



## TEAMSTERS CANADA RAIL CONFERENCE

### CONFÉRENCE FERROVIAIRE DE TEAMSTERS CANADA

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# TCRC PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## A message from the President

Sisters and Brothers,

First off, I wish to acknowledge the efforts of one of our members from Division 390 (Windsor, Ontario), Laura Soutar-Hasulo. Sister Soutar-Hasulo has invested a large portion of her time and efforts in a "Hate has No Home Here" campaign. This campaign is directed against hatred, racism, discrimination and violence against minorities in Canada. I urge you to read her letter included in this report, Laura's initiative is an example for the entire TCRC and every other patriotic Canadian. The TCRC website contains links to various media interviews Sister Soutar-Hasulo has participated in to explain this campaign (<http://www.teamstersrail.ca/News.html>).

As I write this report the International Brotherhood of Teamsters is holding its thirtieth annual convention (June 22-24). The TCRC has thirteen Delegates attending this virtual convention which were elected this past April. This convention will help determine the direction of the IBT for the next five years, including nominations for IBT Executive positions. After twenty-two years as IBT General President, James P. Hoffa will not run for re-election. Nominations for IBT Executive positions including General President will take place at the convention, in the event that multiple candidates receive the required support of the Delegates, we may see an election for these positions later on this year. Every TCRC member in good standing will receive a ballot if an election does occur.

On the subject of elections and conventions, our TCRC Division Quadrennial elections will take place this fall. These elections will determine your Division Officers and the Delegate(s) to the TCRC convention in September 2022. The Division Quadrennial elections are essential to the administration and functionality of Our Union, it is important to elect the best member for the position in your division. It's equally important that members like you are willing and able to stand for election and exercise your right to nominate and vote. The democratic principles that

the TCRC was founded on hinges on your participation in the process. The Delegate(s) your division elects to represent you at our TCRC convention in 2022 will help determine the direction and leadership of the TCRC for the following four years.

On the contract front, Huron Central Railway ratified its first Collective agreement after certifying the TCRC as their bargaining agent in 2019. Congratulations to our bargaining committee and members at HCR.

Lastly, with the decrease in the amount of Covid infections around Canada, it appears that the end of the pandemic may be in sight. I believe that through the hard work of Our Union at every level and the co-operation of our membership, we minimized the Covid infections and transmission of the virus in our workplaces. I want to thank all of you who have invested the effort into keeping your fellow members, families and yourselves safe and healthy during this pandemic. I am hopeful that this may be the last report in which Covid is still a relevant topic.

In Solidarity,

Lyndon Isaak  
President – TCRC

## Executive Board Activities

The TCRC Executive Board met April 20 and 21, 2021:

- The Executive Board discussed and approved the creation of an interactive on-line education module for Local Chairs level 1 as a pilot project.
- The Executive Board reviewed and approved the 2021 TCRC budget.
- Discussion regarding upcoming IBT convention.
- Discussion regarding Field Hill investigation, TSB had announced the expected release of their final report in Spring of 2021. We have received nothing to date.
- The Executive Board was briefed on a proposed trial merger between the ONTC GCA and CNC LE GCA.
- The next Executive Board meeting is scheduled for July 2021.

## Teamsters Canada Youth Committee

The TCYC has had some issues with the nation-wide lock downs as many members were unable to attend in person meeting. Some meetings were canceled, and others postponed. As everyone is aware the pandemic has caused issues for Teamsters across Canada. Last year we lost 8000 members jobs. The fight goes on though, this time through video conferencing. Many parts of the business world have moved towards video conferencing and that includes lobbying section of Teamsters. Instead of meeting in person for a full week, our meetings are more spread out and on certain days.

The committee met February 10<sup>th</sup> and March 25<sup>th</sup> to decide what issues we would be lobbying the government MP's for, and I am happy to say that the fatigue and risk management plan for rail workers was at the forefront. On the day of March 29<sup>th</sup>, we had our meetings with as many MPs as possible. This included the Minister of Transportation Omar Alghabra, the Minister of Labor Filomena Tassi, among others. The Ministers were happy to meet with Teamsters' representatives and encouraged follow up conversations specific for the unions side of the changes for the fatigue and risk management.

The Teamsters Canada Youth Committee is going through some changes quite quickly as some members have "aged out" or moved on, compounded with the restrictions of the pandemic, means the next few years will have many new members from across Canada Join and shape a new Committee. I look forward to these new times as I push for the new youth Committee By-laws and Rail Representation.

In solidarity,



Sheldon King  
TCYC Representative for the Rail Conference

## The Ripple Effect

My journey into the shared humanity of Canadians.

Well. Here I sit, completely astounded at how far one act of kindness can travel. After 35 years on the railroad, many of those years representing my fellow Teamsters brothers and sisters as a Local Chair, my outspoken nature is well known. I have never been one to stay silent on matters that affect my members, or people in general.

This story began in April, when we had events and words from a local politician that led to some acts of anti-Asian racism, discrimination, and harassment in my small town. Speaking with friends, we were at a loss as to how we could show our fellow Essex County Canadians of Asian descent that there were more good people than bad, and that we will not stand for hate of any kind. We came up with the idea of a lawn sign.

Discussing it further, we thought of all the marginalized people in Canada who suffer discrimination, xenophobia, and racism on a daily basis. We decided to make our sign all encompassing, non-political, and a visually appealing symbol of peace. The sign maker came up with an incredible design. The large peace symbol and hands of various colours representing different aspects of our people, all making the Peace sign. Of course, one hand is the Canadian Flag because it does not matter what we look like, who we love, how we worship or don't, or how we identify, we are all Canadians deserving to live a life in peace, free from discrimination, and free from hate.

So we ordered 100 signs. I made my fellow Teamster husband take a photo of me with the sign in our yard and I posted it to Facebook, asking people to join me in showing support for our community and declaring that "Hate Has No Home Here". From that one post, we sold all 100 signs in less than a day. Somebody forwarded it to a local Radio morning show host, and suddenly I was being interviewed live on the air. We ordered 200 more signs.

Then CTV and CBC called and suddenly they had me on their shows talking about our sign. I had to create a Facebook group that first day because the requests for signs were coming in fast and furious.

These signs really resonate with people. Good people, who watch and read the news in horror, not knowing how they can make a difference. For years, it seems the voices getting the most media attention are the negative ones. Hate groups have proliferated, but good people far outnumber the bad in our country. This sign may be a small gesture, but it gives a voice to people who are tired of intolerance.

I would load my truck up, post on the page where and when I would be selling them in random parking lots, and the people came. Boy, did they show up. I have sold 1000 signs here in Windsor/Essex and I am waiting for an order of six hundred more.

When the London terrorist attack occurred, my Facebook page was inundated with requests for signs and questions from people in London about how they could start a movement like that in their town. The artist who designed the sign, does not make money from it and gave me the files to send to any community who would like to print their own signs. Since they wouldn't have them in time for the vigil and the March of All Faiths, I loaded up my truck and posted on the page that signs were coming to London. I sold 127 signs in about an hour and was able to donate \$315 to Fayeze, the 9 year old survivor whose entire family was murdered.

From that, CBC radio had me speak to a whole slew of morning radio show hosts across Ontario. From those interviews, the page has been contacted by people all over wanting to start this movement in their cities.

So far, Sarnia, London, Milton, Thunder Bay, Mississauga, Brampton, Caledon, Barrie, Halifax, Oakville, and Edmonton, as well as a group in Utah, have all started their own movement of embracing our shared humanity. Some places have created a different graphic for their signs.

Even churches have purchased our sign. A convent just contacted me and ordered 25 signs for their order. People have reached out from all over our country, telling me how much it means to them to drive around and see the signs displayed on lawns, in gardens, and the windows of businesses.

We had a same sex couple in Windsor wake up to an 8 page diatribe attached to their door, listing obscure biblical references stating that their sin is worthy of death and how they will burn in hell. That neighbourhood contacted me and invited me to come bring signs. Every house on their street and the neighbouring streets put up their signs overnight so the couple opened their door in the morning to a sea of signs, declaring support and love.

I am thankful that I have a good, union, job that allows me to be able to purchase all these signs up front for \$8.00. I sell them for \$10 and the profits from my signs are for the library to purchase children's books written by diverse authors. Teaching empathy from a young age is the way to change our world.

No matter the graphics chosen by each city and town, the message is the same across Canada.

Let us say it loud and clear:

**HATE HAS NO HOME HERE.**

Laura Soutar-Hasulo  
Local Chair  
Division 390  
Teamsters Canada Rail Conference  
Windsor, Ontario



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...founded by the BR&CF

