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Unifor members took part in rallies and other events across Canada to mark International Women's Day.

CP Rail contract ratified

Unifor Local 101R members have ratified a new collective agreement with CP Rail by 79 per cent.

Voting took place at membership meetings over two weeks, in 26 locations across Canada. The agreement was reached on Saturday, February 14,

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Interns bill a good first step

A private member's bill that recently came up for second reading in the House of Commons is a much-needed step in efforts to end the exploitation of unpaid interns in Canada, but more needs to be done, Canada's largest union in the private sector says.

"Young people need and

deserve real jobs on which they can build their lives, contribute to society and maybe even pay off the massive debts they've built getting their education," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said.

Unifor is calling for all parties to support the bill.

The bill from NDP MP Laurin Liu, however, only applies to federally regulated employers such as telecommunications, financial institutions and transportation. Many more young people work

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Unifor marks IWD

Unifor marked International Women's Day at rallies, dinners and marches across the country and at the United Nations where the 59th session of the United Nation's Commission on the Status of Women was held in New York City.

"International Women's Day gives us a chance to celebrate the progress that has been made on

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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@JimboStanford

Congrats to my friend and #Unifor / #FFAW veteran @EarleMcCurdy, new NDP leader in Nfld/Lab. His sense of humour alone will win next elxn!

@denisenhammond

Saying it loud and proud w @UniforTheUnion - women rise up and resist, today and everyday! #iwd2015

In brief

Local 3000, Edgewater

Unifor Local 3000 members at Edgewater Casino in downtown Vancouver have ratified a new collective agreement with solid economic gains for members.

The new collective agreement is a three-year deal with a two per cent wage increase in each year. The deal introduces a night shift premium, and a greater say for workers in the customer service policy. 

Local 598, Walford on the Park

Members of Local 598 working at Walford on the Park Retirement Home, Copper Cliffs near Sudbury, Ontario have ratified a tentative agreement.

The new collective agreement includes improved language on harassment, discrimination, workplace violence and bullying, severance pay, jury duty and education leave.

The settlement provides for increased wages on July 1, 2014 of 2 per cent (retroactive), 10 cents on Feb. 1, 2015, two per cent on July 1, 2015, five cents on Jan. 1, 2016; two per cent on July 1, 2016, and another five cents on Jan. 1, 2017. 

Photo spotlight: International Women's Day

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PHOTO BY UNIFOR LOCAL 52A

Members of Unifor Local 52A in Edmonton wore purple T-shirts in recognition of international Woman's Day.



PHOTO BY JOHANN WALL

Unifor members attended the Vancouver labour council dinner for International Women's Day.

General Cable members want answers

The 80 members of Unifor Local 589 held a one-day strike recently to back their bargaining team in a tough round of negotiations with General Cable plant in Saint-Jérôme, Québec.

"Company management's stubbornness gives us no choice but to start pressure tactics, including this first strike day," explained John

Caluori, Unifor national representative.

General Cable is demanding a three-year salary freeze, with an increase of 1.25% for the fourth year, but won't justify the need.

"We're a responsible union, if there really is a problem, we are ready to talk about it," Caluori said.

The members have been without a contract for almost a year since last April. In January 2015, they rejected the company's proposals with a 100 per cent vote. The members manufacture low- and medium-voltage insulated electric cables, primarily for Hydro-Québec. 

Shrimp rally held in Gander

About 400 people, including members of Unifor's FFAW and Newfoundland and Labrador political leaders, rallied in Gander recently to denounce cuts to the inshore shrimp quota made by the federal government.

FFAW president Keith Sullivan said it's time Ottawa started listening to the concerns of people in the shrimp industry. FFAW-Unifor has warned that thousands of jobs are at risk, along with the economic stability of municipalities and local small businesses due to the



FFAW President Keith Sullivan, left, was joined at the rally by the leaders of all three major political parties in Newfoundland and Labrador.

quota cuts.

Last year, inshore harvesters saw their shrimp quotas cut by 26 per cent, while offshore quotas were cut by only five per cent.

The March 5 meeting was open to all, and was attended by political leaders including MPs Scott Simms, Gerry Byrne and Ryan Cleary, Premier Paul Davis, provincial

Liberal Leader Dwight Ball, then provincial NDP Leader Lorraine Michael and provincial cabinet ministers Vaughn Granter, Keith Hutchings and Derrick Dalley.

Michael has since been replaced as NDP leader by former FFAW president Earle McCurdy. See story on Page 3. 

UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS: SARAH BLACKSTOCK, KATIE ARNUP, IAN BOYKO, SHELLEY BURGoyNE, SHANNON DEVINE, STUART LAIDLAW, SARAH LESNIEWSKI, MARIE-ANDREE L'HEUREUX, AND ANNE MARIE VINCENT

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in provincially regulated sectors, and also need proper protections.

“It is time for the provinces to step up and bring in similar legislation,” Dias said. “We cannot allow our young people to be exploited in unpaid internships.”

Such legislation needs to treat interns like any other employees, with the full protection of labour laws around health and safety, work standards and wages.

Dias called on the federal government to work with the provinces to ensure a national standard for internships, as well as clear rules governing work terms, school co-op programs and field placements for students. 

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the rights of women. But more importantly, it gives us a chance to push harder to ensure that progress continues to be made,” said Lisa Kelly, Unifor Women’s Director.

Kelly was at the UN as part of the Canadian trade union delegation organized by the Canadian Labour Congress. It has been 20 years since the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action on gender equality and human rights of women and girls.

Unifor and the rest of the Canadian delegation joined more than 1,000 groups from around the world pushing for a stronger declaration marking the 20th anniversary. They criticized the Declaration



Unifor members were out for International Women’s Day in Halifax.

issued on March 9th as simply reflecting the status quo, rather than making progress, and said the drafting process marginalized feminist organizations - sparking the protest “nothing about us, without us”.

In Canada, Unifor was out in force at several marches, rallies and dinners, including in Halifax, Oshawa,

Kitchener, Ottawa, Toronto and Vancouver. Women called for action on equal pay, childcare and an end to violence against women.

As well, Unifor donated \$100,000 to shelters and other organizations helping women across Canada. 

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minutes before a strike deadline.

“We’re pleased to have reached and ratified this new agreement with CP which improves our members’ conditions at work and recognizes their contributions to CP’s incredible financial success over the last few years,” said Unifor National President Jerry Dias.

“Although challenging, this round of negotiations showed that a settlement reached at the bargaining table is the best deal for everyone - it’s the time every few years that workers can have a direct say in improving their conditions and sharing in the wealth they help create.

Only through the work of unions is this possible.”

The agreement included wage increases in each of the four years, improvements to benefits, a commitment to maintaining operations at the Winnipeg Weston facility (employing 160 people), stronger apprenticeship ratios, the women’s advocate program and an initiative to allow skilled trades members leave to assist in repair work at not for profit community agencies.

“With this new agreement, we hope that we will improve our working relationship with CP so that our members are treated fairly and with respect on the job,” said Tom Murphy president of Local 101R, which represents 1,625 members at CP. 

McCurdy new NDP leader

Earle McCurdy, the past president of Unifor-FFAW, has been elected leader of the provincial NDP in Newfoundland and Labrador, and immediately set his eyes on a provincial election expected in the fall.

“Shake off the shackles of the same old, same old and do something that’s going to make a difference around here,” McCurdy told cheering delegates to the NDP convention after his first-ballot win.

Of 1,298 ballots cast for the leadership, McCurdy took 889 votes while Goosney had 299 and Bruce finished with 110.

McCurdy replaces Lorraine Michael, who has



Earle McCurdy is the past president of Unifor-FFAW.

led the party since 2006. The party won five seats in the 2011 provincial election.

McCurdy pledged to rebuild the party as a credible alternative in the coming election. 

Transit drivers win greater protection

The ongoing campaign to better protect front-line transit operators and taxi drivers passed an important milestone in February.

Bill S-221, An Act to amend the Criminal Code (assaults against public transit operators), became law on February 25. The bill amends the Criminal Code to require judges to consider a transit driver's occupation as an "aggravating circumstance" in sentencing.

Unifor and its partners have been working for years on a campaign to better protect drivers. Senator Bob Runciman introduced S-221 as a private members' bill spring in spring 2014.

"Everyone should be safe at work," said Jerry Dias, Unifor National President.

"Bus and taxi drivers provide a very valuable public service, and they shouldn't have to face violence in their workplace."

Vancouver transit

operator and Unifor Local 111 President Nathan Woods testified before a Senate committee that approximately 2,000 bus driver assaults are reported each year in Canada.

Canadian taxi drivers had the highest rate of occupational-related homicide in the country in 2011, even higher than police officers.

Unifor says that changes to the Criminal Code alone will not eliminate

workplace assaults.

Local 111 is working with the employer to implement a trial period with a safety shield between drivers and passengers.

Combined with a "Violent Incident Prevention" program to identify potentially violent situations and strategies to defuse them, transit operators are actively involved in shaping workplace health and safety.



Good jobs are possible

A recent hiring surge at the Ford plant in Oakville shows that when labour, management and the government work together, good jobs can be created and young people can look forward to their future with some optimism, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

"This is good news for the thousands of families who depend on these good paying jobs," Dias said at a

recent ceremony marking a new generation of the Edge to be produced at the plant.

The new generation of the Edge crossover has boosted employment at the plant by 1,400 to 4,500, which Dias said is good for young people in the area, and shows young people across the country that good jobs can be created with a little effort.

"Young people are feeling betrayed. So many jobs that



Unifor National President Jerry Dias was on hand with Local 707 members to for the launch of the new Ford Edge.

are being created today are precarious and part-time," he said.

"There is a better way to do things."

Dias pointed out that

good jobs, such as the ones in auto manufacturing, create more goods jobs elsewhere and raise needed tax money to pay for public services.

Unifor members win journalism award

Unifor members at the Toronto Star and the Winnipeg Free Press won a prestigious award recently for their work looking into the Jian Ghomeshi charges, sexual assault on campuses and the treatment of indigenous peoples.

"The Toronto Star's reporting on the Jian Ghomeshi scandal and sexual assault on college campuses has sparked a social dialogue that will change Canadian society

forever," said Unifor Economist Jim Stanford, one of the judges for the 2015 Canadian Hillman Prize.

Toronto Star investigative editor Kevin Donovan worked with freelancer Jesse Brown to uncover sexual harassment allegations against Ghomeshi, then a prominent CBC Radio host, while Star journalists Jayme Poisson, Emily Mathieu and Randy Risling followed up with an investigation into

sexual assaults on Canadian campuses.

"The series struck a chord, unleashing a long-overdue recognition throughout society of the terrible reality of sexual assault. This investigative journalism exemplifies what the Hillman Prize stands for," Stanford said.

Kevin Rollason of the Winnipeg Free Press was runner up for his "While He Waited" series about the senseless death of

Brian Sinclair, a disabled, indigenous man who died from a treatable infection after being ignored for 34 hours in a Winnipeg hospital emergency waiting room.

The winners of the award, to be handed out March 12 will share \$3,000 and travel to New York City for the U.S. Hillman Prize ceremony on May 5.

Rollason will receive \$1,000.