RWU Co-Sponsoring National Book Tour to Promote Rail Safety

Plans are in the works for a series of events that revolve around a new book recently published by Bruce Campbell. RWU is partnering with allies in the labor and environmental movements, and has conducted a series of presentations and meetings in Baltimore, MD, Washington, DC, Albany, NY, the Twin Cities, MN, Seattle, and Olympia, WA., to explore the issue of rail safety, in the wake of the train wreck and disaster at Lac-Mégantic, Quebec, nearly six years ago on July 6th, 2013. As this issue of The Highball goes to press, events are scheduled for Chicago and Springfield, IL; St. Louis and Kansas City, MO; and Des Moines, IA. Later this year, plans are for a west coast tour. See the RWU website for more information about the tour and upcoming events.

The Lac-Mégantic rail disaster is a tragedy unparalleled in Canadian history. It resulted in major loss of life, massive environmental destruction and the evisceration of a small town. Blame landed squarely on the shoulders of three front-line employees of the Montreal, Maine, and Atlantic Railway Company. But a jury acquitted them. Lac-Mégantic is the story of a rail industry writing its own rules, a booming US oil industry fighting any obstacles to selling their dangerous product, and a rogue US railway operator cutting corners to make his fortune. At another level, the story is about a federal government blinded by its own free market ideology, fixated on making Canada an energy superpower, and compliant bureaucrats failing to protect the public interest.

At the heart of it all is a small, tight-knit community torn apart and struggling to recover. There is unimaginable loss, broken lives and families, and individual and collective trauma. But there is also healing, solidarity, commemoration, remembrance, and the determination to rebuild.

This book uncovers the truth about Lac-Mégantic. It includes first person interviews with many of the key players, analysis of the corporate executives and the companies involved, an examination of the complex world of transport safety regulation in Canada, and an account of the trials of the three accused. Order your copy today, available from RWU online at www.railworkersunited.storenvy.com.