

NEWS RELEASE

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STEELWORKERS WON'T ALLOW GUTTING OF ACTRA CONTRACT **Million-member union supports performers in negotiations**

TORONTO - With more than one million active and retired members, the United Steelworkers (USW) is in support of the Alliance of Canadian Cinema, Television and Radio Artists (ACTRA), during the performers' union's difficult negotiations with producers for a new film and television agreement.

"The USW will not stand idly by and allow ACTRA's contract to be gutted," said International President Leo W. Gerard. "Producers should know that picking a fight with ACTRA means picking a fight with us."

Ken Neumann, USW Canadian National Director added: "I had the opportunity to attend the first days of ACTRA's negotiations with producers. Not only is the ACTRA bargaining committee extremely well prepared, the fact that dozens of film and TV stars took the time to attend the first days of bargaining in support of their union says volumes about the depth of support ACTRA can count on in these talks."

"Major rollbacks and concessionary proposals from producers are not the way to a new agreement, and ACTRA is right to refuse such demands outright," said Gerard. "I know I speak for all Steelworkers when I say I found the producers' demands insulting. We are following negotiations closely, and we're on call to assist our actor friends in any way we can."

ACTRA and the producers began negotiations for a new agreement on October 23. Producer demands include pay cuts of 10 to 25 per cent, gutting of performer residuals, and erosion of working conditions. The current Independent Production Agreement expires Dec. 31, 2006.

USW and ACTRA have a formalized strategic alliance that includes working together on public policy, organizing, education and mutual support in the case of labour disputes. The alliance was signed at the USW International Convention in April, 2005.

In Canada, the USW represents more than 280,000 men and women working in every sector of the economy.

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