handlers, ground handlers, cabin groomers, wheelchair assistants, airport security screeners, and Customs ambassadors — all rank and file members of the IAM at Toronto's largest employer.



"This is a great way to meet the members and to get their views, both good and bad, on issues that are important to them," explained Pickthall. "We want the Canadian office to be more visible and accessible, to be more than just a name they read about in a news release or catch a glimpse of in a video clip. It's all about service and that's something we pride ourselves on."

A fixture to the members of IAM District Lodge 250 for 20 years, Pickthall strives to make himself better known to members in the rest of the country. "I'm happy to say our members are not shy about their union and how it works for them and, in some ways, how we can improve," he explained. "When a member is looking for an answer it's better to look them in the eye, shake their hand and let them hear it first-hand. We have good people and I enjoy meeting and talking to them. These visits provide that opportunity."



Fort McMurray:

All that remains of Shane Ganong's home. The truck he was working on is a burned out hulk. The aluminum block engine melted in the fire.



Fort McMurray, AB — On May 1, 2016 a wildfire began southwest of Fort McMurray, Alberta, 434 kilometres northwest of Edmonton. On May 3 it swept through the community, destroying 2,400 homes and buildings. Some of them — at least 50 — were owned or rented by members of IAM Local Lodges 99 and 1722. It prompted the largest wildfire evacuation in Alberta's history: more than 88,000 residents of Fort McMurray were moved.

More than 600 IAM members, 300 of them permanent residents and the remainder who commute on a weekly and sometimes daily basis to jobs, have been impacted.

These members work for companies such as Finning International and Levitt Machinery, overhauling, repairing and maintaining the heavy equipment used in the production of oil. A quarter of Canada's oil production — one million barrels of oil a day — comes from the oil sands projects surrounding Fort McMurray.

People were uprooted from their homes, some of them were evacuated twice, all of their belongings have been lost, their homes destroyed, their vehicles incinerated. Once they were evacuated many found refuge with friends, family and fellow workers while many others were taken in by complete strangers — it's the Canadian thing to do.

Bicycles belonging to Eden and Isis Gangong, one of the few items to provide testimony that people once lived here.



The response by IAM members in this time of need was quick and heart-warming. "The generosity and support I have witnessed since assuming the role of Disaster Relief Committee Coordinator has been mind-blowing to say the least," explained IAM Local Lodge 99 Recording Secretary Shawn Plouffe. "I have received emails from members who have lost everything and they're asking what they can do to help others that have less resources. This is truly what unions are all about."

We will rebuild



The news for this Stone Creek resident is not good. She's told by an inspector that there nothing she can recover — it's too toxic.

“Our membership has been outstanding with their support, both financial and morally, for their brothers and sisters in Fort McMurray,” said IAM District Lodge 14 Directing Business Representative Bob McKinnon. “There was no hesitation. Our Fort McMurray members needed help and the rest of the membership reacted with clothing, food, accommodation and money — you name it — and they will continue to do so until our needs are met.”

David Hyde, a volunteer fireman and heavy duty mechanic at Finning International and a LL99 member, put up two neighbours with their camper trailers in his driveway in Saprae Creek after the fire began. They were there for most of the summer! Duane Brooks, a heavy equipment technician and LL99 member, retired two weeks prior to the fire. Within two days of the fire's onset, he was in nearby Lac LaBiche setting up generator sets and trailers for evacuees so they'd have power and some place to stay. Everywhere you looked, members of Local Lodges 99 and 1722 were stepping up to the plate.

The IAM International Grand Lodge donated \$50,000 toward the IAM District Lodge Disaster Emergency/Disaster Relief Fund, and LL 99 matched that amount. From across the country, the donations have been coming in. The Quebec Machinists Council donated \$2,500, the Ontario Provincial Council of Machinists raised more than \$1,200 at its recent convention, and LL 2921 (Toronto Pearson Airport Screeners) set the bar, raising \$7,000 through bake sales at Terminals One and Three. Their employer, Garda Canada, matched that amount for a total donation of \$14,000. It's safe to say that Machinists have big hearts and deep pockets in Alberta's time of need.

It was early June before those residents lucky enough to have homes to return to were allowed to come back, but for thousands of others their fate remained unknown. For some, it was too painful to relive and, like survivors in New Orleans of Hurricane Katrina, they moved away never to return. But five IAM members agreed to talk about their ordeal. Here are their stories.

“I was working on a truck in my garage and when I looked outside my street was red. I couldn't believe it,” explained IAM LL 99 member Shane Ganong. He lives at 7303 Hughes Avenue in the Waterways subdivision at the bottom of the hill leading into town. “The top of the hill was covered with a thick wall of black smoke, the fires behind it were red and orange, and it cast a red glow over everything. The fire started moving down the hill toward me so I knew I didn't have much time.” Shane didn't have to worry about his wife and two daughters — they were visiting out of town — but he had to act fast. “I grabbed a garbage bag, filled it with some clothes, our passports and an envelope filled with money from the recent sale of a truck.” He then left his home to its fate.

David Hyde had already put in 80 hours as a roving heavy duty mechanic for Finning International by May 3 when duty called. Hyde is a volunteer fireman with the Saprae Creek Fire Department. “I lost a shed but saved my house by placing sprinklers on the roof, but 30 percent of the homes in this community were not so lucky,” explained Hyde. The fire, fueled by winds of 72 kilometres per hour, pushed the fire along, consuming three square kilometres of territory an hour. “The heat and the flames were intense and the wind kept changing,” explained Hyde. “You would get one area under control and the fire pushed by the wind would actually leap over to another building or across the street. I've never fought one like this before.”

Continued on next page...

By May 6, the fire had destroyed 12 structures in the hamlet of Anzac, 36 kilometres southeast of Fort McMurray. In the subdivision of Abasand, 50 percent of the homes were destroyed, in Beacon Hill subdivision 70 percent. North Parsons lost an unfinished school, and in Saprae Creek 30 percent of the homes were destroyed. Wood Buffalo lost 30 homes, Waterways 90 percent of its homes, and Stone Creek 70 homes — and the area was still rated an active fire zone, over a month after the fire was out!

For Kyle Hepditch, a 26-year-old heavy duty mechanic with Levitt Machinery, married with a six-month-old infant, the fire had a double impact. The house he was renting was totally consumed by the flames, taking all of their belongings. The second blow came when his employer refused to bring him back to Fort McMurray. Levitt Machinery gave him a job in Edmonton, where he is now

The resilient Canadian spirit of Fort McMurray. A Canadian flag sways in the breeze at the end of a driveway on Hughes Avenue in the Waterways subdivision. Behind the flag are a few pots and pans, all the owners could salvage from a past life.



renting a house but at a lower rate of pay (Edmonton pay scales for heavy duty mechanics are lower than in Fort McMurray). “It’s hard enough losing all of your belongings but now they refuse to send me back to Fort McMurray and have even posted my old job!”

Like Hepditch, Lorne Park is also an IAM member and a resident of Beacon Hill, the subdivision adjacent to Highway 63, the only access in and out of Fort McMurray. Although Lorne’s house survived, he can’t move back in. “The land surrounding my house is still too toxic from all of the contaminants that burned during the fire,” he explained. As to when he’ll be permitted to return, he said, “Nobody seems to know for sure.”

We can survive and we can rebuild! With everything destroyed around it, this flower blooms defiantly. Perhaps the journey back has already begun.



Paul Mandryk owns a home in Edmonton and rents in Fort McMurray where he works for Finning International. Like many of his fellow LL 99 members, he works staggered shifts, often two weeks on and two weeks off. The fire destroyed his apartment building. “It took everything I had in Fort McMurray: clothing, furniture and other personal things. I was one of the lucky ones — my house is fine.”

The initial insurance payouts are estimated as high as \$9 billion if the entire community has to be rebuilt. A further estimate based on current damage pegs the insurance payouts at \$2.6 to \$4.7 billion and the cost of lost oil production to the Alberta economy is \$70 million per day or as high as \$1 billion in total.

There is one footnote that stands out in this story: Once the rebuilding began by mid-August, the Municipality of Wood Buffalo, which includes Fort McMurray, sent cleanup bills to those residents whose homes were destroyed or damaged by the fire. Each invoice covers the cost of removing debris from the home site and tippage fees at the local waste facility — apparently insurance doesn’t cover this expense!

Turbulent skies ahead

By Carlos DaCosta
IAM Airline Coordinator

On June 25, 2014, a review of the *Canada Transportation Act (CTA)* was started by then-Federal Minister of Transport Lisa Raitt who then appointed David Emerson as chair of the committee. Mr. Emerson is a business executive and all of his advisors were from business and industry.

On February 25, 2015, Minister of Transport Marc Garneau tabled the CTA report in Parliament. The report's recommendations revolved around expansion of privatization, deregulation, and increased competition in the transportation industry.

The IAM has read this extensive 700+ page report which explains three decades of deregulation, liberalization, and the sale of government assets. It examines rail, air and marine transport. It touches on the transportation needs of the North, climate change, technological innovation, and governance.

But this report does not address labour's issues and ignores the impact of the report's recommendations on IAM workers, their incomes, terms and conditions of employment, and the quality of work.

The focus of the recommendations is on increased liberalization, regulatory harmonization, expanding access for private investment, and intensifying competitive forces, all of which have huge negative impacts on the workforce in the air transport sector.

Some of the recommendations in the report include opening Canadian Airport Authorities to private ownership, further deregulating air transportation, and increasing foreign ownership control of airlines.

Air transport

In the mid-1980s, governments owned and operated infrastructure and service providers, and regulated the transportation industry in Canada. In 1985 governments pursued commercialization, the selling of assets, deregulation of markets and liberalization of international trade.

Between 1986 and 2006, Canada shifted to a commercial market-driven system from one based on government ownership and direction. This transformation began with the deregulation of the domestic market for air services and the privatization of Air Canada, which resulted in job losses, service cuts, bankruptcies, consolidations and price hikes in regional markets.

Following deregulation and privatization in the carrier sector, the government moved to commercialize larger airports and air navigation services. This policy also established Nav Canada as a not-for-profit corporation that operates Canada's air navigation system. The report's solution to this problem is to create private, for-profit airports.

Regarding the above actions taken by past governments, the IAM has made it clear through its submissions of its concerns on the possible impact that our members would face in the air transport industry. To date, most of our fears have become reality.

The Emerson report recommends moving within three years to a share-capital structure for the larger airports, with equity-based financing from large institutional investors. The review describes three options for privatizing large airports.

Another recommendation of the report proposes increasing the scope for foreign ownership among airline carriers. Currently, bilateral service agreements generally require airlines to be substantially owned and effectively controlled within one of the countries party to an agreement. Most countries limit foreign ownership in airlines to between zero and 49.9 percent of voting shares while Canada has a 25-percent limit, as does the United States. The report recommends increasing foreign ownership to at least 49 percent for air carriers operating commercial passenger services and 100 percent for airlines operating all-freight and specialty air services.

Airport security and passenger screening are also addressed in the report. We are presently at risk of experiencing longer line-ups unless the government increases funding to address increased passenger levels, which have over the last five years increased by 21 percent while the funding received has not kept pace. On average, passenger levels in Canada are increasing by 3.5 percent each year.

The recommendations do not sufficiently address this problem and the government continues to pocket revenues collected from every passenger air ticket. We would like to see the government direct all of the revenue collected — as was intended — so that more airport pre-board screeners can be hired to reduce passenger line-ups at airports.

This report does not address the concerns and issues being experienced by those working in the transportation sector. Also, health and safety issues are completely omitted from the report.

Interestingly, many of the recommendations in the CTA report are at odds with and contradict the Liberal government's objective of "strengthening the middle class and helping those working hard to join it." As a result, it will be interesting to see how Justin Trudeau's Liberal government will react.

2016 and trade Workers' rights

By Aurélie Sarrabezolles
IAM Research Director for Canada

2016 has been a very busy year in terms of trade agreements. Driven by a neo-liberal agenda, Canadian leaders are negotiating harmful deals with different partners that erode worker's rights. Trade should involve economic growth and social development, but instead these deals, presented to the Canadian public and workers without all the facts and information, could have disastrous effects on employment, public services, and prescription drug costs, among other things. The Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) was signed last October after seven years of closed-door negotiations; the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) involves 12 Asia-Pacific nations. Finally, the Trade in Services Agreement (TISA), is another trade deal that will hurt Canadian workers' rights. Here is a brief analysis of these three trade agreements.

CETA

What is CETA?

This free trade bilateral agreement was signed between Canada and the EU. According to the European Commission, it "will remove customs duties, end restrictions on access to public contracts, open up the services market, offer better conditions for investors and help prevent illegal copying of EU innovations and traditional products."

Negotiation and ratification process of CETA

The negotiations ended in 2014. The final version of the document was leaked to the public last February. The agreement was finally signed on October 30. Most of the provisions of the text will come into effect at the beginning of 2017, but in order for the agreement to be fully implemented, the European Parliament will need to give the green light to the Council of the EU and each of the 28 EU nations involved will ratify the document following their respective ratification procedures. After the Wallonia resistance, a referendum could be held in Netherlands regarding CETA. An anti-CETA petition lead by Meer Democratie (More Democracy) is being circulated calling for a referendum to be held.

Why is CETA a bad deal for workers?

As pointed out by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC), there are many

issues that need to be addressed in the current version of the CETA agreement:

- Getting rid of the Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism. That central measure allows foreign investors to challenge, at private arbitration panels, local, provincial and federal governments, for any actions to protect the environment or public health or promote Canadian developments and jobs that might affect corporate profits. That mechanism should not exist in the first place because we already have an excellent court system in our country. Allowing the private sector to interfere with the institutionalized court system could lead to a disastrous outcome. It is anti-democratic and it contravenes the rule of law.
- Enhancing labour rights.
- Building in review.
- Protecting public services.
- As for the aerospace sector, as pointed out before in a previous article, while it does not directly affect the 2009 Canada/EU air transport Open Skies agreement, CETA will put pressure on our aerospace sector, already facing heavy government-supported competition from Europe.

When asked recently about opposition to CETA, the Council to the EU President Donald Tusk replied: "free trade and globalization are meant to protect, but few people understand and believe in it." With Canada not willing to modify that secretive deal, it proves that the Liberal government subscribes to the myth of globalization, and that weakens workers' rights.

agreements: under attack

TPP

What is the TPP?

The TPP is a massive trade agreement involving the following countries: Canada, the United States, Mexico, Chile, Peru, Vietnam, Brunei, Australia, New Zealand, Malaysia, Japan and Singapore.

Main provisions of the TPP:

- Trade barriers lifted.
- Labour provisions putting jobs in Canada at risk and allowing foreign companies to hire outside of the country.
- ISDS provisions allowing companies to sue governments.

Negotiation and ratification process of TPP

Like CETA, after secret negotiations without consultation, the agreement was signed in Auckland, New Zealand, on February 4, 2016. The 12 countries still need to ratify the final version of the agreement. The federal government is currently consulting with the public, holding consultations and town halls throughout the country — after signing it. It is an opportunity for workers from coast to coast to coast to challenge the Liberal government and make their voices heard during those public events. There will be a debate in Parliament and a vote after the consultation process. It would be kind to call the consultation process an empty gesture.

The U.S. election results shed a new light on the American approach to free trade. Donald Trump, the President-elect of the United States, wishes to increase customs tariffs for imported goods from China and Mexico. He also threatens to renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

Why is the TPP a bad deal for workers?

The Canadian Labour Congress organized a lobby day on Parliament Hill last spring to plead with the Liberal government to reject the TPP. The IAM took part in it and had the biggest delegation. IAM members met with MPs and challenged them on that trade agreement. The main problem with the TPP is that 97% of commercial goods between Canada and those countries are already duty-free. Should Canada access more market with that deal, it will have a very negative impact on employment, specifically in the automotive and dairy industries.

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The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) released a research paper last May on “The Impact of TPP Tariff Removal on Canadian Trade.”

The research paper concluded:

“The TPP would have broad impacts in a number of policy areas not described here but covered in other studies within the CCPA’S “What’s the Big Deal” series on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. This report has examined the potential impacts of tariff reduction in the TPP on the Canadian economy. It finds that, far from automatically benefiting workers and consumers, the agreement will likely exacerbate Canada’s reliance on low-employment intensity primary commodity exports. The potential for the TPP to open up opportunities in certain sectors, such as pork and seed exports, must be assessed against the increased imports of dairy products from the U.S., New Zealand and Australia, the likely increase in tariff-free imports of advanced manufactured products from Japan, and of non-advanced manufactured goods from lower-cost jurisdictions such as Malaysia and Vietnam. The Pacific deal not only removes tariffs but also many of the tools governments, including Canada, might reasonably wish to use to foster economic advancement and the growth of innovation-driven exports.”

The air transportation sector is another industry that is being put at risk because of the TPP. As pointed out by the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), if ratified, what are known as “flags of convenience” in the maritime sector could also appear in the commercial civil airline sector.

TISA

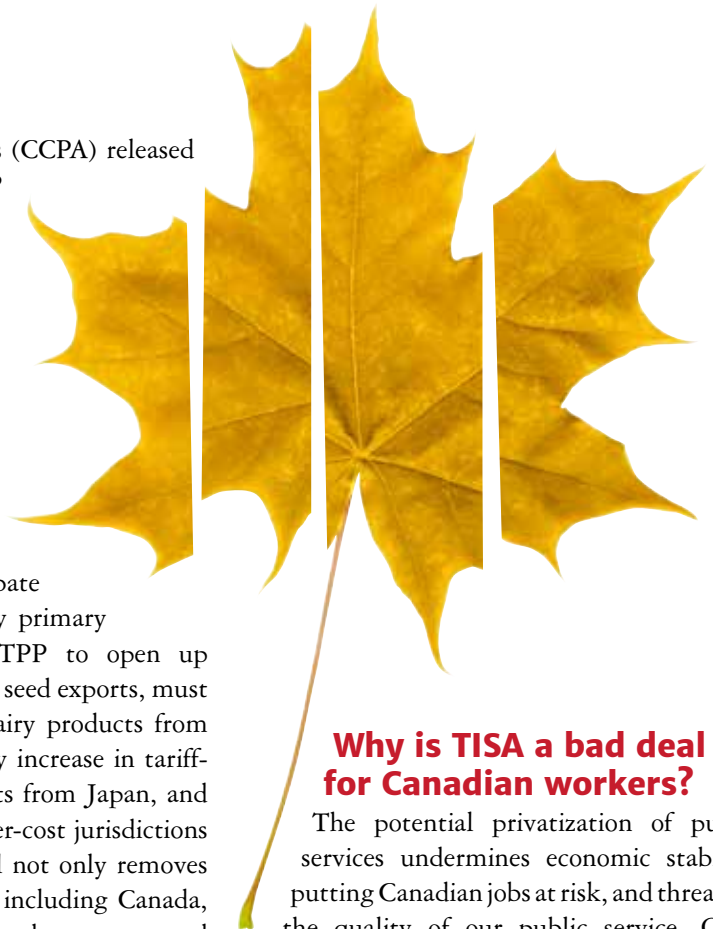
What is TISA?

“The objective of the Agreement will be to enhance trade in services and improve market access. TISA Parties represent an enormous services market with nearly 1.6 billion people and a combined GDP of more than \$50 trillion in 2015 — nearly two-thirds of the world’s economy.” Public services such as health care and transport could be partly privatized.

Negotiations started three years ago, involving 23 members of the World Trade Organization (WTO): Canada, Australia, Chile, Chinese Taipei, Colombia, Costa Rica, the European Union, Hong Kong (China), Iceland, Israel, Japan, Liechtenstein, Mauritius, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, South Korea, Switzerland, Turkey and the United States.

Negotiation and ratification process of TISA

Like CETA and the TPP, negotiations are being conducted behind closed doors. WikiLeaks releases new documents on a regular basis. The latest one dates from October 14, 2016.



Why is TISA a bad deal for Canadian workers?

The potential privatization of public services undermines economic stability, putting Canadian jobs at risk, and threatens the quality of our public service. Once again, the interests of private corporations are put forward before the public good.

Conclusion

As analyzed in this article, CETA, TPP and TISA are unfair trade deals and the IAMAW is totally against them. They threaten different industries that the union represents, the consultation process lacks transparency, and labour rights are at risk. Furthermore, these agreements establish the highly controversial ISDS system already enacted in Chapter 11 of the NAFTA deal. That unfair settlement system, which puts corporations and governments on the same level, has been rejected by many countries, such as South Africa, Brazil and Indonesia. Trade union leaders from varied countries rallied in Panama last month against CETA and TISA, and Canada was represented. The meeting was called by the ITF, of which the IAMAW is a major supporter and stakeholder. As long as trading nations put worker’s rights and democratic principles at risk, the IAMAW will oppose those unfair trade agreements and will challenge the Liberal government.

Political action: The hammer or the velvet glove?



Ottawa, ON — As has often been quoted by former IAM Canadian General Vice President Dave Ritchie, a government can change the lives of working Canadians with the stroke of a pen, and on March 24, 2016, the national Liberals did just that.

“The federal Liberals have shown that they are no different from the Conservatives when it comes to preserving Canadian jobs,” stated a dejected Ritchie.

He was reacting to amendments to the *Air Canada Public Participation Act* (Bill C 10) filed March 24 by federal Transport Minister Marc Garneau. The amendments allow Air Canada to control the type and the volume of any aircraft maintenance work of its fleet in Canada.

What followed was the largest lobbying effort ever undertaken by the Machinists in Canada. An IAM delegation appeared before the Commons Transportation and Infrastructure Committee in late April, offering alternatives to the proposed legislation. When the attempt failed we came back and presented our case before a senate committee. While the government may not have wavered after our first attempt, it certainly had an impact on Air Canada. In follow-up questions to its presentation to the senate committee, the airline made it quite clear to committee members that if the legislation was not passed, Air Canada may have to reconsider purchasing 75 Bombardier C Series aircraft. The government sacrificed well paid aircraft maintenance, repair and overhaul jobs for votes in coveted Montreal ridings.

It wasn't the result we were looking for but it did have a silver lining. It was proof that political action can have an impact when conducted properly. In a space of just over two years, the number of Political Action Committees in IAM Canadian Local Lodges grew from two to 64. “It's funny but our members always wanted political action but they either didn't want to do it themselves or they didn't know how to go about it,” explained Lou Pagrach, IAM Grand Lodge Representative in charge of political action. “Once you get the members involved it sort of takes care of itself. They can see the results: it's empowering for them and they're happy with the results.”

Pagrach admits it has been a big learning curve for him since his appointment in June of this year. “It's the scope of the job that is challenging and enjoyable, whether it's organizing our participation in a rally for fairness and a better minimum wage or taking on airport employers engaged in contract flipping,” he said. “Our members are happy we're doing it and I'm happy to be a part of it.”

There's nothing about contract



For 15 years you have toiled under the wings of aircraft at Toronto's Pearson Airport. Every day you feed aviation fuel into those wings and life is good, your salary pays you \$21 per hour, you have benefits, a pension, regular shifts, seniority and a union to protect you. Based on that salary you sign for a new mortgage, perhaps a new car, or maybe a loan so your children can attend university. But then comes the end of the week and you're told your employer has lost its contract with the airlines because the airlines have found a cheaper provider. At the stroke of a pen, you lose your benefits, your pension, your seniority, even your union, and if the new employer hires you for your old job, your hourly wage has been cut 30 percent! Welcome to the world of contract flipping endorsed by the Greater Toronto Airport Authority (GTAA).

In April 2014, airport parking attendants launched a wildcat strike after 80 employees of Impark lost their jobs when the contract was flipped to Vinci Park. Only 30 former employees were rehired by the new company. In April 2015 the GTAA announced it would take over Servisair's de-icing contract, resulting in the loss of 100 full time jobs. Also in April 2015, GTAA advised Air Canada that it will take over its wheelchair attendant services. An arbitrator ruled that the work legally belongs to Air Canada but has no authority over the GTAA. In May 2015 Swissport lost its customer assistance program contract to Toronto Ground Airport Services, resulting in 282 lost jobs. Also in May 2015, Air Canada led a group of airlines changing their fueling contract from Allied Aviation to Aircraft Service International Group and almost 300 jobs were lost. The

new employer pays 30 percent less with no pension and little or no benefits!

This is the reality at the nation's largest airport — Toronto's largest employer with more than 45,000 workers. Thanks to loopholes in both federal and provincial labour laws, employers are allowed to subcontract out services and then continually change service providers. Contract flipping is rampant and it allows employers to shed workers, cut wages and keep benefits low.

However, in the United States, airports in Los Angeles and San Francisco have committed to paying all employees a living wage, including those hired by contractors. The starting wage is \$15 per hour.

Fifteen is the magic number — what many consider to be the new minimum wage — and the IAM is at the forefront of labour and social justice groups demanding the minimum wage bar be raised to that level. Called the "Fight for \$15," the IAM argues that airport workers in Toronto and elsewhere in Canada can't survive on the current minimum wage (in Ontario for example it was raised to only \$11.25 per hour in October 2015 and

decent or fair flipping



\$11.40 in October 2016). And across the province, a full-time job at Ontario's current minimum wage still leaves a worker around 20 percent below the province's low income measure — while back in 1976, minimum wage brought workers just above it.

A living wage is the new benchmark, the trendy term to describe where “just above the poverty line” really is, and in Toronto that means two working parents each need to work full-time, year-round and earn \$18.52 an hour in order to make a living wage in that city. That's almost a seven-dollar-an-hour gap from what the minimum wage is and what is needed to survive — \$15 an hour is a good place to start!

The current poverty level for a single person in Toronto is \$23,000 a year but the minimum wage pays only \$22,888. The poverty line for a family of four is \$34,829 and that's based on a wage of \$16.60 per hour based on a 40-hour work week.

On October 1, 2016, Ontario raised its minimum wage to \$11.40 per hour, but in the eyes of organized labour and social activists, this wasn't enough. On the same day, that message was brought to Queen's Park.

The lawn of Queen's Park — home of Ontario's Legislature — has seen many protests by labour over the years but rarely has it seen an across-the-board demand for decent work and decent wages!

On October 1, thousands of union members braved adverse weather to join with community activists from across Ontario to march up Toronto's University Avenue to attend a “Rally for Decent Work.” It marked the beginning of Decent Work Week, an initiative sponsored by the Ontario Federation of Labour. It coincides with the first government review of Ontario's employment laws in a generation.

“This is the time to let this government and Premier Wynne know that Ontario workers expect real change,” said IAM Canadian General Vice President Stan Pickthall. “We're calling for safer working conditions, paid sick days, paid vacation, the right to join a union and a \$15 per hour minimum wage. The time to end the gender racialized wage gap is now and we have to push this government to do it. This rally is just the first step and we won't stop until we achieve our goal.”

Celebrating 35 years of labour education — one class at a time



Hollywood, MD — Thirty-five years ago a commitment was made by the IAM Executive Council to support William W. Winpisinger's vision of a full-time residential facility to educate and train IAM members and staff in organizing, bargaining and leadership. That commitment to educating members remains strong today and is an integral part of the IAM's cultural DNA.

The first class, a two-week comprehensive organizing program held in a windowless classroom in the basement of the dining hall, was attended by 20 IAM staff from the United States and Canada in the last week of October 1981.

Multilingual instruction soon followed: the first French-language classes for Canadian members were held in 1986. Subsequent French classes were so successful that similar classes were inaugurated in Spanish in 2006. Over the years Canadian IAM members have utilized the Center's facilities not only for instructional classes but for bargaining preparations and political action symposiums. Since the inaugural class, the Winpisinger Center has expanded. It now operates 47 weeks a year, utilizing 114 guest rooms, five classrooms, two computer labs, six conference rooms, an auditorium and a theatre.

Physically, the school doesn't look quite the same as it did over three decades ago, but the mission remains the same: developing

union leaders of the future. The range of programs has grown more than anyone could have predicted, in both number and content.

During the first year of operation the school held three training programs and hosted 51 members. In 2015 the Center administered 139 programs, with more than 2,800 members participating. Since opening in 1981, more than 90,000 members have completed programs at the Winpisinger Center.

"The Winpisinger Center is an integral part of the IAM and we all benefit from the vision our past leaders had for educating and training our members," said IAM International President Robert Martinez. "We are a better, stronger and more effective labour organization because of it. More importantly, our members are better served for having access to such a fine educational facility. Our focus is to continue to grow our membership through education."