

Strategic Alliance Gets Results

[David Moorhouse](#), S/T UTU Local 1778,

Oct. 27, 2006

The UTU and the United Steelworkers demonstrated the strength of their alliance when members from both unions spent four days in Ottawa this October lobbying MPs for the passage of Bill C257. The private members' bill will prohibit the use of replacement workers during a legal strike or lockout in the Federal sector. Members were teamed up, briefed, provided with information packages and given an assignment of MPs to lobby. Each team then set off to strategize, book appointments and meet with MPs. The teams used the resources of both the UTU and USW offices, which are close to the Hill, and to each other. The Canadian Labour Congress had other affiliate members on the Hill, which increased our presence to over 100 lobbyists.

The amount of talent and enthusiasm our group was immediately apparent. Along with direct face to face lobbying, the teams ran campaigns in their home ridings, inundating MPs with faxes, calls and emails, did radio interviews, spoke to aides and passed out buttons and pins in support of the bill. In total, the group met with over 50 MPs.



Alliance group on Parliament Hill



MP Don Bell, UTU S/T David Moorhouse & USW Unit Chair Glen Rankine in the Opposition Lounge

Many meetings were held in the offices of the MPs, others were held directly in the Centre block, where the House sits. Our team met Liberal North Vancouver MP Don Bell in the Opposition lounge (adjacent to the House chambers), while the House was in session. Don supported the bill, and is also vice-chair of the House transportation committee. Don has put forward a motion before the committee that they "...conduct an in-depth inquiry into rail safety and particularly the recent CN Rail accidents in BC on the former BC Rail line and in western Canada...". Don Bell brought this motion forward after extensive lobbying efforts from Local 1778 Chair John Holliday, who is one of his constituents.

A large Strategic Alliance delegation attended the Transportation committee meeting to watch the proceedings. The committee is made up of all parties, and the motion was discussed in detail. There was an effort from the some Conservatives to deflect the motion by focusing on the wording but Don Bell, David McGuinty (L) Peter Julian (NDP) made convincing arguments to the contrary. The motion was ultimately deferred until next meeting, where 1 hour will be set aside for further discussion. The Alliance spent the next day lobbying members of the committee

Alliance gets results

to support this motion and to discuss the issue of rail safety. We discovered that each member of the committee we talked to recognizes the importance of rail safety, and have committed to work together to fully investigate our complaints. We will continue to monitor this important work.

The free vote on Bill C257 was held while labour lobbyists watched from the galleries. The bill was supported by members from all parties, including some Conservatives, except the government ministers and parliamentary secretaries, who were “whipped” into voting against it. When the vote passed by a wide margin, the galleries erupted with a spontaneous standing ovation, frustrating the guards and surprising the MPs with the break in decorum. For the first time in history, a bill of this nature has passed from second reading onto committee, where it must be discussed before being passed back to the House for the 3rd reading and becoming law. The CLC hosted a reception in the Hill following the vote, where MPs and labour leaders met in celebration. It's great to see the power of the UTU and the USW strategic alliance at work.

We saw the Railway Association of Canada (RAC) on the Hill this week in force, lobbying for their own agenda (whatever that is). According to the MPs we talked to, we had bigger numbers and more attention from MPs than they did. Also, despite apparent claims to the contrary on their website, the Teamster's Rail Conference of Canada presence was minimal. We met only one Teamster lobbyist.

The success of this effort demonstrates the following:

- YOU can make a difference. Whether you have an issue with your local union, city council, provincial or federal legislators, you can get results by making your voice heard
- Members are getting real value for their dues money
- The [Strategic Alliance](#) between the UTU and the Steelworkers is showing positive results
- Anybody who might consider themselves better off with another union should look at who does the work and gets results, and who simply takes credit while riding on the backs of others

[More photos](#)

Find out how your MP voted in the list below. Call him or her to congratulate or express your disappointment, and request their support when this bill goes to third reading. [Find your MP](#).

YEAS

Alhabra André Angus Asselin Atamanenko Bachand Bagnell Bains Barbot Beaumier Bélanger Bell (Vancouver Island North) Bell (North Vancouver) Bellavance Bennett Bevington Bigras Black Blaikie Blais Bonin Bonsant Boshcoff Bouchard Bourgeois Brown (Oakville) Brown (Leeds—Grenville) Brunelle Byrne Cannan (Kelowna—Lake Country) Cardin Carrier Chamberlain Chan Charlton Chow Christopherson Coderre Comartin Cotler Crête Crowder Cullen (Skeena—Bulkley Valley) Cummins D'Amours Davidson Davies DeBellefeuille Demers Deschamps Devolin Dewar Dhaliwal Dhalla Dosanjh Duceppe Dykstra Easter Faille Folco Gagnon Galipeau Gaudet Gauthier Godfrey Godin Goodale Goodyear Graham Grewal Guarnieri Guay Guimond Harris Hubbard Ignatieff Jennings Julian Kadis Karetak-Lindell Karygiannis Keeper Khan Kotto Kramp (Prince Edward—Hastings) Laforest Laframboise Lapierre Lavallée Layton LeBlanc Lemay Lemieux Lessard Lévesque Loubier Lussier MacAulay Malhi Malo

Alliance gets results

Maloney Manning Mark Marleau Marston Martin (Esquimalt—Juan de Fuca) Martin (Winnipeg Centre) Martin (Sault Ste. Marie) Masse Mathysen Mayes McDonough Ménard (Hochelaga) Ménard (Marc-Aurèle-Fortin) Merasty Minna Mourani Murphy (Charlottetown) Nadeau Nash Neville Norlock Ouellet Owen Paquette Patry Perron Petit Picard Plamondon Priddy Proulx Ratansi Regan Robillard Rodriguez Rota Roy Russell Savage Savoie Scarpaleggia Scott Siksay Silva Simms St-Cyr St-Hilaire St. Amand St. Denis Stanton Stoffer Stronach Telegdi Temelkovski Thibault (Rimouski-Neigette—Témiscouata—Les Basques) Thibault (West Nova) Tonks Valley Van Kesteren Vincent Volpe Wappel Wasylcyia-Leis Watson Wrzesnewsyj Zed

Total: -- 167

NAYS

Abbott Albrecht Allen Ambrose Anders Anderson Baird Batters Benoit Bernier Bezan Blackburn Boucher Breitzkreuz Brown (Barrie) Bruinooge Calkins Cannon (Pontiac) Carrie Casey Casson Chong Clement Cullen (Etobicoke North) Day Doyle Emerson Epp Fast Finley Fitzpatrick Flaherty Fletcher Gallant Goldring Gourde Guergis Harper Hawn Hearn Hiebert Hill Hinton Holland Jaffer Jean Kamp (Pitt Meadows—Maple Ridge—Mission) Keddy (South Shore—St. Margaret's) Kenney (Calgary Southeast) Komarnicki Lake Lauzon Lee Lukiwski Lunn Lunney MacKenzie McGuinty McTeague Menzies Merrifield Miller Moore (Port Moody—Westwood—Port Coquitlam) Moore (Fundy Royal) Nicholson O'Connor Obhrai Oda Paradis Poilievre Preston Rajotte Redman Reid Richardson Ritz Scheer Schellenberger Shipley Simard Skelton Smith Solberg Sorenson Storseth Strahl Sweet Szabo Thompson (Wild Rose) Tilson Toews Trost Turner Tweed Van Loan Vellacott Verner Warawa Warkentin Williams Yelich

Total: -- 101

PAIRED

Freeman Lalonde MacKay (Central Nova) Prentice Total: -- 4