UNITY BREEDS SUCCESS

INTERNATIONAL PROVIDES ESSENTIAL SUPPORT IN THE FIGHT FOR TRANSIT WORKERS ACROSS US AND CANADA
**NEWSBRIEFS**

**Milwaukee transit workers ratify new contract**

After a 3-day strike, the rejection of two contract offers, and months of stalled negotiations, Milwaukee transit workers finally ratified a new 3-year contract with the Milwaukee Country Transit System (MCTS). “Milwaukee’s transit system is the economic backbone of the region. We will always fight for a fair contract that puts our riders first, retains full-time, professional transit workers and moves Milwaukee forward,” says James Macon, president of Local 998, representing the workers. The new contract included steady wage increases and the transit system’s pledge not to hire part-time drivers, a big sticking point in the labor dispute.

**Local 107, ATU Canada rewards man for act of kindness**

With school shootings, the growing refugee crisis and other bad news in this world, random acts of kindness usually go unnoticed. But a man in Hamilton, ON became the toast of the Internet after he held hands with a man with special needs on a public bus. A photo of his touching gesture was posted on Facebook and immediately went viral. Local 107 and ATU Canada wanted to acknowledge the man, a 21-year-old student, for his kindness and presented him with a check to help pay for his education.

**Show your ATU pride, new items on ATU online store**

We’ve added some cool new items on to the ATU online store. Everyone could use a sporty new camp shirt and never lose your keys with an ATU bus keychain. There’s also a great ATU lapel pin and even an ATU spiral notebook to keep important notes. There are plenty of other items too, including an awesome mechanic’s shirt, the comfortable polar fleece, and our member favorite leather jacket. There’s something for everyone in your household. So show your ATU pride and shop at the ATU online store at http://atu.imagepointe.com/atu/
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The Liberal Party headed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau swept Stephen Harper’s Conservatives out of office with a convincing majority of 184 seats in Parliament (40% of the vote) – 14 more than the 170 needed for an outright majority.

The Conservative Party, which had controlled the government since 2006, was reduced to 99 seats (31.9%). Tom Mulcair’s New Democratic Party (NDP), which had earlier been expected to do much better, finished a disappointing third with just 44 seats (19.7%).

Bloc Québécois won 10 seats (10.7%), and the Green Party won one (3.4%).

Mulcair wants to continue as NDP leader

Tom Mulcair intends to continue to lead the NDP in the wake of the party’s third place finish.

“We have a track record of working with the Parliament that has been elected by Canadians,” he said. “We fight for the things we believe in but work with other parties where common agreement arises.”

Mulcair’s secretary, Karl Bélanger, says the party will find ways to insert NDP values into the Liberal agenda.

Trudeau, during his victory speech, did not mention his famous father, former Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, who led Canada with one interruption from 1968 – 1984, which could be interpreted as further signaling his independence from the past.

The prime minister-designate spent the morning after the election in a Montreal subway station to say thank you to transit riders. ATU Canada will be watching to see if his gratitude to riders extends to his actions with regard to operating public transit with good union labour – like ATU.
The Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) is congratulating Prime Minister-elect Justin Trudeau and the Liberal party on their election victory, and urging them to act quickly on key priorities for working Canadians.

“Canadians have soundly rejected the Conservatives’ politics of fear and division and have voted for change, and we look forward to working to ensure the Trudeau government delivers on the real change it has promised for working Canadians,” says CLC president Hassan Yussuff.

Yussuff highlighted key Liberal campaign promises he hopes the new government will act upon swiftly. Those included:

- Significantly increasing infrastructure funding, including new, dedicated funding for public transit, social infrastructure like seniors and child care facilities, and green infrastructure;
- Providing Canadians with a more secure retirement by enhancing the Canada Pension Plan, restoring the eligibility age for Old Age Security and the Guaranteed Income Supplement to 65, and increasing the GIS by 10 percent;
- Expanding training and apprenticeship opportunities to help Canadians – particularly young Canadians – find and keep good jobs;
- Beginning to turn back more than $36 billion in Conservative cuts to health care by investing $3 billion over the next four years to improve home care, mental health services and access to prescription drugs;
- Repealing the Conservatives’ fundamentally flawed, ideological anti-labour bills C-377 and C-525; and
- Immediately launching a national public inquiry into missing and murdered indigenous women.

Concerns

Yussuff also raised significant concerns about the Liberals’ position on C-51 and the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

“‘The Conservatives’ so-called anti-terror legislation C-51 is an affront to Canadian values and our Charter of Rights and Freedoms,” said Yussuff. “Repealing the legislation, not just tinkering with it, is the only way to adequately safeguard Canadians’ rights and freedoms.”

Yussuff also encouraged the government to strengthen its position on child care by implementing an affordable child care system for all families. Yussuff concluded: “We encourage the incoming government to work constructively with the labour movement, to ensure Canadians see positive change.”

Canadian Agenda

CLC hopes Trudeau will act quickly on campaign promises
MAINTENANCE BACKLOG LEADS TO SERVICE CUTS IN WINNIPEG

Service cuts caused by a maintenance backlog continue to plague Winnipeg (MB) Transit. There doesn’t seem to be any end in sight for the problem Local 1505 warned about way back in June.

On September 10, the city announced a new fall schedule with peak service cuts at least until January 1. Service was reduced on over a dozen morning and evening routes.

‘Hate to say I told you so’

“I hate to say I told you so,” says Local President John Callahan, who blames low maintenance worker wages and not enough buses for the shortage.

“The newer buses are a lot higher maintenance, and this city’s transit is not competitive enough to maintain the trades people,” says Callahan, adding, “We had two mechanics quit this week. Working conditions are great, but with wages we are not competitive enough.”

Callahan explains that Winnipeg maintenance worker wages rank somewhere around 28th in the country.

The city has only added around 10 buses to their fleet since 1998, according to Callahan, who said only 11 per cent of the city’s buses are available as spares while others are being worked on.

‘Someone fell asleep at the switch’

The local president insists that the “Council had to know this was coming because we have been preaching this for a long time.”

“It didn’t all happen overnight,” agrees Harry Wolbert, co-chair of the Winnipeg Transit Riders Association. “It seems like someone fell asleep at the switch.”

Joe Kornelson with Functional Transit Winnipeg, asserts, “The city needs to buy more buses, buy more buses and operate more buses.” But Callahan counters that just buying new buses won’t solve the problem. “There’s too many buses out of service because there’s not enough people to repair them,” he explains.

There were over 100 buses waiting for repairs in September.

‘Can’t see any end to it’

“I can’t see any end to it,” Callahan says, “because we are in a downward spiral. It’s not sustainable the way things are going.”

Brian Kelcey, a former mayoral staffer, says it all could have been avoided, had the council heeded the warning signs, and taken action. Kelcey cites a failure to deal with the maintenance backlog as ATU asked; failure to create an emergency bus schedule, and warn riders; and a failure of oversight as the three factors contributing to the service cuts.

Kelcey blames Mayor Brian Bowman, his staff and council for not acting sooner. Bowman says “The reality is that the issue should have been brought forward to the [City Administrative Officer Doug McNeil] much earlier.”

It looks like McNeil will be left holding the bag and has apologized to the city promising to “make improvements to prevent this from happening again.”

It’s obvious that the City of Winnipeg has a lot of work to do to bring its transit service back up to its former level. It’s also obvious that they should seek out the advice of their transit workers as they go through the process.
“We want to make transit here accessible and affordable,” says Local President Patty Furry, 1633-Welland, ON, explaining the reason members of three ATU Locals have come together to form the Niagara Transit Coalition. They particularly want to be advocates for those who struggle to make ends meet, persons with disabilities, and seniors for whom public transit is an essential part of life.

They see them on their buses every day – people who are on public assistance; people who are alone on a fixed income; part-timers and minimum wage workers; people without money; people without a job.

‘I want to do something’

One reason these members are so passionate about improving transit is that at some point they’ve all been in the position of their most vulnerable passengers.

“We’ve never forgotten what that’s like,” says Local President Margaret Gilbert, 1582-Niagara Falls, ON. “I see it every day. I listen. I care enough that I want to do something.”

The Niagara Transit Coalition is bringing in more individuals and community organizations into the coalition to put ATU’s motto, “A union that makes things happen” into practice.

For instance, they’re promoting low fares for low-wage riders, which other systems, like Calgary (AB) Transit provide. Local President Robert Llord, 846-St. Catharines, ON, says Calgary seniors can get an annual pass for $95 (even less for low income seniors) much less than the $57 per month St. Catharines seniors pay.

‘Transit means getting to a job’

“There’s lots of people who are down and out,” says Furry. “And whose only mode of transportation is a bike if they’re able to ride it. Transit means getting to a job, getting to school, and getting to their appointments on time.”

In addition to the cost of public transportation, the group focuses on making sure there are schedules that meet the needs of the community, and the time it takes to travel from one place to another on the bus.

‘We want to speak with one voice’

“We’re all a part of this community,” says Recording Secretary Chris Byford, 846, “and we want to speak with one voice.”

Byford points to one common work commute in the area, saying, “If you’re working there and making minimum wage, it costs you an hour’s wage to get there and back.”

‘Things need to change’

“The region used to be strong in manufacturing,” says Byford. “And now there’s more and more precarious jobs.”

“It used to be that people came out of high school and they could go to GM, make a decent wage, have a boat, take a vacation,” says Byford, who struggled financially for a long time. “I see people like that now. It’s tough. It’s sad. It’s something I can relate to, and things need to change.”
Contract flipping leaves transit workers feeling like ‘temps’

Something called “contract flipping” has become a new reality that puts a lot of stress on transit workers. Contract flipping is a practice that transit properties are increasingly using to continually change service providers every few years to keep wages low, get rid of unwanted employees and sidetrack collective bargaining agreements.

Three contracts have flipped at York (ON) Region Transit in the last five years, creating great insecurity among employees who risk not getting hired every time they have to reapply for their jobs. And many do lose their jobs, even though they have sterling records.

‘Little protection’

ATU says contract flipping leaves workers “with little protection from discrimination in hiring by the new contractor on the basis of union activism or human rights grounds. If transit work is to be a permanent service offered to the public, why should transit workers be treated like a temporary workforce?”

One York driver with a great record was not rehired during a recent flip while applicants with little to no experience were taken.

“You love your job. You bust your backside all these years,” she says. “And then the region causes its own unemployment rate to go up.”

Brampton wants to take away drivers’ lunch breaks

In the never-ending quest of transit systems to strip away every vestige of personal time transit operators have on the job, the City of Brampton, ON, has reached a new low. Local 1573 just rejected a city contract proposal that eliminates transit employees’ 30-minute lunch breaks.

“The corporation would like the members to drive for eight hours without a lunch break,” says Local President Paul Thorp. “We’re not agreeing to this because we do have serious concerns about what the impact would be (on drivers).”

Increased threat of driver fatigue

Not only would the proposed change increase driver fatigue, it would have a negative effect on operators’ health. “They would have to eat on a bus, on a layover,” says Thorp. “Those are not proper conditions.”

At the end of a “run,” a driver sometimes has a scheduled five or 10-minute layover before starting the return trip, he says. That’s the time they use to get up, stretch and use a washroom. But if that layover time is eaten up by traffic slowdowns or bad weather, the drivers don’t get those breaks,” he adds.

Eight hours straight behind the wheel without any breaks can create negative long-term physical effects, caused by the amount of vibration absorbed by the body when driving for that length of time, and that can impact the neck, back and knees, Thorp continues. “It’s very, very detrimental.”
This is your Union

The International Union may seem like a far away building in Washington to many members. But, we, and our staff are involved in the lives of our members deeply, and every day. We have stepped up our work over the last several years in fighting to get our members a raise, retirement security, stopping assaults, getting real bathroom breaks, improving healthcare, organizing new workers and getting more funding for transit.

Though quite proud of our work, we continue to live in a harsh political environment in both Canada and the United States. We live in a time when billionaires feel cheated when workers live well. This Union is not standing its ground, we are moving forward every day. In this magazine we chronicle some of those efforts.

Often the International works in a supporting role with Local officers and they, more than the members, see our work. In the U.S. the International is responsible for the day-to-day legislative work of the Union. We also assist Local officers in the states and provinces when called upon. In Canada, we have a Canadian organization – ATU Canada – which leads the national lobbying efforts.

Behind the curtain

All of these efforts are backed up by support staff at headquarters that provides the resources needed to get the job done in the field. In the end, all that work is for one purpose: to make the lives of workers and riders better.

The people who ride our services, from school children in New York, to the seniors in Vancouver, the dialysis patient in Delaware, to the hipster riding a bus or train in the Bay Area in California – they all depend on our members every day. And behind the curtain, our members depend on our international staff who in turn support our Local officers and members in making their job a little less stressful and maybe easier.

Be assured that we work every day to do all the things I mentioned in my first sentence and also that this Union is run by its members and people like me who came up through the ranks.

We are transit workers, school and paratransit workers, bus drivers and mechanics who feel every day the concerns of our members. I think that once in a while that needs to be said. This is your Union – be proud of it!

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.

Look closely

But look closely and you will see the influence of our Washington (soon to be Silver Spring, MD) based staff, and our leaders in the field – international vice presidents and representatives working to organize internally and lead contract and other battles everywhere.

We have a very professional organizing staff that is racking up victories from coast to coast. Over the last two years we have cranked up our Health and Safety Department. Here we are working on bathroom breaks, transit worker assaults and the fight to clear up blind spots on our buses.
Mobile app-based transit – should we care?

For those who may not know, “Uber Technologies Inc. is an American international transportation network company headquartered in San Francisco, CA. The company develops, markets and operates the Uber mobile app, which allows consumers with smartphones to submit a trip request which is then routed to Uber drivers who use their own cars.”

Initially an Uber user must download the app, input the credit card information to be used, select a percentage tip amount to apply to all trip purchase then you done. One simply taps on the Uber app and advises of location and selects the level of vehicle luxury you want, from Uber X, a small car to an Uber limo.

The app sends you notice of exactly how long it will take for your ride to arrive, who your driver will be and a phone number to reach the driver if needed. Wait times are usually no longer than six minutes. Once your Uber arrives, you get in, travel to your destination get out and walk away. There is no monetary transaction to conduct. Its all been handled by your initial Uber set up.

Pretty slick

Sounds pretty slick and it is. However we are seeing more and more articles and news reports about how the Uber effect is undermining taxis.

Cab drivers and companies argue that while they have to pay for operation medallions, are required to carry higher limits and types of insurance, and special licenses Uber drivers are not.

Uber (who has deep ties to the Obama administration) argues that their technology has made them “market disruptors” and the clamor against them is akin to the clamor of typesetters when the printing press came along.

Further it is said the cab companies should have evolved out of a service that makes you call, puts you on hold too many times, is rude, and then lets you hope that your cab will show up.

Should we prepare?

Many of our locals represent members whose transit systems operate line haul service, para-transit service and deviated route services. We are not cab drivers, should we care? Should we prepare? Prepare for what?

Uber now has a service called Uber Pool which uses the same app technology to pool riders heading in the same direction together. The cost is higher than bus fare but Uber says they provide leather-seating, worktables, Wi-Fi, and extremely courteous drivers.

Local 1287-Kansas City, MO, has been in negotiations with an employer who is seeking to offer this type of service in through a public private partnership arrangement with a company called Bridj, utilizing ATU operations employees. Bridj calls itself a “pop up transit service”, that prides itself on “not being your grandmother’s transit system; check it out (http://www.bridj.com/).

Its not just coming to a place you call home, it’s here. And that’s why we should and do care. ♤

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.
ATU must lead – whether we like it or not

The Canadian election

The disappointing results for the NDP in the recent Canadian election should not dissuade the party’s supporters among our members from continuing to fight for public transit and labour. Electoral politics is a marathon – not a sprint.

I know that 11 weeks seemed like a long campaign to my Canadian sisters and brothers, but for an American candidate that wouldn’t be enough time to clear his or her throat before a debate.

Seriously, though, NDP supporters should feel encouraged by how much they accomplished in a very short period of time. Progressive policies were discussed positively on a national level, and, for the first time it wasn’t ridiculous to think that Canada’s labour party could form a government.

Hold Trudeau’s feet to the fire

There’s no doubt in my mind that Tom Mulcair’s popularity pulled Justin Trudeau closer to Labour. The Liberal leader tried mightily to position himself as a friend of working families – and apparently succeeded with a lot of trade unionists. Our job now is to hold his feet to the fire.

If Trudeau is a true friend of Labour he won’t advocate public-private partnerships as a way to build and operate public transit, as he has previously advocated.

Members must take the lead

But for him to change his mind he needs to hear from Canadians – a lot of them – who tell him that they don’t want P3 programs. And whether we like it or not, that will only happen if ATU members take the lead and keep at it during times when there is no election to focus our attention.

Those are the times when government decisions are made and legislative votes are taken that can have a far-reaching impact on our lives.

A crucial moment

Canadian members are now entering a really crucial moment in which everyone will be needed to stop federal, provincial, and municipal governments from selling public transit and transit labour out to the lowest bidder.

The Union is doing everything possible to stop this threat to our jobs, but it cannot succeed unless everyone gets involved.

And, why not? We have the opportunity to show the world that ATU has only just begun to fight.

Please visit www.atu.org for more information and the latest ATU news.
New Organizing Victories from Coast to Coast

UNORGANIZED TRANSIT WORKERS REACH OUT TO JOIN ATU

ATU members sometimes take for granted the wages, benefits, working conditions, and job security we have fought for -- and defended -- for many decades. It’s good to remember that none of the benefits of union membership fell out of the sky, or were the result of employers suddenly deciding to be fair and generous. It’s easy to forget this until workers without any union at all reach out to ATU and we hear their nightmare workplace reports and stories. There is a real and very significant difference between ATU workplaces and those with no union at all.

ATU scores organizing victories

Our ranks grew significantly this year as we scored strong organizing wins across the country including Aspen, CO, West Palm Beach, FL, and Indiana, PA, just to name a few. (See map for all ATU organizing wins) These were hard fought victories with international staff and locals working hand-in-hand.

The ATU family welcomes our new members, and we stand ready to support them in the next phase of their organizing – the push for a first union contract.

Many employers refuse to accept the fact that democratic majorities have voted or chosen ATU to be their union. These employers resist the bargaining process, and continue to conduct what amount to ongoing anti-union campaigns aimed at exhausting the workers and ultimately punishing them for their choice.

Union organizing is never really “done”, since these new groups will still need to be trained and supported to enforce their initial contract, and begin to represent the new members in the workplace. It’s hard, but worthwhile. Every ATU property in the U.S. and Canada can trace back its origins to some similar process.

Thousands of unorganized transit workers

However, thousands of non-union transit workers in North America today continue to work for poverty wages, enjoy few benefits, and are subjected to horrendous working conditions. They have no on-the-job protections or independent representation when dealing with their employer.

Working in the transit industry today without a union contract means you work strictly at the whim of the boss, have no recourse to resolve unfair treatment, and can be fired at any time for no reason at all.

The growing privatization trend pushed by politicians and corporations is designed to magnify the downward pressure on wages and benefits, and it’s therefore no surprise that the private contractor workforces are those joining ATU in the greatest numbers. There are some remaining public transit agency workers who are not organized, and these groups are also reaching out to ATU for help with their own difficult situations.

Do you know a transit worker who needs a union?

New union organizing is hard work, and it is often complicated by employers who threaten and discriminate against workers who want the benefits of a union contract. ATU local leaders and members participated in all the successful campaigns listed here, with a number of them stepping up and playing a critical role from start to finish.

There is strength in numbers; reaching out to unorganized workers in our industry is one way to defend the gains your ATU local has made at the bargaining table.

You might find workers in your area or even at your workplace in need of union representation. There are even more unorganized transit workers who drive paratransit vans, school buses, commuter coaches and tour buses, and different kinds of shuttles.

What can you do?

Talk to these workers and ask them if they are satisfied with their pay rates, their benefits, and their on-the-job treatment.

When you find interest – and you will – contact ATU International at officeofthepresident@atu.org

ATU International provides advice, counsel, and support for union organizing every day across North America.

It all starts with someone breaking the ice and talking to the unorganized workers about why they should join ATU.
ATU ORGANIZING VICTORIES

Toronto, Ontario, Local 113
TTC 55 workers

New York, NY, Local 1181
MVP 216 workers

Grand Junction, Colorado, Local 1774
MV 41 workers

Stockton, California, Local 276
MV 55 workers

Hunterdon and Warren Counties, New Jersey, Local 1614
First Transit 29 workers

Hanford, California, Local 1027
MV 57 workers

West Palm Beach, Florida, Local 1577
First Transit 115 workers

Fresno, California, Local 1027
Economic Opportunities Commission 135 workers

Joshua Tree, California, Local 1704
Morongo Basin Transit Authority 33 workers

Austin, Texas, Local 1091
Ride Right/MTM paratransit 84 workers

Aspen, Colorado, Local 1774
Roaring Fork Transit 120 workers

Indiana, Pennsylvania, Local 1279
IndiGO Indiana County Transit Authority 55 workers
ATU’s bathroom break fight bringing changes to transit industry, but much more progress needed

Few people would take a job in which they risked death to use a bathroom, but that is the situation facing bus drivers around the world today. It’s not only a disgrace; it’s a human rights violation that must be stopped.

Last December a Miami-Dade County Transit driver died attempting to get to a bathroom in the five minutes she was allotted. She left the motor running as she ran to the driver’s side window to pull the lever to close the door. In her haste she had forgotten to set the parking brake. The bus ran over and killed her as she struggled to control it from the driver’s window.

The same thing happened in 2004, when a Portland, OR, driver, rushing to use the bathroom forgot to set the parking brake, closed the door, and the bus moved forward pinning her between the vehicle and a bus sign, killing her instantly.

ATU made bathroom breaks an issue

Tragically, few would blame these deaths on anything but driver error if the International and our locals hadn’t initiated the campaign against the miserable conditions that drivers endure which endanger their health, and the safety of themselves and their passengers.

When International President Larry Hanley instigated ATU’s campaign to secure adequate bathroom breaks and facilities for transit workers in 2011, it was a problem few acknowledged. As Hanley put it, “I think the bathroom break problem persists because of our natural discomfort with talking about the issue.”

“We need to be more aggressive in making sure that clean restrooms and sufficient time to use them are negotiated into our contracts, and that those provisions are enforced,” he said. “It’s an important health and safety issue that really should be regarded as a human right.”

That is what has been happening in local after local, since then. And hundreds of news reports have emerged increasing awareness of the issue. From Bangkok to London there are reports of similar problems.

Up until 2011, no international figure had ever spoken so openly and forthrightly about this important issue, much less declared it a matter of human rights. With input from ATU, the International Labor Organization recently held a meeting on health and safety endorsing bathroom access for all transport workers. Also at the behest of the ATU, the FTA and TRB have taken up the issue.

Still, too many properties demand slavish adherence to computerized schedules, rather than treating their employees in a humane fashion.

There have been victories, such as in Seattle, WA, where the work of Local 587 resulted in the state Department of Labor and Industries fining King County Metro.

Since then the agency has hired a “comfort station coordinator” to address the issue. But that doesn’t, necessarily mean the problem is solved.

The Washington Post shocked the nation’s capital in June with an article about the bathroom struggles of Metro drivers there. But, Local 689 told the Post that they were still having troubles with Metro over the issue in October.

When questioned by the media, most agencies feign surprise, claiming their operators can use a bathroom anytime they want – without punishment.

Drivers know that just isn’t true, and are fighting to build decent breaks into the breakneck schedules that wreck their health over time.

It may be that the most significant thing ATU has done is to make bathroom breaks, and the humane treatment of transit workers an issue that cannot be ignored in contract negotiations, or the media. While progress has been made, the fight continues. There is no turning back.
Survey reveals health and safety concerns of locals

Over 125 locals responded to a union-wide health and safety survey ATU sent out earlier this year. The results were revealing.

Chief among the health and safety concerns of well over 90% of respondents were:

**Operations:**
- Stress
- Assault
- Bathroom access
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Vehicle safety

**Maintenance:**
- Air quality
- Back injuries
- Chemical exposure
- Hearing loss

Some, but not all locals have been successful in getting management to address health and safety (see article on page 14) problems and provide training.

Progress is being made in bathroom access, but there needs to be more attention paid to this problem.

Musculoskeletal disorders

Our knowledge that poorly designed and poorly maintained vehicles cause musculoskeletal disorders, combined with the news that federal budget cuts are making it more difficult for agencies to buy new buses, leads many to worry that physical problems will increase as poorly maintained buses remain on the streets longer than they should. As a result our members will pay the price in acute as well as debilitating injuries.

Don’t let this happen to your members

Don't let this happen to your members. It can be prevented, but management has to be responsible for a safe and healthful workplace. Our job is to see that they provide that.

Almost 70% of those who responded had a joint health and safety committee, but many had not been trained recently or met with management in a long time.

Know your safety rights

Knowing your safety rights at work is the job of every member. Earlier this year a 10-page booklet was sent to all locals on how to run effective safety committees. The International is ready to follow this up with training of your local safety committee, safety stewards and activists.

You'll learn how to start immediately. Then we can follow that with training and step-by-step guidance to improve the health and safety of your members.

Many locals ask for training

Health and safety training has been completed in some locals and has been scheduled in others. Please contact the office of the international president to arrange for your health and safety training and other assistance if you have not already done so.
Locals hone skills at Bargaining and Contract Campaigns Trainings

As part of ATU’s next generation of innovative training programs for leaders and members more than half of ATU locals across the U.S. and Canada have taken part in the Collective Bargaining and Contract Campaigns Training. This training is another step in the charge given by the 2013 International Convention to educate and train our members in new skills and strategies to make our locals stronger, empower members to get involved, and prepare for the battles that lie ahead.

Through a combination of plenary sessions, breakout workshops and hands-on training exercises, the Collective Bargaining and Contract Campaigns Training is conducted by international staff and a wide range of experts in the fields of negotiations and contract bargaining. Among the topics covered are Strategies for Building Power through Contract Campaigns, Preparing for Bargaining: Knowledge of Power, Mapping Members, Employers, Allies and Opponents, and The Nuts and Bolts of Collective Bargaining.

This training offers both the seasoned local union leader and new officers an exciting opportunity to learn and improve negotiating skills and also expand their Local’s power and presence in their community.

One of the most recent Collective Bargaining and Contract Campaigns Trainings took place in Toronto, ON, with representatives from every Canadian local in attendance prior to the ATU Canada convention. The participants were energized by the training for their next contract negotiation and learned why mobilizing members to get involved and building alliances with community groups is critical.

“The training was eye opening and very informative. I learned new skills for collective bargaining and negotiating contracts that will serve my Local well in the future,” said one attendee at the Canadian training. “I now realize the importance of getting all our members involved and that we need to think outside the box to achieve that. We also need to build coalitions with our riders and community advocates because without them we would not have a job. I now feel empowered to make a difference for my Local and my Union.”

With the International putting the finishing touches on the new state-of-the-art ATU Tommy Douglas Conference Center, the Union will be offering the Collective Bargaining and Contract Campaigns Training and other innovative education programs at the new center to leaders and members in the coming months and year. If you’re interested contact your Local officers and tell them you want ATU training or email us directly at training@atu.org.
Giving children a good education is critical to the future of any country, but if kids can’t get to school safely and on time it will certainly hurt the cause. That is the problem facing many school districts across the United States as many have a shortage of experienced school bus drivers.

Fox Valley school districts in Illinois started the school year with new buses, but not enough drivers to operate them. This has meant that sports teams have been running late to after-school events or that mechanics sometimes drive buses instead of working on repairs.

A shortage in school bus drivers in the Metro Nashville Public School district has caused problems for thousands of students. The district started the school year down 55 drivers, but that number has skyrocketed to 143 open bus driver positions. This has resulted in delays at the stops, which has caused students to be late getting to school, and back home.

What may surprise many, but not school drivers or transit workers, is the reason for this growing problem—an improving economy.

School bus driver pay low

It has become harder for school districts to attract enough people to drive yellow buses, because they have lower pay than jobs driving other types of large vehicles.

Now, a new federal report shows that openings for school bus drivers will continue to be one of the nation’s top transportation workforce needs in coming years. The report, titled “Strengthening Skills Training and Career Pathways Across the Transportation Industry,” was jointly released by the U.S. Departments of Education, Transportation and Labor.

One of the most interesting findings is that over a 10-year period (2012 to 2022), the second-highest number of transportation job openings will be for school or special client bus drivers, projected at 330,699 openings. The report also shows a big demand for bus and truck mechanics and diesel engine specialists, with a projected 86,850 job openings over the 10-year period.

The report also shows the range of the transportation workforce, revealing an important trend in the school bus industry. For the broad sector of transit and ground passenger transportation (which includes school transportation, transit, charter, taxi service and others), the age distribution shows that 63% of the workers in transit and ground passenger transportation are above age 45, and retirement will loom large in the future. So the problem is just going to get worse as the industry will experience an increase in retirements.

How to deal with the problem? Raise the wages for school bus drivers to make it a more attractive job. After all, what’s more important than making sure our children get a good education? Getting them there safe and on time is half the battle.
Calgary members launch ‘Easy Rider’ campaign to combat assault

Local 583 wants all of their passengers to be “easy riders.” They’ve launched a new campaign – complete with billboard and bus shelter advertisements – aimed at eliminating the violence against drivers that every ATU member knows has increased greatly in recent years. There have been 80 assaults upon Calgary drivers since April 2014.

Local President Rick Ratcliff says his members are rightfully concerned about assaults and riders’ bad behaviour. “They say ‘we need to send a message, we need to be safe in our workplace,’” he says. “So we’ve followed the procedures and here we were are.”

Drivers being spit on

Ratcliffe says his drivers have endured everything from threats to coffee and beverages thrown at them, to punches and being been spit upon. He says these kinds of things don’t happen to other people at their place of work. “You don’t see someone come into an office environment and spit on somebody else and yet that does happen in the operator work station.”

“We did a lot of research,” he says, “we did focus groups with our operators and got their opinions, we did an omnibus survey with the public and got their opinions and that leads us to where we are today.”

Ratcliff has also met with Calgary Transit officials about the campaign and intends to develop plans to deal with the problem.

Winnipeg Local asks for police on buses

“There is almost a complete lack of respect out there for the transit system,” says Local President John Callahan, 1505-Winnipeg, MB, adding that having a firm police presence on buses “not only provides safety for our members, but for the public as well.”

Local 1505 wants Winnipeg to provide police officers to patrol its buses. The local president told the police board that there have been 45 confirmed assaults on bus drivers so far this year, compared to 39 incidents in 2014.

“Violence on transit buses,” he says, “generally peaks at around 4 p.m. and later in the evening.” Assaults, drug deals, “grab-and-runs,” happen all the time, and the number of fare evaders is growing.

Staten Island example

For support Callahan cites the transit system in Staten Island, NY, which deploys a combination of uniformed and undercover officers who ride buses on a rotating basis.

“They had an over 80% decrease in on-board assaults and over 90% decrease in fare evasions, and they’ve maintained those numbers,” he says.

Callahan said he has spoken with the Winnipeg Police Association about how to place officers on transit buses at little or no extra cost.

Several city councillors have backed his proposals.
DART bus driver Renaldo Epps was awarded the Delaware Department of Transportation Challenge Medal for his heroism in whisking a mother and her baby to the safety of his bus when being threatened by a man with a knife. Tragically, Epps was not able to save another hero who rushed to save the woman and her baby before Epps got there, and was stabbed to death as a result.

Epps witnessed the incident in which 27-year old Thomas Cottingham intervened between the assailant and the woman, telling him, “You don’t know her. Leave her alone. Leave her alone,” as he helped her to onto the bus with her stroller.

The assailant then stabbed Cottingham in the throat in front of the bus door, and proceeded to stab him twice in the back.

“Mr. Cottingham went to go run and once he fell, the assailant then got on top of him and repeatedly stabbed him,” said Epps. As people fled onto the bus to get away from the horrific attack as it unfolded, Epps called 911.

**Loss of life would have been greater**

Delaware DOT Secretary Jennifer Cohan called Cottingham “a hero” and said she felt certain the loss of life would have been greater, had he not intervened.

Epps, 42, of Wilmington, accepted the Challenge Medal, “on behalf of Thomas Cottingham, who is the real victim and the real hero.”

Epps addressed elected officials at the ceremony about the underlying issue in the attack, asking them to “Please send more money to mental health issues.”

Although the driver had seen crime at Rodney Square before, he had never seen such extreme violence. “He was on top of him, just stabbing and stabbing and stabbing.”

Dedicating the medal to Cottingham “was just beautiful,” said Local President Lillian Shavers, 842-Wilmington, DE. What Epps did was important and probably saved lives, but Cottingham gave his life protecting strangers, she said.

Epps, who nodded in agreement, adding, “He is the hero.” ✨
ATU joins final Nuns on the Bus tour rally in DC

The 2015 Nuns on the Bus tour concluded in Washington, DC, with a rally on the National Mall hours ahead of Pope Francis’ arrival in the United States. Local 689 member Karen Reed spoke at the event highlighting the poor treatment of MetroAccess drivers and riders.

International staff was also in attendance to help raise support for the DC paratransit drivers.

On their 13-day tour, the sisters hosted 33 events in seven states to “connect with real people — and to hear about the injustices they encounter daily,” according to the Nuns on the Bus website. The theme of the fourth annual trip: “Bridge the Divides, Transform Politics.”

“If we can’t face and bridge the divides here, where else can we expect it to be done?” asked Sr. Simone Campbell, leader of the bus tour and executive director of NETWORK, a Catholic social justice lobby.

The rally saw a number of struggling Americans sharing their stories.

“We walked off our job because federal contractors make billions in profit, but workers live in poverty,” said Bertrand Olotara, a federal contract worker employed as a cook at the U.S. Senate.

The ‘Fight for 15’ is a fight for all workers

The “Fight for 15” minimum wage movement is spreading rapidly around the United States as workers as diverse as fast food employees and college instructors have decided they’ve had enough of working long hours for non-living wages. Many union members may be tempted to think that’s just not their issue because they haven’t personally worried about the minimum wage since they were teenagers.

Half of all US workers make less than $15/hour

Most people, however, would be astounded to discover that nearly half of all workers in the U.S. make less than $15 an hour.

That’s right – minimum wages aren’t just for kids working summer jobs any more. All across America workers – even union workers – are laboring long and hard for totally inadequate pay.

ATU fighting for members making less than $15/hour

Right now, ATU is fighting for members making less than $15 per hour. These include: “junior” drivers in several cities, paratransit operators, university shuttle bus drivers, customer service representatives, cleaners, custodians, school bus drivers, utility and service workers.

Privatization has been the engine driving this trend, and foreign multinational transit providers and their friends in Congress are working hard to make this the norm in the transit industry.

Creating a $15 per hour floor for employees in the United States will help all workers no matter what they make.
Vice president helps rollout new Detroit buses

“This isn’t an investment in buses, this is an investment in the people of Detroit, this is an investment helping them move into the middle-class,” said Vice President Joe Biden, who was on hand for the city’s roll-out of the last of its new buses provided by the federal government.

The vice president cited one of the recent studies demonstrating the connection between public transit and getting to a good job, saying, “It’s not early education, it wasn’t other things … they wrote transportation is the single strongest factor in the changes that someone [needs to] move up the economic ladder.”

‘It was heartbreaking’

The lack of adequate bus service had become critical in Detroit. “People stood on street corners in the freezing cold for hours and at times the buses would show up and the buses would be full and they’d still leave them on the street corner. It was heartbreaking,” says Mayor Mike Duggan.

During a dinner with the vice president early in Duggan’s term, Biden turned to the mayor and asked, “‘If I can do one thing to help Detroit, what would it be?”

Duggan said “We need buses,” and Biden replied, “Of all the things I thought you were going to ask me for, I would not have guessed buses was the first priority.”

But that was the one thing the mayor knew the city needed before it could get back on its feet again.

Assault

Local 26 President Fred Westbrook, took advantage of the moment to remind the public that more needed to be done to protect operators and passengers from violent assault on transit.

Ferguson report: transit key to expanding opportunity

The Ferguson Commission issued a report in that listed the lack of public transit among several problems that lead to racial inequality in the St. Louis, MO, area. The commission was appointed by Governor Jay Nixon to investigate the conditions that impede racial equality and progress in the region in the wake of the unrest caused by the fatal shooting of Michael Brown, Jr., by a police officer in Ferguson on August 9, 2014.

The commission confirmed reports from other areas around the country that a lack of public transit to good jobs makes it almost impossible for residents of poor neighborhoods to find employment that lifts them out of poverty.

The commission said, in part:

“Public transit is a key to expanding opportunity for all St. Louisans. A safe, reliable, affordable, and efficient public transportation system can increase access to health care, education, and employment. Moreover, public transit affects how long it takes many low-income citizens to get to work, and in research from Harvard, commuting time has emerged as the single strongest factor in the odds of escaping poverty. The longer an average commute in a given county, the worse the chances of low-income families there moving up the ladder’ (Chetty & Hendren, 2015).”

Transit = economic benefits

“Effective public transit, and the mobility it enables, can also provide economic benefits to the region as a whole. Transit reduces household expenses; attracts talent and business; and in leading people to drive less, has the potential to decrease traffic congestion, air pollution, and roadway wear and tear (Osborne, 2015).”
Milwaukee members, riders call for restoration of transit funding

Saying public transit is a civil right the Milwaukee Transit Riders Union (MTRU) and Local 998-Milwaukee, WI, rallied outside of the Milwaukee County Courthouse to demand the county board restore transit funding to improve transit running times on express routes.

“Everyone in a major city needs transportation,” says Local President James Macon, pointing out that Miller Brewing headquarters left town a few years ago because public transportation wasn’t up to par. He continued that a robust bus system is critical because “…to bring new business in you’ve got to have transportation. Everyone can’t drive a car.”

Riders and drivers also called for a comprehensive plan to install more transit hubs across Milwaukee County. The hubs would allow riders to wait for buses inside during the very cold winter months. “A bold vision is needed to address the lack of access to bathrooms for drivers and to provide an indoor waiting space for riders at key transfer points” said an MTRU organizer and rider. “Riders often endure waiting times of 30-45 minutes or longer in freezing conditions.”

Monroe, LA, members, riders form coalition to push for transit funding

Thousands of Louisianans in the City of Monroe and the Parish of Ouachita, rely on buses, trains and trolleys each day to get to work, school, the doctor and other daily tasks. Yet many can’t get where they need to be because bus, train and trolley service is being slashed, and there is not enough money to fund public transit.

To address this problem Local 1160–Monroe, LA, is working with riders, employees and Monroe businesses to form a coalition to push for new legislation to increase funding for public transit throughout the state of Louisiana. The new group will be launching a campaign to reach out to riders, the community, and elected officials about the important role a robust public transportation system plays in stimulating and growing local economies.
ATU pleased MO governor’s RTW veto sustained

Local President Michael Breihan, 788-St. Louis, MO, is one of many union members happy that the Missouri House sustained Governor Jay Nixon’s veto of a right-to-work (RTW) bill passed by the state legislature.

He and his members joined other trade unionists who lobbied hard to defeat attempts to override the veto. The override campaign failed by 13 votes.

While glad that the RTW threat is over for the time being, Breihan says, “It’s been a long hard fight, but we know in our hearts that this is going to be coming back next year.”

Phoenix bus drivers reject poor contract offer

Demanding the city intervene to stop the bullying tactics of foreign for-profit bus service contractor Transdev and settle a fair contract, members of Local 1433-Phoenix, AZ, overwhelmingly rejected the company’s last, best contract offer.

The vote sends a loud and clear message to Transdev and the City of Phoenix that bus drivers will not be bullied and demand respect.

The Local called on Transdev to bargain a fair and just contract that is good for riders and the city, and that recognizes the commitment and hard work these employees put in every day to safely transport the citizens of Phoenix to and from work, school, the doctor and other important tasks.

After months of stalled negotiations that began in April, members had voted 95% to authorize a strike. The drivers and Local maintain that they do not want to strike, but will do what is in their legal power to get the respect they deserve.

Quality, safe, reliable service

“Bus operators do not want to strike, but this is about ensuring quality, safe, reliable bus service for the people of Phoenix and fair treatment of workers,” says Local President Bob Bean. “They take taxpayer dollars and push employees out on strike for no other reason than to increase the profit margin.”

ATU has requested through the federal mediator that Transdev return to the table in an attempt to settle the dispute through binding arbitration.
Even AAA says Americans want more public transportation

A significant majority of Americans (70 percent) believe the federal government should invest more than it does now for roads, bridges and mass transit systems, according to a new survey by AAA. The results also show that only 38 percent of Americans believe that Congress is taking the necessary steps to ensure that our roads, bridges and transit systems will meet the needs of the nation.

AAA also asked the public to rank its priorities for transportation funding. Conducting routine maintenance of roads and bridges overwhelmingly topped the list, yet all categories included in the survey received significant support. The complete rankings include:

- Conducting routine maintenance and repair of roads and bridges, such as fixing potholes, repaving roads, etc.: 91 percent rate as important.

70% support expanding public transportation

- Expanding public and shared transportation, such as buses, commuter rail and support for car-pooling: 70 percent rate as important.
- Reducing traffic congestion and travel time by expanding lanes and adding lanes reserved for high-occupancy vehicles: 65 percent rate as important.

Study reveals 75% of Americans support using tax money for transit

The American Public Transportation Association (APTA), in conjunction with the Mineta Transportation Institute (MTI), recently released a study, which underscores the public’s need for access to reliable public transportation and demonstrates broad support for investment in the nation’s aging transportation infrastructure.

Its analysis shows that over 75 percent of Americans support using tax dollars to create, expand and improve public transportation in their communities, and that close to 70 percent believe Congress should increase the level of investment in public transportation infrastructure.

Value added

The study also highlights the value public transportation adds to communities:

- More than 80% agreed that public transportation provides an affordable way for people to get around;
- More than 82% believe public transportation provides people with vital connections to important resources like jobs, schools, and medical facilities; and
- Roughly 80% said that public transportation connects people to jobs, and thus helps to fuel economic growth and development.
Job numbers released by Statistics Canada in September show underwhelming employment growth and a stagnant labour market.

The unemployment rate was up from 6.8 to 7.0 percent, back to where it was a year ago. Employment growth has averaged just 4,000 jobs per month, down from the 20,000 monthly average earlier in the year.

There was also a significant increase in the number of unemployed – up 40,000 – as more entered the labour force looking for work, only to find no jobs available.

“The Conservative government kept telling us there wasn’t a recession and talking about employment growth, but we know that economic recovery is still weak and that the convincing job growth they promised is still missing in action,” says Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) President Hassan Yussuff.

Yussuff said numbers in Ontario, where expectations were high, that industry – especially manufacturing – would benefit from a lower dollar, are especially disappointing. The unemployment rate in that province jumped from 6.4 to 6.8 % as 30,000 more people were unemployed and looking for work. At the same time, employment fell.

“We are headed in the wrong direction precisely where we shouldn’t be,” said Yussuff.

“Ontario was supposed to become the engine of economic expansion and employment growth, but instead we see a big spike in the number of unemployed and a drop in the overall number of jobs available,” he added.

Manufacturing lost jobs for the third straight month and employment in the industry is up only slightly from last December. Construction employment is down from 12 months ago and significantly (2.1 percent) lower than last December.

The CLC has called for commitments to expedited large-scale investments in infrastructure like green transit, a move that would boost manufacturing, lift business confidence and spark growth.

Investment in public transit for municipalities, for example, would create thousands of local jobs in manufacturing and construction, and boost ridership.

“Canada has a long history of manufacturing high quality transit equipment, so let’s get this going and create the jobs we need,” says Yussuff.
Une nouvelle ère commence pour les membres canadiens du SUT alors que 126 délégués des sections locales canadiennes se sont rencontrés à Toronto (Ontario) pour le congrès de fondation du nouvellement formé SUT Canada. Le nouvel organisme aura une voix forte, représentant toutes les sections locales du SUT et comptant près de 40 000 membres à travers le pays.

Il succède au Conseil canadien et l’on s’attend à ce qu’il soit beaucoup plus proactif dans la défense du transport en commun et des droits des travailleurs, à Ottawa comme dans les provinces.

SUT Canada a été mis sur pied juste avant les élections du 19 octobre dernier, où le Parti libéral dirigé par Justin Trudeau a balayé les conservateurs de Stephen Harper avec une majorité écrasante de 184 sièges au Parlement (40 % des voix), soit 14 de plus que les 170 nécessaires pour obtenir la majorité absolue. Le Parti conservateur dirigeait le gouvernement fédéral depuis 2006.

Le Parti conservateur a été réduit à 99 sièges (31,9 %). Le Nouveau Parti démocratique de Tom Mulcair, qui prévoyait au début de bien meilleurs résultats, a obtenu une décevante troisième place avec seulement 44 sièges (19,7 %).

Le Bloc québécois a remporté 10 sièges (10,7 %) et le Parti vert, 1 siège (3,4 %).

**Le défi de SUT Canada**

Cette restructuration historique de la filière canadienne du SUT arrive au moment où nos sections locales devaient affronter des attaques importantes sur les droits de négociation collective, le salaire des travailleurs, les fonds de pension, la sécurité d’emploi et les menaces de privatisation.

La privatisation sera l’un des plus importants défis au programme de SUT Canada, car Trudeau et le Parti libéral se sont avérés d’avides partisans du partenariat public-privé (P3) dans le passé.

C’est en reconnaissant ces défis et l’importance de la solidarité entre toutes les sections locales du SUT que les délégués du Conseil canadien se sont rencontrés en juin, qu’ils ont voté en faveur de la dissolution du Conseil canadien et de la formation de SUT Canada. Un comité de restructuration a été mis sur pied et s’est consulté pour développer une structure, des règlements administratifs et une vision pour SUT Canada.

La convention a débuté avec le président de l’International, Larry Hanley, qui promet un appui de taille de la part de l’International pour ATU Canada, et qui déclare que le syndicat travaillera en collaboration avec le nouvel organisme pour faire avancer les dossiers des membres canadiens et pour protéger leurs intérêts fondamentaux.

Les délégués ont tenu des discussions vives et productives sur les règlements et la structure du nouvel organisme. Il en est ressorti une vision claire et unifiée d’un organisme plus représentatif et plus proactif qui met à contribution la puissance de tous ses membres afin de combattre les forces antisyndicales auxquelles ils sont confrontés, de Terre-Neuve-et-Labrador à la Colombie-Britannique, de l’Ontario à l’Alberta.

**Dirigeants**

Les délégués ont aussi procédé à l’élection des trois dirigeants principaux et du Conseil d’administration pour SUT Canada.

Président : Bob Kinnear, section locale 113 – Toronto (Ontario)

Vice-président exécutif : Steve Bradshaw, section locale 569 – Edmonton (Alberta)

Secrétaire au Conseil d’administration : Travis Oberg, section locale 987 – Lethbridge (Alberta)

Membre du Conseil d’administration pour l’Est du Canada : Paul Doucette, section locale 107 – Hamilton (Ontario)

Membre du Conseil d’administration pour l’Est du Canada : Clint Crabtree, section locale 279 – Ottawa (Ontario)

Membre du Conseil d’administration pour l’Est du Canada : Paul Thorp, section locale 1573 – Brampton (Ontario)

Membre du Conseil d’administration pour l’Ouest du Canada : John Callahan, section locale 1505 – Winnipeg (Manitoba)

Membre du Conseil d’administration pour l’Ouest du Canada : Eric Carr, section locale 1374 – Calgary (Alberta)
Mandat

Le président de SUT Canada, Bob Kinnear, voit son mandat la mission d’agir comme représentant des intérêts des membres du syndicat auprès des trois paliers de gouvernement : municipal, provincial et fédéral. L’une de ses préoccupations premières est de travailler de concert avec le nouveau gouvernement libéral afin d’établir une stratégie nationale de transport en commun. Il prévoit également continuer à former des alliances avec d’autres groupes de défense du transport en commun, et compte intensifier le combat contre la privatisation de ce secteur.

« Le transport en commun est l’un des enjeux économiques et environnementaux les plus pressants, et il est temps d’établir une stratégie nationale en matière de transport en commun », déclare Kinnear. « Des milliards de dollars seront versés par le gouvernement pour le transport en commun dans les prochaines années et en tant que syndicat, nous devons travailler avec d’autres afin de nous assurer que chaque ville du Canada obtienne le système de transport en commun dont elle a besoin et qu’elle mérite. »

Il ajoute : « Par-dessus tout, nous devons protéger l’argent des contribuables canadiens et voir à ce que l’argent prévu pour l’élaboration et l’amélioration du transport en commun ne soit pas englouti par ces entreprises avides et leur “partenariat public-privé”.

Des deux côtés de la frontière, le transport en commun se fait flouer par des politiciens sans vision et nous devons travailler ensemble pour arrêter cela. »

Le président du Congrès du travail du Canada, Hassan Yussuff, s’est également adressé aux délégués en parlant de l’importance pour les travailleurs de s’unir, de mobiliser leurs membres et la population afin d’être prêts à relever les défis à venir pour les travailleurs.

Les élections

Tom Mulcair a l’intention de continuer à diriger le NPD suite à la troisième place obtenue par le parti lors des dernières élections.

« Depuis le début, cette élection porte sur le changement. Et les Canadiens ont tourné la page sur dix longues années et ils ont rejeté la politique de la peur et de la division, » déclare Mulcair. « Avec cette élection, les Canadiens nous ont tous demandé de travailler avec eux. Nous ne les abandonnerons pas. Je ne pourrais être plus fier de la diversité et de la force de notre équipe NPD. »

Le secrétaire principal de Mulcair, Karl Bélanger, estime que le parti trouvera des façons d’intégrer les valeurs du NPD dans le programme libéral.

« Nous avons un historique de collaboration avec les gouvernements élus par les Canadiens. Nous nous battons pour les causes auxquelles nous croyons, mais nous pouvons aussi travailler avec les autres partis pour trouver des solutions communes. »

Dans son discours de la victoire, Trudeau n’a pas mentionné son célèbre père, l’ancien premier ministre Pierre Trudeau – qui a dirigé le Canada de 1968 à 1984, avec une seule interruption – ce qui pourrait signaler davantage son indépendance relativement au passé.

Le nouveau premier ministre a passé le matin suivant les élections dans une station de métro de Montréal pour y remercier les usagers du transport en commun. SUT Canada continuera de surveiller si sa gratitude envers les usagers se transformera en actions concrètes relativement à l’opération des transports en commun avec un bon syndicat – comme le SUT.
C’est votre syndicat

Pour plusieurs de nos membres, l’Union internationale n’est qu’un édifice lointain situé à Washington. Mais nous, comme tous nos employés, sommes profondément et quotidiennement impliqués dans la vie de nos membres. Au cours des dernières années, nous avons accéléré la cadence de notre combat afin d’obtenir pour nos membres une hausse de salaire, un fonds de retraite décent, l’arrêt des agressions, de vraies pauses-santé, l’amélioration des soins de santé, l’organisation des nouveaux travailleurs et des fonds supplémentaires pour le transport en commun.

Tout en étant fiers du travail accompli, nous faisons toujours face à un environnement politique difficile, autant au Canada qu’aux États-Unis. Nous vivons dans une époque où les milliardaires se sentent trahis lorsque les travailleurs ont de bonnes conditions de vie. L’Union internationale n’est pas immobile; nous allons de l’avant, chaque jour. À l’intérieur de ce magazine, nous présentons certains de ces efforts.

Souvent, l’Union internationale adopte un rôle de soutien auprès des représentants des sections locales qui sont témoins de notre travail, plus que ne peuvent le voir les membres. Aux É.-U., l’Union internationale est responsable des travaux courants en matière législative du syndicat. Nous offrons également une assistance aux dirigeants des sections locales des états et provinces qui font appel à nos services. Au Canada, nous avons un organisme canadien – SUT Canada – qui dirige les efforts de pression au niveau national.

Regardez de plus près

Si vous regardez de plus près, vous y verrez l’influence de notre personnel basé à Washington (et bientôt à Silver Spring, Maryland) et de nos dirigeants sur le terrain – les vice-présidents et les dirigeants internationaux qui voient à l’organisation interne et qui dirigent les contrats et les combats partout.


En arrière-scène

Tous ces efforts sont appuyés par les employés de soutien des quartiers généraux, qui fournissent les ressources nécessaires à la réalisation du travail sur le terrain. En bout du compte, tout ce travail n’a qu’un seul but : améliorer la vie des travailleurs et des usagers. Les gens qui utilisent nos services, des élèves de New York aux retraités de Vancouver, du patient en dialyse au Delaware jusqu’au hipster prenant le train ou l’autobus dans la baie de San Francisco, en Californie – tous dépendent de nos membres, chaque jour. En arrière-scène, nos membres dépendent de notre équipe internationale qui, en retour, appuie les membres et les dirigeants de sections locales en rendant leur travail un peu moins stressant et peut-être même plus facile.

Soyez assurés que nous travaillons chaque jour sur tous les aspects que j’ai mentionnées dès ma première phrase. Soyez également assurés que ce syndicat est dirigé par ses membres et des gens comme moi qui ont gravi les échelons. Nous sommes des travailleurs du transport en commun, des travailleurs du transport scolaire et du transport adapté, des chauffeurs d’autobus et des mécaniciens qui ressentent quotidiennement les préoccupations de nos membres. Je crois qu’il est bon de le dire de temps en temps. C’est votre syndicat – soyez-en fiers!

Le transport en commun basé sur une application mobile – doit-on s’en préoccuper?

Pour ceux qui ne seraient pas au courant, « Uber Technologies Inc. est un réseau de transport international américain dont le siège social est situé à San Francisco, en Californie. Cette entreprise développe, met en marché et exploite l’application mobile Uber. Cette application permet aux consommateurs dotés de téléphones intelligents de faire une demande de trajet qui est ensuite relayée aux conducteurs Uber qui utilisent leur propre voiture. »
Initialement, l’utilisateur Uber doit télécharger l’application, saisir l’information sur la carte de crédit qu’il compte utiliser, sélectionner le pourcentage de pourboire qu’il désire laisser à chaque course, et c’est tout. L’utilisateur n’a ensuite qu’à taper sur l’application Uber, aviser de l’endroit et de la gamme de voiture désirée, de la Uber X – une petite auto – jusqu’à la Uber Limo.

L’application vous avise du délai exact avant l’arrivée de votre conducteur, du nom de votre conducteur et du numéro de téléphone pour le rejoindre en cas de besoin. Le temps d’attente dépasse rarement six minutes. Une fois votre Uber arrivé, vous montez, vous rendez à destination, vous descendez et vous partez. Il n’y a aucun échange monétaire entre le conducteur et le passager. Le paiement se fait selon vos préférences indiquées lors de votre configuration Uber initiale.

Plutôt facile

Cela semble être plutôt facile, et ça l’est. Cependant, nous voyons de plus en plus d’articles et de reportages sur l’effet dévastateur d’Uber sur l’industrie du taxi. Les chauffeurs et les entreprises de taxi dénoncent le fait qu’ils doivent payer pour obtenir un permis d’exploitation, se munir d’assurances de divers types à responsabilité élevée et autres exigences spéciales qu’on ne demande pas à Uber. Uber (qui entretient des liens profonds avec l’administration Obama) prétend que leur technologie a fait d’eux des “perturbateurs de marché” et que l’indignation soulevée contre eux s’apparente à celle des typographes lorsque la presse à imprimer est apparue.

De plus, ils disent que les compagnies de taxi auraient dû se réinventer et mettre fin à un service qui reçoit votre appel et vous met en attente, qui est souvent impoli et qui vous impose un temps d’attente interminable avant l’arrivée de votre chauffeur.

 Devrait-on se préparer? 

Plusieurs de nos sections locales représentent des membres dont le système de transport en commun exploite un service de transport régulier, de transport adapté et d’itinéraires alternatifs. Nous ne sommes pas chauffeurs de taxi. Devrait-on s’inquiéter? Devrait-on se préparer? Se préparer à quoi? Uber offre maintenant un service appelé Uber Pool, qui utilise la même application pour permettre le partage de trajet entre des passagers situés au même endroit et qui vont dans la même direction. Le coût est plus élevé qu’un billet d’autobus, mais Uber le justifie en disant fournir à ses clients des sièges de cuir, des tables de travail, le Wi-Fi et des conducteurs extrêmement polis.

La section locale 1287 – Kansas City (Missouri) a entrepris des négociations avec un employeur cherchant à établir ce type de service à travers un partenariat public-privé avec une entreprise nommée Bridj, qui embaucherait des employés du SUT. Bridj se qualifie elle-même de « service de transport en commun émergent » et elle est fière de ne pas être « le transport en commun de vos grand-mères ». Jetez un coup d’œil à leur site Web (http://www.bridj.com/).

Ils ne seront pas seulement chez vous bientôt; ils sont déjà là. Et voilà pourquoi nous devrions – et le faisons déjà – nous en préoccuper. ❖

Le SUT doit diriger – que cela nous plaise ou non

Les élections canadiennes

Les résultats décevants du NPD lors de la dernière élection ne devraient pas décourager nos membres partisans de ce parti de continuer à défendre le transport en commun et les travailleurs. Une course électorale est en fait un marathon – pas un sprint.

Je reconnais que 11 semaines de campagne peuvent paraître longues pour mes sœurs et frères canadiens; mais pour un candidat américain, ce temps ne serait même pas suffisant pour qu’il (ou elle) s’éclaircisse la voix avant un débat.

Sérieusement, les partisans du NPD devraient tout de même être encouragés par tout ce qui a été accompli en si peu de temps. Des politiques progressives ont été abordées de manière positive sur le plan national et, pour la première fois, il n’était pas ridicule de croire que le parti des travailleurs du Canada pourrait former un gouvernement.
Exiger des comptes de Trudeau

Il n’y a aucun doute dans mon esprit que la popularité de Tom Mulcair a rapproché Justin Trudeau des travailleurs. Le chef libéral a fortement tenté de se positionner comme ami des familles des travailleurs – et a apparemment réussi auprès de nombreux syndicalistes. Notre mission consiste maintenant à exiger des comptes du nouveau premier ministre.

Si Trudeau est vraiment l’ami des travailleurs, il ne fera pas la promotion des partenariats publics-privés comme étant le moyen de construire et d’opérer le transport en commun, comme il l’a fait dans le passé.

Les membres doivent prendre l’initiative

Mais pour lui faire changer d’idée, il faut que la voix des Canadiens – beaucoup de Canadiens – se fasse entendre et qu’ils lui disent ne pas vouloir de programmes P3. Que cela nous plaise ou non, cela se produira uniquement si les membres du SUT prennent l’initiative et la conservent durant ces périodes où il n’y a pas d’élections pour attirer l’attention sur cet enjeu.

Ce sont durant ces périodes que le gouvernement prend des décisions et adopte des lois ayant le potentiel d’affecter nos vies de façon considérable.

Un moment crucial

Nos membres canadiens entrent maintenant dans un moment crucial dans lequel chacun devra faire son effort pour empêcher les gouvernements fédéral, provinciaux et municipaux de vendre nos transports en commun et leurs travailleurs au plus bas soumissionnaire.

Le Syndicat fait tout en son pouvoir pour stopper cette menace visant nos emplois, mais nous ne réussirons pas sans l’implication de tous les membres.

Et pourquoi pas? Nous avons l’occasion de montrer au monde entier que pour le SUT, le combat ne fait que commencer. 

Follow us on twitter
www.twitter.com/atucomm

Information about Traveling to Canada

An international destination of choice, Toronto is easily accessed by land, water and air. Don’t forget to ensure you have a valid passport at all times. American citizens returning home should also be aware that there are new customs requirements in effect.

For more information, visit the websites of:

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

U.S. Department of State (Passport Information)
http://www.travel.state.gov/content/travel/english.html

THE 58TH INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION will be held at
Sheraton Centre Toronto Hotel
October 3 – 7, 2016
In Memoriam

Death Benefits Awarded July 1, 2015 - August 31, 2015

1- MEMBERS AT LARGE
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GROVER C. PIERCE JR.

85- PITTSBURGH, PA
DALE A. DAUS
MARTIN J. CHUBAROV JR.
JEFFREY A. DANIELS
EILEEN KEOATING
FRANK J. LACIC
EDWARD F. LUSZAK
EDWARD D. RARK
RAYMOND P. ROSS
RICHARD J. SANTORO

107- HAMILTON, ON
DANIELLA CICCONE

113- TORONTO, ON
GIOVANNI CALABRESE
ALBERT EDWARD CALWAY
RODGER S. ERNST
KENNETH GRANT
JAN A. HUBERT
WALTER M. RODRIGUES
IAN J. MURRAY
IGNACY A. KACZMARCZYK

126- CHICAGO, IL
LEONARD MARTIN

192- OAKLAND, CA
EVELYNE JEWELL
JAMES W. RUSSELL

241- CHICAGO, IL
SAMUEL ACOFF JR.
EDWARD M. ADAMOWSKI
JOHN H. BAKER JR.
EDWARD D. RARICK
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FRANK J. LASICA
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265- SAN JOSE, CA
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268- CLEVELAND, OH
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272- YOUNGSTOWN, OH
FRANK RAYMOND HOVANEK

282- CLEVELAND, OH
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287- YOUNGSTOWN, OH
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RICHARD J. SANTORO

777- CHICAGO, IL
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799- ROCK ISLAND, IL
DOROTHY L. WILSON

819- NEWARK, NJ
EARL T. CALWELL
EDWARD A. WATERS

833- EUGENE, OR
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893- CINCINNATI, OH
JAMES R. WEGNER

931- HAMILTON, ON
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ATU Makes Historic Move to New Headquarters

Establishes New Conference Center in Silver Spring, MD

A new era for ATU begins as international headquarters moves from Washington, DC, to the campus formerly occupied by the AFL-CIO’s National Labor College, in Silver Spring, MD.

The ATU has established a new conference center on the campus to train future generations of leaders in the labor and progressive movements at the state-of-the-art facility.

“This is a historic moment for ATU as we move our headquarters and launch the new center,” says International President Larry Hanley. “Future generations of organizers will learn from the brilliance, strength and courage shown by past American and Canadian activists with the goal of going back to their communities to do the same.”

The new address for the ATU International headquarters is

ATU INTERNATIONAL
10000 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, MD  20903
301-431-7100
Fax: 301-431-7117