

4th BIENNIAL CONVENTION

Working People Working Together

November 24-28, 1997



Document 1

TO ALIVE
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ORGANIZING IN A COLD CLIMATE

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to show the need to dramatically increase union organizing efforts and suggest measures to be taken toward that end, despite the cold political climate inaugurated by the Harris Conservative Government.

With “restructuring” -- downsizing, outsourcing and privatization -- now impacting on the public and broader public sector workers in a manner as devastating as that which impacted on the manufacturing sector workers several years ago, it is time to re-evaluate where we are headed.

With each passing year the crisis in our society seems to get worse. We are either in a recession or supposedly recovering from one. Yet, while the economic indicators such as the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) look good and profits are up, the lives of the vast majority of the population aren't doing so well. They need a union more than ever before.

At the same time the corporate sector have used their considerable resources -- political and media connections -- along with raw power to both discipline the workforce and make it more compliant.

Economic insecurity, mass unemployment, low wage work, temporary and part-time work abound. Social services are either being cut or eroded. Programs fundamental to our quality of life, such as medicare and public education, are under attack.

Still not content, the corporate community and their government, the Harris Conservatives, have moved to attack the basic protective organizations of working people -- their unions. We have only to examine the amendments to the *Labour Relations Act*, known as Bill 7 and the initial provisions of Bill 136, impacting on broader public sector workers and the teachers' legislation, to understand the seriousness of the situation.

Labour's response to the Harris Government's attacks has been and continues to be on many fronts: from mass protests in city after city in Ontario to increased membership education; from negotiations, workplace occupations and strikes to lobbying; from health and safety and workers' compensation to fundamental equity issues; from demonstrations to conventions where our directions are clarified and our commitment to solidarity strengthened.

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This policy paper recognizes the validity of all these efforts. But it advocates a renewed commitment to organizing the non-unionized workforce. It calls on all of us to make organizing a key priority despite the hostile political climate as is evidenced by the anti-worker employment and labour relations legislation of the Harris Government.

Part 1 of this policy document provides the essential figures on organizing in the province of Ontario over the 1990's. While these statistics are shown in a way which enables us to follow major legislative changes, other factors are also important, such as the state of the economy, the consequent employment levels and the political climate.

Part 2 of this paper briefly examines the state of labour law and our desire for reforms such as those contained in the NDP Government's Bill 40 and the need for broader-based bargaining mechanisms. While change is necessary, it is argued that it is critical to increase our organizing efforts now. We can't wait for legislative reform.

Part 3 provides an overview of the changing profile of employment in reference to union organizing, the expansion of various sectors of the economy and key trends in employment.

Part 4 provides a brief overview of new organizing strategies and tactics that have proven successful, either in Ontario or in other jurisdictions.

The policy paper concludes with an Action Plan.

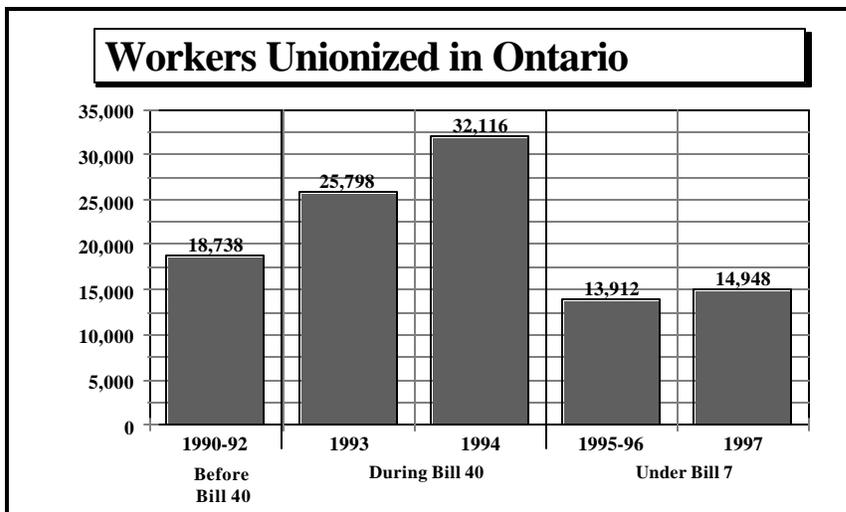
PART I

THE FIGURES SHOW A STARK PICTURE

Statistics from the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB), provide us with the most accurate count available of the number of workers organized in Ontario over the last several years. For purposes of illustration, the following exhibit compares the number of workers organized in Ontario before the NDP labour law reforms known as Bill 40, the number organized under Bill 40, and the drop in organizing since the enactment of Bill 7 under the Harris Conservative Government.

Exhibit 1 shows that if we average the number of workers organized (certified) over three years before Bill 40, namely 1990, 1991 and 1992, it amounts to 18,738 for each year. Under the Bill 40 reforms and despite a severe recession wherein organizing figures usually undergo decline, the figures show a dramatic increase to 25,798 and then to 32,116 for 1993 and 1994 respectively.

EXHIBIT 1



? Bill 7 figures are based on November 1995 to November 1996. All others are based on the OLRB's fiscal year April 1 to March 31.

? 1997 projected for full year from first three quarters.

Under Bill 7, not only were the many significant reforms of Bill 40 repealed, but legislative amendments were enacted which made gaining a union (certification) more difficult and getting rid of a union (decertification) easier. These legislative changes constitute the major reason for the number of new workers organized in Ontario between November 1995 and November 1996 to decline dramatically to **13,912**. 1997 saw only a marginal improvement with certifications totaling **14,948**.

A decline in the rate of organizing the unorganized can also be seen in percentage terms. Exhibit 2 below compares the period prior to Bill 40, the period under Bill 40 and the period of Bill 7. Only this time, rather than use the actual number of workers, the Exhibit shows the rate of organizing or certification.

**EXHIBIT 2
CERTIFICATION SUCCESS RATES**

BEFORE BILL 40 1990-91-92	BILL 40 1993	BILL 7 1995-96
67%*	73%	60%
	1994	1997
	77%	63%

* average per year

There have been a number of changes to the certification process, but the main legal mechanism used to lower union organizing rates under Bill 7 was the overriding of a card majority system of certification with the addition of a secret ballot vote.

In a province of over eleven million people, 31.5% of whom are unionized, the minimum number of newly organized members needed to maintain the current percentage of the workforce organized has been calculated to be **30,000**.

As the previous Exhibit shows, only in 1994 did unions in Ontario organize slightly more than this number. Indeed, experience from other jurisdictions demonstrates that when the barriers to unionization are lowered, as under Bill 40, an increasing share of the workforce exercises their democratic right to unionize. No doubt this upward trend in certifications was a factor in the Harris Government's decision to repeal Bill 40.

**EXHIBIT 3
THE DECLINE IN CERTIFICATIONS
UNDER BILL 7**

	1995-96	1997
Workers Certified	13,912	14,948
Minus Raids	- 3,746	- 3,282
<hr/> New Workers Certified	10,166	11,666

New Workers Certified	Number Required*
1996 - 10,166	30,000
1997 - 11,666	30,000

* To maintain existing union density.

If one were to add the increased number of decertifications to these figures **the net number of new workers certified in 1995-96 was only 8,052. In 1997 the figure is only marginally higher at 9,735.**

The following Exhibit provides a snapshot picture of the number of workers decertified. For purposes of consistency the Exhibit will again display the relevant figures using the same format, namely, decertifications before Bill 40, under Bill 40 and then under Bill 7.

EXHIBIT 4

WORKERS DECERTIFIED IN ONTARIO

BEFORE BILL 40 1990-91-92	BILL 40 1993	BILL 7 1995-96
1,246*	2,004	2,114
	1994	1997
	978	1,931**

* average per year

** projected for full year from 1,690 to August 27, 1997.

Beyond the actual number of workers decertified, an examination of the decertification rates is helpful in order to better assess the seriousness of the challenge we all face. Exhibit 5 below documents the increased rate of decertification under Bill 7 as compared to three years prior to Bill 40 and then under Bill 40.

EXHIBIT 5 DECERTIFICATION RATES IN ONTARIO

BEFORE BILL 40 1990-91-92	BILL 40 1993	BILL 7 1995-96
43%	48%	68%
	1994	1997
	36%	65%

As Exhibit 5 shows, decertification rates actually increased during the recession of the early 1990s and then fell under the Bill 40 labour law reforms to 36%. In 1995-96 the “success” rates for decertification rose to 68%. It dropped marginally in 1997 to 65%.

The experience of organizing and decertification under Bill 7 for 1995-96 and for 1997 can be summarized in the following manner:

EXHIBIT 6

UNIONS UNDER BILL 7

CERTIFICATION APPLICATIONS	?	48%
WORKERS CERTIFIED	?	55%
WORKERS DECERTIFIED	?	107%

PART 2

ORGANIZING & LABOUR LAW REFORM

For many decades the OFL and its affiliated unions have called for labour law reform. Key demands of our agenda were met by the NDP Government’s Bill 40. These include:

- ? expedited procedures and interim relief for workers illegally fired while organizing;
- ? access to third party property for organizing and picketing;
- ? the consolidating of bargaining units where there was one union and one employer;
- ? quick access to first agreement arbitration;
- ? successor rights for workers upon the sale of a business;
- ? the right to join a union in the agricultural sector;
- ? just cause protection for workers following certification as well as during strikes and lockouts; and
- ? prohibitions on the use of scabs.

It is difficult to underestimate the importance of these reforms, particularly in the context of the Harris Government. At the same time, past OFL conventions have properly recognized the need to

fundamentally restructure the current model of collective bargaining.

This is because in order to enhance workers' rights and improve their standard of living, wages must be taken out of competition. Solidarity amongst workers is directly undermined by wage competition between workers -- individually, at the level of a single enterprise, between service or goods providers within a sector and between sectors. In the absence of solidarity between workers facing essentially common circumstances, collective bargaining and trade unions are rendered increasingly powerless as wages of the non-unionized drag down those of the unionized. Nowhere does the harmful impact of wage competition exhibit itself more clearly than in the low wage service sector.

This is why in the OFL's 1989 convention document, ***THE UNEQUAL BARGAIN***, we documented how workplace-by-workplace collective bargaining structures established in large manufacturing during the 1930s and codified in contemporary labour law, did little for small workplaces or for workers in the contingent workforce (part-time, seasonal and contractual employment). These forms of employment are mainly, though not exclusively, concentrated in the private service sector. The 1989 convention and those subsequent to it agreed that "the small workplace sector needed a basic change in the model of collective bargaining," and that the OFL should take whatever initiatives it could in the direction of broader-based bargaining.

The OFL has since carried this message in all its submissions to government on this topic. In 1991 and 1992 we lobbied for a task force to be struck on broader-based bargaining. In 1993 we commissioned our own major study of broader-based bargaining, with particular emphasis on the Quebec decree system entitled ***Broader-based Bargaining and the Decree System: THE BIG PICTURE***.

At our last convention, in 1995, we passed a policy document entitled ***FIGHT BACK! Defending Working People's Gains***. The themes of this document were both the need for labour legislative reform and that the legislative victories of past decades in Ontario were not handed down from on high.

Rather:

Workers in the public and broader public sector, like workers in the private sector, have had to constantly struggle in order to maintain, protect and expand their rights. Collective bargaining for public sector employees has been subject to an almost continuous assault.

At the same time we recognized that legislative gains were not always on the agenda and that at various times in the past the employer community was able to roll back reforms. We see this again today with the repeal of Bill 40 and the enactment of the Harris Government's Bill 7. But despite such set backs, the labour movement maintains its view that we must continue the fight for labour law reform.

Currently the kinds of legislative reforms needed to help workers defend themselves are not on the government's agenda. Indeed, we are faced with further attacks by the Harris Conservative Government on employment legislation. The Bill 7 amendments to the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* have now been compounded by the tabling of Bill 136 which contains severe restrictions on broader public sector employees and their unions. As first tabled, this legislation was so restrictive that rather than extend free collective bargaining it attacked the arbitration system utilized by those workers denied the right to strike and replaced independent arbitrators with commissioners handpicked by the Premier's office. The unfairness of this legislation was further demonstrated by the fact that employees

could even be denied a hearing in this process. Nor was an appeal by employees and their unions originally allowed under Bill 136.

The government's anti-worker policies are set in place for purposes of rolling back as many gains as possible, from progressive labour legislation; to compensation levels; to pay equity; to health and safety. As we noted in the **FIGHT BACK** policy paper at our last convention:

The Harris Government only understands raw power. It will only change its course if it is countered with the united power of a mobilized social movement.

This has recently proven correct. Labour's fight back actions, including the strike votes taken in hundreds of broader public sector workplaces across Ontario were central in compelling the Harris Government to recind the worst provisions of Bill 136.

This reality also means that while we support labour law reform we have to continue our fight back actions in order to defend ourselves against other attacks such as Bill 160, the teachers legislation. Far from gaining progressive reforms like broader-based bargaining legislation, we are confronted with the challenge of building our unions by organizing unorganized workers despite legislative hurdles. The decline in the number of newly organized workers from over 32,000 in 1994 to a low of 11,666 in 1997, as shown in Exhibit 3, must be halted.

We cannot wait for progressive labour law reforms to be granted by some future government. With increased determination and resources we must start now to dramatically increase union organizing.

PART 3 ORGANIZING & THE CHANGING PROFILE OF EMPLOYMENT

For union organizing to be successful in the long run, not only are good labour relations, expanded resources and success proven tactics important, but so is an awareness of the changing profile of employment. While a detailed examination of all the changes are beyond the scope of this policy paper, a brief snapshot of key changes follows.

Exhibit 7 compares paid employment by sector to union coverage by sector.

The first thing we see in this exhibit is the divergence between the sizes of various sectors of paid employment versus the actual numbers and rates of union coverage. Most dramatic is the large (and growing) private service sector employment on the one hand and the low level of unionization on the other (12%).

The private service sector is also one with a considerable number of small workplaces. Here contingent employment is rampant. Exhibit 8 shows key trends in types of employment in Ontario.

EXHIBIT 7
PAID EMPLOYMENT AND UNION COVERAGE IN ONTARIO
(ESTIMATES, 1996)

	PAID EMPLOYMENT (1,000S)	UNION COVERAGE (1,000S)	ESTIMATED COVERAGE RATE
Manufacturing & Resources	974	390	40%
Transportation & Communications	248	149	60%
Construction	169	95	56%
Private Service Sector	2,302	266	12%
Broader Public Sector	755	503	67%
Total	4,448	1,403	31.5%

Sources: figures compiled from Statistics Canada, Ministry of Labour,
and Broader Public Sector Secretariat

EXHIBIT 8
TRENDS IN TYPES OF EMPLOYMENT IN
ONTARIO 1976 AND 1997 (7 MONTHS)

	1976	1997
Part-Time	13.4%	19.2%
Self Employed	10.3%	16.9%
Full-Time	86.6%	80.8%

Source: Statistics Canada / Labour & Household Surveys
Analysis.

Small workplaces of 1 to 19 employees have the highest ratio of women - 53%, and of youth - 22%. Immigrants and people of colour are also highly represented in this sector.

This sector therefore represents a considerable challenge for organizers. Nonetheless there is

potential for successful union organizing in at

least significant parts of this sector, despite the lack of progressive legislative change.

If the private service sector has the lowest level of union coverage it is somewhat understandable given its expansion over recent decades and the already noted difficulties in organizing. But this is not the case for the second lowest area of coverage shown in Exhibit 7, namely manufacturing and resources. Here recent decades have seen a decline in coverage. In part this is due to the expansion of newer manufacturing sectors such as plastics and electronics which remain overwhelmingly non-union, but there is still a surprising number of unorganized workplaces in traditional industries from auto parts to mining.

In both cases -- the private service sector and primary industries -- the union movement as a whole has had difficulties in organizing in new employment areas.

The overall figure for union coverage in Ontario is 31.5%, just under that for Canada as a whole.

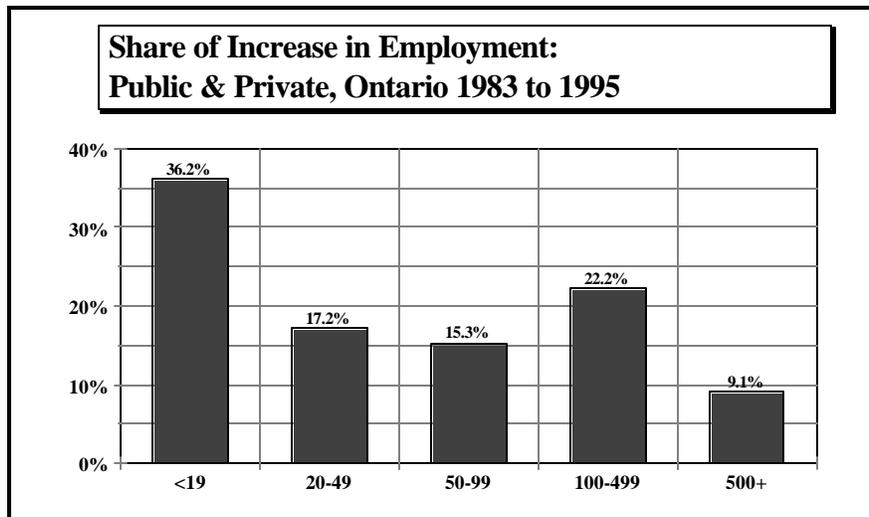
Exhibit 9 shows the share of employment by employer size. The dramatic growth of annual employment in the small workplaces in the private service sector is shown in the following graph (Exhibit 10). Here the average annual change in employment is shown providing a capsule view of the size of workplaces wherein most employment growth can be found.

**EXHIBIT 9
EMPLOYMENT TRENDS IN ONTARIO:
PUBLIC & PRIVATE (1983-1995)**

Employer Size	Share of Total Employment in 1995	Average Annual Change in Employment 1983-1995
1 - 19	21.1%	36.2%
20 - 49	10.0%	17.3%
50 - 99	7.8%	15.2%
100 - 499	15.2%	22.2%
500 +	45.9%	9.1%
TOTAL	100%	100%

Source: 1983-1995 LEAP file, Statistics Canada (unpublished)

EXHIBIT 10



Source: 1983-1995 LEAP file, Statistics Canada (unpublished)

The net annual increase in small workplaces is dramatic. If we combine workplaces of 1 - 19 employees with those of 20 - 49 employees, the annual growth totals (53%). While this growth speaks mainly to the private service sector, it is not exclusively so. Small workplaces have grown in

other sectors such as manufacturing as well. With policies of privatization and downsizing on the part of the provincial government, smaller workplaces can also be expected to rise as a percent of broader public sector employment.

While recognizing where most employment growth is located we should not lose sight of the fact that most working people can still be found in medium and large places of employment. So the point here is not to ignore medium and large workplaces, quite the contrary. The point is that most employment growth is in smaller workplaces and as a labour movement we cannot let this continue without unionization, if only because workers' low incomes in this large and growing sector will otherwise undermine the wages and working conditions of everyone.

PART 4 NEW ORGANIZING TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

The first part of this document provided evidence of the decline in organizing due to the unfavourable political climate and accompanying restrictive legislation. The second section provided a picture of the trends in the economy and employment that impact on organizing.

It is in this context that the issues of union strategy and tactics must be viewed. The intent here is not to provide all the answers, but rather to question whether traditional approaches to organizing are still appropriate in a changed political and legal environment and to suggest some alternatives.

Faced with a cold, indeed hostile, external environment for organizing, the position presented here is that unions must now focus their energies on the one element of the organizing process over which they have control -- their own strategies and tactics.

This doesn't mean we should ignore legislative reform -- only that we can't wait for it.

It also means we need to go beyond the traditional campaigns most unions engaged in before Bill 7 repealed the card majority system of certification, automatic access to first agreement arbitration and

other significant provisions out of the *Labour Relations Act*. As we are all too familiar, Bill 7 imposed new restrictive provisions including a secret vote in the workplace in addition to gaining individual signatures on a union card.

This changed legislative environment, a concrete reflection of a cold and hostile political climate, merits a serious re-evaluation of organizing strategies and tactics so as to ensure we are as effective as possible.

There are a number of jurisdictions outside of Ontario that we could examine with the intent of finding new and more effective organizing strategies and tactics. Restrictive labour law amendments have been legislated against our brothers and sisters from Nova Scotia to Manitoba and Alberta. But it is in the United States where decades-long decline in the percentage of the unionized workforce has finally sparked more effective tactics.

Here we also find research that matches various union strategies and tactics to their organizing success. In *It Takes More than Housecalls: Organizing to Win with a Comprehensive Union-Building Strategy*, Kate Bronfenbrenner and Tom Juravich examine certification and first contract campaigns across the United States. They provide the first comprehensive analysis of the successes and failures of organizing strategies and tactics. Their findings suggest that union success in certification elections and in first contract negotiations depends upon using "an aggressive grassroots rank-and-file intensive strategy, building a union and acting like a union from the very beginning of a campaign."

Such tactics included:

- ? developing a large representative organizing committee;
- ? house calling at least 50% of the proposed bargaining unit;

- ? holding ten or more small group meetings;
- ? using rank-and-file volunteers from other units to do house calls;
- ? using union solidarity days (various pro-union actions);
- ? establishing a bargaining committee before the election;
- ? surveying one-on-one at least 70% of the unit about the first contract;
- ? using community labour coalitions;
- ? holding union rallies;
- ? holding union job actions; and
- ? focusing on issues of dignity and fairness, rather than only bread and butter issues.

Taken as a group, union tactics were found to have played a greater role in explaining certification election outcomes than any other group of factors including employer tactics, bargaining unit characteristics, labour legislation or the political environment.

The Bronfenbrenner and Juravich study also documents how unions were more successful where they developed “a culture of organizing that permeated every activity and structure of the union.” This included a serious commitment of staff and financial resources, the involvement of the national union and the local, training, recruitment and utilization of rank-and-file volunteers from the membership -- particularly those with similar characteristics such as occupation, age, gender, and colour to those being organized.

Finally, a “comprehensive union-building strategy” utilizing the tactics listed above is associated with **win rates of 10 to 30 percentage points higher** than the win rates in campaigns which did not utilize rank-and-file intensive tactics. In the public and broader public sector, where employer opposition was significantly less, although growing, the win rates were even higher.

Coming from outside Canada and Ontario the study’s findings need to be modified and adopted for our political and legal context. Some tactics are applicable with the appropriate modification, while others are less so. They are listed here for purposes of debate and more effective action.

The stakes are high. The growth and stability of the public and broader public sector in Ontario during the 1970s and 1980s cushioned the decline in the private sector unionization rate which had traditionally provided the base for the labour movement. Now the public and broader public sector itself is under attack with various forms of “restructuring,” such as downsizing, outsourcing and privatization.

Organizing therefore must become a key priority of the labour movement -- it can no longer be lost in one of a dozen other priorities. Unions must become more strategic -- carefully choosing which sectors they can take wages out of competition in and which sectors are better left to others. To turn around the decline in organizing unions must adopt and utilize aggressive rank-and-file tactics such as those listed above.

CONCLUSION

The examination of the latest figures on organizing in the first part of this paper made a fundamental point -- the labour movement in Ontario organized 14,948 new members in 1997. This is about half of the 30,000 new members per year needed just to maintain the current unionization rate in Ontario of

31.5%. A huge effort would be needed to help the majority of the workforce unionize and thereby gain some dignity and justice in the workplace through collective agreement protections.

Given the nature of Bill 7, the lack of prospects for progressive labour law reform and the changing profile of the economy as seen in the growth of the private service sector, unions are faced with major challenges.

In her extensive work on unions in Canada *Sisters and Solidarity*, Julie White puts the issue clearly: “If unions cannot organize in the private service sector, in small workplaces and among part-time workers, women and different ethnic groups, the decline in union membership will continue.....There needs to be what has been called ‘a fourth wave’ of unionization, equivalent to the industrial organization of the 1930s, or the public sector unionization of the late 1960s, but this time in the private service sector.”

ACTION PLAN

The Ontario Federation of Labour will assist affiliate unions to make organizing a priority by:

- ? examining and where possible adopting, the union-building strategies and rank-and-file intensive tactics noted in this policy paper;
- ? encouraging a renewed commitment of staff and financial resources to organizing;
- ? encouraging the recruitment, training and utilization of rank-and-file volunteers;
- ? continuing to lobby government, wherever possible, for progressive

labour law reforms, including changes that enable broader-based bargaining;

? holding an annual conference on a regional and/or province-wide basis to share information and experience on organizing;

? working with community activists, academics, as well as our political partner, the Ontario New Democratic Party, to expose Bad Bosses and promote a positive image of unions in the broader public;

? working to increase the participation of young workers in the labour movement by organizing in sectors of the economy where they are employed and by utilizing young workers as membership volunteers in organizing drives.

? making a special effort to organize and help those marginalized by economic “restructuring,” particularly women, youth and visible minority workers, concentrated in the small workplaces of the private service sector.

SUMMARY

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the need to dramatically increase union organizing efforts and suggest measures to be taken toward that end, despite the cold political climate inaugurated by the Harris Government.

With “restructuring” -- downsizing, outsourcing and privatization -- now impacting on the public sector workers in a manner as devastating as that which hit the private sector several years ago, it is time to re-evaluate where we are going.

PART 1

THE FIGURES SHOW A STARK PICTURE

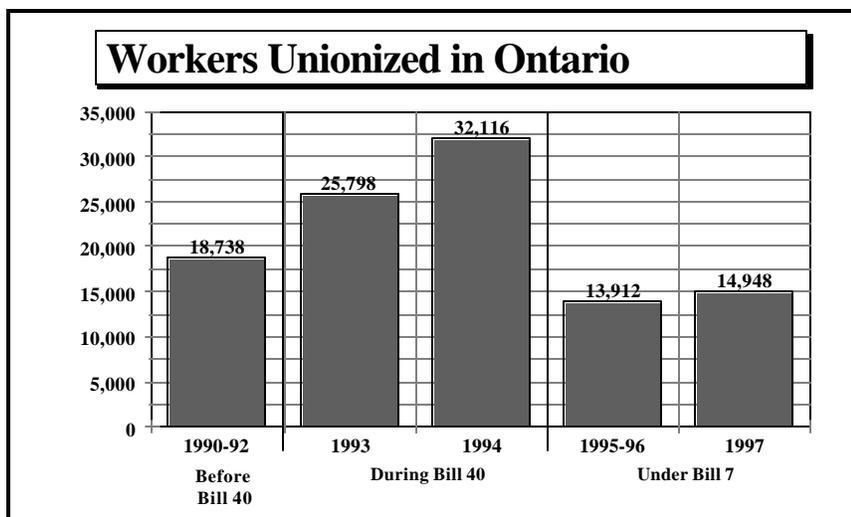
The figures from the Ontario Labour Relations Board (OLRB), show that in the three years prior to the enactment of labour law reforms under the NDP Government, namely, 1990, 1991 and 1992, the average number of newly organized union members was 18,738.

Under the labour law reforms, known as Bill 40, the number of newly organized workers increased to 25,798 in 1993 and then further increased to 32,116 in 1994.

Under Bill 7, not only were the many significant reforms of Bill 40 repealed, but legislative amendments were enacted which made gaining a union (certification) more difficult and getting rid of a union (decertification) easier. These legislative changes constitute the major reason for the number of new workers organized in Ontario between November 1995 and November 1996 to decline dramatically to **13,912**. 1997 saw only a marginal improvement, with certifications totalling **14,948**.

Exhibit 1 below tells the story in graph form.

EXHIBIT 1



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Bill 7 figures are based on November 1995 to November 1996. All others are based on the OLRB's fiscal year April 1 to March 31.

? 1997 projected for full year from first three quarters.

When we take away from these figures the number of workers changing unions (raids) the results are even lower. In 1995-96 the number of new workers certified was 10,166, in 1997 the figure is 11,666.

This amounts to less than half the number, namely 30,000 needed to maintain the current percent of the workforce that is organized (31.5%).

Indeed under Bill 7 to date the number of workers organized (certified) has averaged a decline of 55%, whereas the number of workers decertified has increased 107%.

PART 2

ORGANIZING & LABOUR LAW REFORM

This section briefly examines the state of labour law and our desire for reforms such as those contained in the NDP Government's Bill 40 and the need for broader-based bargaining.

Policy papers passed at earlier conventions described how workplace-by-workplace collective bargaining structures established in large manufacturing during the 1930s and codified in contemporary labour law, are of little benefit to employees in small workplaces or for workers in the contingent workforce (part-time, seasonal and contractual employment). These forms of employment are mainly, though not exclusively, concentrated in the private service sector.

While reforms to the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* are needed, as are structures enabling broader-based bargaining, Part 2 concluded by stating: we cannot wait for progressive labour law reform to be granted by some future government. With increased determination and resources we must start now to dramatically increase union organizing.

PART 3

ORGANIZING AND THE CHANGING PROFILE OF EMPLOYMENT

This part of the policy paper examines the size and growth of various sectors in the economy and compares them to the rate of union coverage. Most dramatic is the largest sector -- the private service sector -- with a unionization rate of only 12%.

This private service sector is largely composed of small workplaces. By 1995 over 21% of the work population was employed in workplaces of 1 to 19 employees. Workplaces of this size have also had by far the highest average annual growth in employment -- 36% between 1983 and 1995.

Contingent employment, particularly part-time, is also rampant. Women make up 53% of employment, and youth 22%. Immigrants and people of colour are also highly represented.

Taken together these factors, particularly the small size of the workplace and the contingent nature of employment, represent a considerable challenge for union organizers. Nonetheless there is potential for successful union organizing in at least significant parts of this sector.

PART 4

NEW ORGANIZING TACTICS AND STRATEGIES

Research findings demonstrate that union certification elections and first contract negotiations are more successful where "an aggressive grassroots rank-and-file intensive strategy" is used from the very beginning of a campaign.

Such tactics include:

- ? developing a large representative organizing committee;
- ? house calling at least 50% of the proposed bargaining unit;
- ? holding ten or more small group meetings;
- ? using rank-and-file volunteers from other units to do house calls;
- ? using union solidarity days (various pro-union actions);
- ? establishing a bargaining committee before the election;
- ? surveying one-on-one at least 70% of the unit about the first contract;
- ? using community labour coalitions;
- ? holding union rallies;
- ? holding union job actions; and
- ? focusing on issues of dignity and fairness, rather than only bread and butter issues.

Taken as a group, union tactics were found to have played a greater role in explaining certification election outcomes than any other group of factors including employer tactics, bargaining unit characteristics, labour legislation or the political environment.

In jurisdictions where such tactics have been utilized they have been associated with win rates of up to **30%** higher in the private sector. Their use in the

broader public sector has proven even more successful.

Coming from outside Canada and Ontario such findings need to be modified and adopted to our political and legal context. Most important they need to be tried.

Organizing must become a key priority of the labour movement -- it can no longer be lost in one of a dozen other priorities. To turn around the decline in organizing unions must adopt and utilize aggressive, rank-and-file tactics such as those outlined.

ACTION PLAN

The Ontario Federation of Labour will assist affiliate unions to make organizing a priority by:

- ? examining and where possible adopting the union-building strategies and rank-and-file intensive tactics noted in this policy paper;
- ? encouraging a renewed commitment of staff and financial resources to organizing;
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- ? continuing to lobby government, wherever possible, for progressive labour law reforms, including changes that enable broader-based bargaining;
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NOTES