

Mining & Maritime ALERT

Canadian steelworkers bring smelter protest to New Zealand



**Canadian members of the
United Steelworkers are
visiting New Zealand in March
2012 to gain support for their
struggle against contracting
out by their employer –
Rio Tinto Alcan**

Invercargill meeting

Thursday 8 March
South Lounge,
Invercargill Working
Mens Club, 154 Esk
Street, 7 PM

For more info contact
Trevor Hobbs (EPMU) on
mobile 0275900061 or
Ray Fife (MUNZ) on
mobile 0274475317

Wellington event

Friday 9 March
12.30–1.30 PM
Peaceful assembly at Rio
Tinto's NZ head office
at the ASB Building,
2 Hunter Street,
Wellington.

For more info contact
Paul Tolich (EPMU) on
mobile 0275935595

**Supported by
Mining & Maritime
Initiative New Zealand**



New Zealand mining & maritime workers support USW

Canadian United Steel Workers (USW) officials Guy Farrell and Mark Matais are to visit New Zealand in March 2012 to highlight the plight of 780 locked out aluminium smelter workers in Quebec. The visits of the two USW delegates are part of a campaign to gather global support.

The USW delegation will visit Invercargill on Thursday 8 March and meet with local workers.

The nearby Tiwai Point Smelter has a majority shareholding by the same company Rio Tinto Alcan (RTA) that has locked out the Canadian workers.

The following day Friday 9 March they will lead a peaceful assembly at Rio Tinto's New Zealand Office at the ASB Building in Wellington.

Their visit is being jointly sponsored by the Engineering Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) and the Maritime Union of New Zealand (MUNZ) who are affiliated to the USW through the Mining and Maritime Initiative.

EPMU Senior National Industrial Officer Paul Tolich says the goal is to get RTA management to lift the lock out and return to negotiations around sub-contracting issues with the USW workers. USW delegate Mark Matais is the President of the USW Local 9495, District 5 Branch based at RTA's Aluminium Smelter in Alma, Quebec. He and fellow workers have been locked out since 1 January 2012 after workers rejected a company contract, in a harsh struggle that has attracted global attention.

RTA management is trying to contract out jobs at the Alma smelter, meaning that existing employees could end up working alongside workers who would be contracted in at half the pay rate of unionised employees. The USW is not totally opposed to sub-contracting but wants stricter conditions placed around its use by RTA. The Canadian dispute has parallels with the current Ports of Auckland action involving Maritime Union of New Zealand members. MUNZ National Secretary Joe Fleetwood says the Canadian workers are facing the same tactics Ports of Auckland management are using against union members. "Employers are attempting to pressure their workforces into accepting contracting out around the world, and that's why we have to all stand together for secure jobs."

Support the Canadian workers – check out USW website
<http://www.usw.ca/workplace/campaigns/campaigns/rio>

