

# 1999 ELECTION EDITION

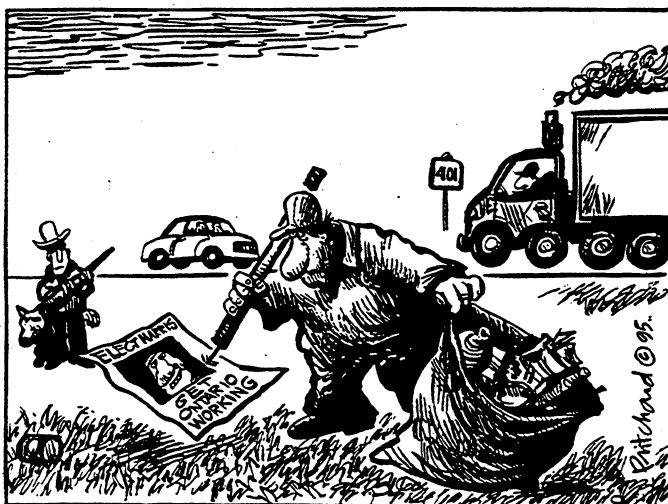
## THE COMMON SENSE REVOLUTION: 1,460 DAYS OF DESTRUCTION

FIGHT BACK FACTS

### The Harris plan

Since their election on June 8, 1995, the Harris government has followed a single-minded and senseless objective.

*They promised to make a 30% reduction in the provincial income tax rate, and balance the provincial budget at one and the same time. The goal is to shrink the size of the public sector and reduce the role of government itself. The purpose is to replace the public provision of programs and services with privatized services sold on the "free market" for whatever the traffic will bear.*



### Tax break for the rich

The lions' share of the tax cut (57%) will go to the wealthiest tax filers, that is, to the top 10%. To pay for the tax cut, the Harris government has borrowed so much money that it will add \$25 billion to Ontario's public debt. And at the same time, they are slashing public spending. By the end of 1999 Ontario's net spending on programs and

capital works will be cut from 15% of GDP to 12%, a drop of twenty percent.

### THE FOUR TORY BUDGETS

#### Economic Statements, July and November 1995

Ernie Eves announced the first round of common sense revolution cuts on July 21, 1995, adding up to \$2 billion. This cutback package included \$500

million in service and staff cuts to ministries and a 22% cut in social assistance rates.

The Tories brought down the second and most devastating hit in November 1995 when another \$3.5 billion was cut from the base of Ontario's annual spending on public

programs. Added to the July cuts, this first round totalled \$5.5 billion in cutbacks announced to the end of the fiscal year 1995-96.

Mike Harris did not cut the full \$5.5 billion. Between 1995 and 1998 he cut about \$4.5 billion from health, education and community programs. But he made the clear statement that he was prepared to cut as much

as \$8.2 billion in total if that was necessary to carry out the Common Sense Revolution. The return of growth to Ontario's economy has protected us from the full effect of the cuts needed to pay for the tax cut. The full price tag will show up whenever the next business downturn comes around again.

As the first big round of budget cuts began to bite, they had a profound effect on the Ontario economy. They knocked Ontario back into a made in Ontario recession in 1996 and delayed the recovery which arrived in the rest of Canada as a result of lower interest rates and the boom in the USA. Between August 1996 and March 1997 Ontario actually lost 37,000 jobs.

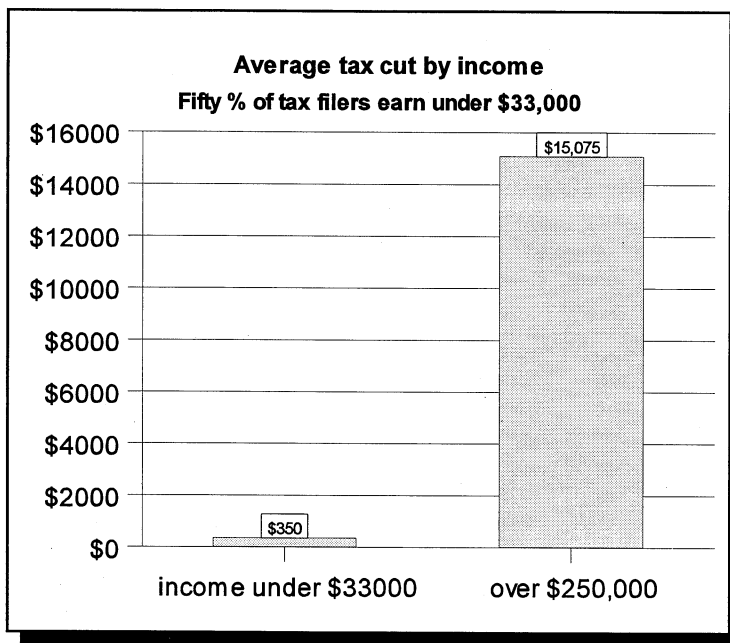
**First Budget May 1996**

The first real Harris budget re-announced the tax cut and confirmed that the total cutback plan of \$8.2 billion. Figures released under freedom of information showed clearly that the tax cut would only benefit the top 10% of taxpayers. Everybody else would see their tiny "tax break" eaten up by new user fees and charges. The economy continued to stall throughout 1996, thanks to the damage of deep spending cuts.

**Second Budget May 1997**

The Tory budget for 1997-98 came down on May 6, 1997. By now it was crystal clear that Ontario's fiscal crisis had mysteriously disappeared. But the great jobs recovery did not happen.

**Tax Savings from Harris Tax Cut,  
By Income**



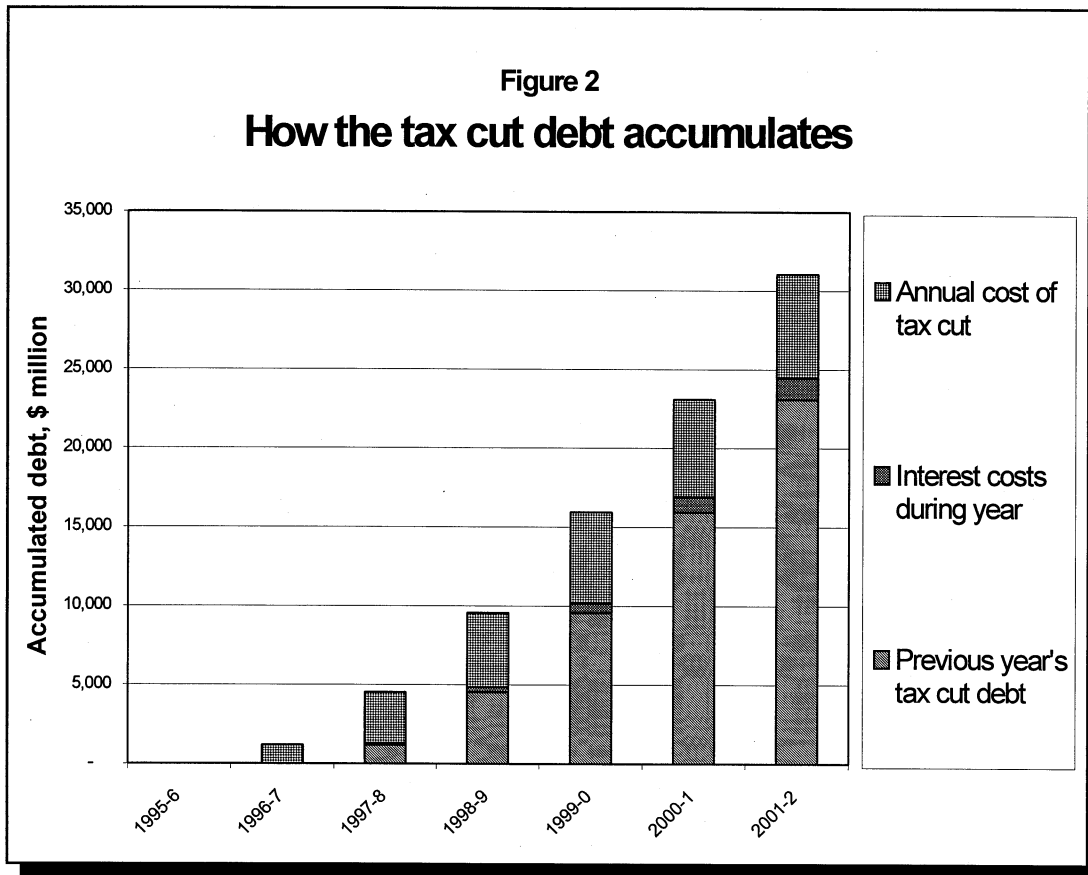
The Government admitted that it had underestimated the previous year's revenue by nearly \$2 billion. And for the coming year 1997-98 the Government deliberately understated its revenue by over \$2 billion in income tax alone.

The sole reason that Ontario still had a fiscal problem was entirely due to the \$6 billion tax cut!

By the end of 1997-98, close to \$4 billion of the \$5.5 billion of announced spending cuts were scheduled to take place.

But on the jobs front, after two full years Ontario had created only 137,000 new jobs, the majority in part-time or self-employment.

## Tory Tax Cut Adds \$30 Billion to Ontario's Debt



## THIRD TORY BUDGET - MAY 5, 1998

As the Tories came within a year of the next election, they tried to put a kinder gentler face on their Government. To do this, they cooked the books.

Spending appeared to be up, but on closer look, there was much less than meets the eye. For example, \$9 billion was provided for "millennium scholarships", and another \$9.5 billion is "added" for training. But both these announcements were fake; they gave new names to money already in the system, combine the federal and provincial funding and total it over 10 years.

The government's budget claimed to increase spending dramatically, even above the level of the previous NDP government. That too turned out to be false. A full \$2.3 billion was shown as provincial spending when in fact it represented services which were transferred to the municipal governments as part of the 'Who Does What' downloading exercise. Local government was really bearing the cost.

Another \$1.4 billion of spending was one-time "contingency" funding which served to pad spending but was not part of the permanent budget base. In fact, it may never be spent at all.

Since 1995-96, the Tories have allocated a total of \$6.4 billion for the one time costs of restructuring

and other purposes. Of this, \$5.3 billion had *not* been spent. It would be spread around as election candy, but since these are one-time, one-off expenditures, they did nothing to restore permanent services and programs.

Education spending was trumpeted as a priority, but when all the financial changes from education restructuring are taken into account, overall education spending was reduced by about one billion dollars since the 1997-98 budget.

At the end of the day, the bottom line was that the Harris government cut about \$3.5 billion from the base of Ontario's budget for programs, services and public works. While the total economy was been growing, the public sector was cut. They shrunk the size of the public sector from 15% of the total economy (measured as

GDP) to about 12%. This is a cut of twenty percent!

Paying for his tax cut to the rich is still what is driving the Harris agenda. The full cost of the tax cut is \$6 billion!

Full details are set out in the Ontario Alternative Budget, available at the OFL website - [www.ofl-fto.on.ca](http://www.ofl-fto.on.ca)

### AMAZING BUDGET FACTS

Total cost of the Harris tax cut is \$6 billion a year in lost revenue. More than half of this goes to the top 20% of income earners.

Since Ontario still has a deficit, all the money to pay for the tax cut has to be borrowed. And interest has to be paid on these new loans. Thanks to compound interest, Harris will have to borrow \$25 billion by the year 2000 to pay for this tax cut to the rich. This \$25 billion is added to the Ontario debt, which will rise from \$88 billion in 1995 to over \$113 billion by the end of Harris' first term.

If Mike Harris and Ernie Eves had been locked in a closet the day they were elected in June, 1995, kept there under lock and key and prevented from doing anything, economic growth would automatically balance the budget and wipe out the deficit by the end of 1998. None of the Harris spending cuts were necessary.

## FOURTH BUDGET - MAY 4, 1999

The fourth Tory budget is the culmination of four years of budgetary deception. As the Harris Government got closer to the election, they have been less and less honest about the extent of their spending cuts. The latest budget is deliberately distorted by adding \$2.7 billion in one-time contingency and restructuring costs to the permanent base budget for programs and capital spending. When these once-off items are removed, the Tory spending plan has been reduced from \$49.4 billion in 1995-96 to \$46.7 billion in 1998-99.

Put another way, while Ontario's economy has been growing at the rate of more than 3% a year, spending on the public sector has been shrunk from 15.1% of GDP in 1995-96 to 12.2% in 1999-2000; a reduction of 20%!

The final absurdity was Treasurer Eves claim in the budget that the tax cut did not cost Ontario anything at all, and that they have actually increased spending on health and education.

The truth is exactly the opposite. While the budget promised to increase health spending by 20% over five years, his budget does not keep up with population growth and inflation. The end result will leave real per capita health spending lower than it was before Harris was elected. In 1994-95 real per capita spending was \$1609; in 2003-04 it will be \$1558. The Harris health care crisis would last another five years.

Education spending is also drastically lower than it was before the Harris cuts. Taking into account the new education funding formula reduces real education dollar by \$987 million a year, and that's on top of the \$525 million the Government cut from schools during the first two years. That's a \$1.5 billion reduction in real spending on schools.

The 1999 budget promises another round of tax cuts, totaling \$4 billion. This will lead to another round of slash and burn cuts as soon as the economy begins the next cyclical downturn. And it raises the total annual revenue loss from the Harris tax cuts to \$10 billion a year!

The dirty little secret is, of course, that Harris has had to borrow every penny needed to pay for the tax cut. And the interest on the debt run up to pay for the tax cut compounds the cost each and every year. By the end of 2000-01, the total borrowed to finance the tax cut will be \$25 billion, and the annual carrying cost for that debt will be \$1.4 billion.

Once again the point must be made: if Eves and Harris had been locked in a closet in 1995, the budget would have balanced in 1998 and none of the huge spending cuts would have been necessary.

## THE WEEK FROM HELL - THE MEGADUMP OF JANUARY 1997

Starting on January 13, 1997 the Harris government announced the next phase of their Revolution. This time they threatened to completely destroy Ontario's traditions of local government. And to complete their program of cutbacks to pay for the tax cut, they announced a plan to off-load over \$6.5 billion in new costs to municipal government.

The province proposed to take education finance off the residential property tax and to pay this \$5.4 billion cost itself. In exchange, Harris dumped over \$6 billion in costs onto the property tax. Ontario saved over \$1 billion in the deal. The outcry was so ferocious the government was forced to revise their plan.

### ADDITIONAL COST OF THE TAKE-OVERS TO ONTARIO

Education - transfer of residential property tax effective January 1, 1998	<b>\$5.4 billion</b>
Community Re-investment Fund	\$1.0 billion
Municipal Social Assistance Fund	\$700 million
Municipal Capital and Operating Restructuring Fund (but Municipal Support Fund of \$666 million scrapped January, 1998)	\$250 million

Plan one looked like this.

### NOT ACCOUNTED FOR

The cancelled Municipal Support Fund	\$666 million
Water Service Support	\$100 million
4,000 km of Provincial Highway Maintenance off-loaded to local government	n/k
Housing capital cost	\$70 million

### ADDITIONAL COST OF OFF-LOADS TO MUNICIPALITIES

#### Programs to be under municipal control and management

Community police financing	(180)
Integration of farm tax rebate and other rebates to local taxes	(165)
Property assessment services	(120)
Social housing	(890)
Municipal transit and GO	
Transit services	(395)
Community libraries	(20)
Community public health	(225)
Community ambulance services	(200)
Homes for special care	(25)
Community ferries, municipal airport services	(15)
Fire services and sewer and water inspections	(10)

#### Property funded through a 50-50 partnership with local governments

Social assistance program partnership	(2,655)
Child-care services partnership	(270)
Long-term health care partnership	(1,150)

#### Gross receipts tax revenue transferred to the Province

Gross receipts tax revenue transferred to the Province	(100)
Provincial offences revenues transferred to municipalities	65
	<b>(6,355)</b>

## THE FINAL OFFER ... PLAN B

The outcry was so intense that the Tories backed down from the most extreme feature of the Megacity off-load onto the property tax.

But the net effect remains severe; at least \$800 million in new expenses have been dumped onto the shoulders of the property taxpayer.

### THE NEW OFF-LOAD LOOKS LIKE THIS:

#### 100% Provincial Responsibility

- children's aid
- homes for special care
- long-term care (except homes for the aged)
- shelters for abused women

#### 100% Municipal Responsibility

- Ferries
- Municipal airports
- Transit
- Police
- Property Assessment
- Fire
- Public health
- Libraries
- Septic services
- Sewer and water
- Social housing
- GO Transit
- Ambulance

#### 80%-20% Provincial-Municipal Cost Sharing

- Child care
- Ontario Disability Support Program
- Ontario Works (workfare)

#### 50%-50% Cost Shared Responsibility

- Ontario Disability Administration
- Ontario Works Administration

#### New Justice Partnership

- Municipalities run Provincial offences, keep revenue

A complicated series of one-time grants and special funds are set up to try to cushion the blow to local government. But the bottom line, after all the smoke and mirrors is an \$800 million tax dump.

# SUMMARY OF MEGAWEEK

JANUARY 13 - 17, 1997

## **Bill 103 - Megacity**

The Tory Megacity Bill abolished all locally elected municipal government within Metro Toronto, as of January 1998. Elected mayors and councillors were put under the authoritarian control of a Tory appointed Board of Trustees. In effect, Toronto and the other local governments were put into receivership by Harris.

Harris ignored an overwhelming referendum vote against the Megacity.

Bill 103 had almost no details about the Metro-wide single tier Megacity government which will come into being in January 1998. The details were set out in Bill 148.

## **Bill 104 - Chopping Education**

Bill 104 -- the Education Bill -- also gave almost no detail. We were told that school boards would be reduced from 129 to 72 (plus isolate boards).

School Trustees were cut in number from 1,900 to 700 across Ontario, and their salaries were capped at \$5,000.

## **Bill 160.**

The ugly details of the Tory plan for education was revealed in Bill 160, introduced in September 1997. See page 20 for details.

## **Bottom Line**

The bottom line is that another \$1 billion was cut out of the education budget, under the smokescreen of restructuring

## **The Megadump - Welfare, Housing, Long Term Care, Transit**

The major items dumped into the laps of local property tax payers are part of the costs of welfare,

all of the expense for social housing, and public transit .

## **Welfare - The Poor Have No Rights**

After 30 years of provincial funding support under national standards, Ontario is scrapping its social assistance laws which give all persons in need the legal entitlement to financial aid. Local government will have to pick up new costs for these harsh new laws.

## **Social Housing**

Responsibility for Ontario's 275,000 units of social housing was downloaded to municipalities, at an added cost of \$890 million per year.

## **Transit**

Public transit was totally dumped onto municipal government at an added annual cost of \$395 million. A sleeper was the transfer of 4,000 kilometres of road maintenance to local government.

## **The Slush Funds**

Harris claimed that any inequities in this huge restructuring would be smoothed over with cash from one of three new provincial funds -- the Community Re-Investment Fund @ \$500 million, the Municipal Capital and Operating Restructuring Fund @ \$800 million. And a \$70 million special needs fund. (But the old Municipal Support Fund of \$600 million was scrapped).

## **Market Value Assessment**

On top of all this, Ernie Eves has announced a new system of municipal property tax based on a variant of market value assessment. Winners and losers are split evenly under the new scheme.



## MUNICIPALITIES

### **Cut 50 Percent**

In 1995, Harris started his cuts with an incredible 48% reduction in provincial grants to municipal government. Ontario's financial support to municipal government was virtually cut in half. The total cut was \$658 million over two years.

A new block grant replaced the traditional municipal roads grants and unconditional grants, but at a level reduced by 43%.

Transit grants were cut 21% over two years; \$24 million next year and \$28 million in 1997/98.

Libraries were cut \$12 million over two years.

Blue Box funding was completely wiped out.

Conservation Authorities were cut 70% over two years.

### **Megadump**

Those cuts were simply the prelude to the Megadump announcements of January 1997.

Full costs for social housing and public transit, and new costs for welfare were dumped onto the property tax. Municipalities got at least \$1 billion in off-loaded new costs.

### **Police Tax**

Rural Ontarians are required to pay up to \$220.<sup>00</sup> per household as a special tax to pay for Ontario Provincial Police services.

### **Bill 26**

The new *Savings and Restructuring Act* gave Mike Harris and his gang dictatorial powers to abolish municipalities at will, or to force municipal mergers and amalgamations. It allowed for the massive introduction of user fees, without approval by the Legislature, for services which have always been free, like libraries. Privatization is allowed, with no need for a referendum.

### **Megacity**

The Megacity Bill for Metro Toronto showed how dictatorial these powers can be. Local government in Metro Toronto was put into receivership. Then it was abolished.

## HOUSING

Cancellation of 390 co-op and non-profit housing projects already approved and under construction resulted in the loss of more than 17,000 units of affordable housing, 37,000 person-years of employment and more than \$750 million in tax revenues.

Under the Megadump, all 275,000 units of social housing in Ontario became the total responsibility of local government at a cost of \$890 million.

The shelter allowance portion of welfare cheques was cut by 21.6%, forcing low-income tenants to use food money for rent.

Tenant protection laws were put on the chopping block, with basement apartments once more illegal. Rent control is being dismantled.

## RENT DECONTROL

Hearings started in August 1996 on the Tory Consultation Paper on Rent Control.

For the first time since 1975, rent has been decontrolled in Ontario. All new apartments will be permanently exempt from rent control.

And every apartment unit will have a window of escape from rent control whenever that unit becomes vacant. Within four years virtually every apartment unit in Ontario will be decontrolled!

Tenant protection laws were watered down. The *Rental Housing Protection Act* was repealed, leaving thousands of vulnerable tenants exposed to eviction as their apartments are converted to condominiums.

The Chair of Ontario's Human Rights Commission testified that the new Tenant laws violate human rights.

## **ENVIRONMENT**

### **No More Enforcement**

In the 1996 business plan statement, the Ministry of the Environment was decimated; the budget was slashed 36% and 752 positions were axed. It is no longer able to protect the environment. Cuts to the Ministry of the Environment spell the end for recycling programs, as well as an end to enforcement of anti-pollution laws. During the toxic fire at Plastimet in Hamilton, the Ministry was useless.

### **Garbage**

The Interim Waste Authority has been abolished, together with all its work to find three permanent waste disposal sites. Metro and the GTA will now be free to use the rest of Ontario as a garbage dump.

### **Incinerators Allowed**

The NDP ban on municipal garbage incineration was repealed. Deadly incineration is now promoted as official government policy.

### **Blue Box**

Provincial funding to the blue box program is eliminated next year. The Tories have also killed funding for other 3'r's' (reduction, reuse, recycle) to municipalities.

### **Planning**

The Sewell reforms to the planning Act in Bill 163 were watered down to allow environmentally irresponsible development. Ontario's new planning principle is private greed.

### **Mine Pollution**

Laws requiring mine owners to clean up behind them were repealed.

### **Wetlands**

Restrictions on the development of Ontario's precious wetlands have been weakened.

### **Forests**

Funding for sustainable forestry was cut \$20 million for 1995-96, and government has abdicated responsibility for tree planting to the forest industry. Clear cutting and tree stripping will replace sustainable forestry.

### **Clean Water**

All provincial funding for building and repairing water and sewer treatment systems has been eliminated.

### **Environmental Law**

The 80 Ontario regulations covering toxic pollution are being reviewed as the first step in repealing them.

### **Plus**

Funding for Ontario's Conservation Authorities was cut by 70% over two years.

Ontario's Green Communities program was scrapped one day after the Minister boasted about its effectiveness.

Fish harvesting rights for First Nations peoples in Georgian Bay were abrogated.

## BILL 136 - LABOUR WINS A BIG VICTORY

Bill 136 -- *The Public Sector Transition Stability Act, 1997*, was a Bill to put free collective bargaining for over half a million Ontario public service workers into deep freeze and to strip public sector workers of the right to strike.

The original Bill 136 created two new bodies, the *Labour Relations Transition Commission* and the *Disputes Resolution Commission*, with enormous arbitrary powers over public service workers and their collective bargaining rights. These two bodies would usurp the authority of the Ontario Labour Relations Board.

*The Labour Relations Transition Commission* was a temporary body, made up of Tory patronage appointments. It had the power to deal with mergers and amalgamations as the Harris revolution hits local government and school boards.

It had the power to:

- ▶ determine the size and shape of the new bargaining unit;
- ▶ decide which union will represent the workers as the bargaining agent;
- ▶ rule how seniority rules will apply and to whom; and
- ▶ set the terms and conditions of employment during the "transition" period.

*The Disputes Resolution Commission* was also going to be an exclusive group of Tory patronage appointees, but it would be a permanent Commission with the power to:

- ▶ hear and decide all collective bargaining issues for public service workers who do not have the right to strike -- i.e. police, firefighters and hospital workers; and
- ▶ for all other public service workers, if collective bargaining is not successful the DRC would write the collective agreement for the first contract following merger or amalgamation, at the request of either the employee or the employer.

### **Labour Fights Back**

Under the threat of this unprecedented assault on free collective bargaining, Ontario's labour movement mobilized as never before. Votes were held all across Ontario, local by local, to give a democratic mandate for strike action against the Bill. A province-wide lobby campaign directed at municipal politicians was so effective that AMO passed an anti-Bill 136 resolution at its Convention.

At the end of the day, the Harris Government blinked. Bill 136 was completely gutted. All its restrictions on the right to strike were removed. The two proposed Commissions were eliminated entirely, and the existing system of independent arbitration under the jurisdiction of the Ontario Labour Relations Board was maintained.

Labour continues to be vigilant to ensure that essential service workers who do not have the right to strike really do get fair and impartial arbitration.

And we will resist all attempts to weaken the OLRB with Tory political hack appointments.

### Bill 84 Hits Fire Fighters

Ontario's fire fighters were stripped of collective bargaining rights -- even though there has never been a strike in this sector. Bill 84 opened the door to privatize our fire departments.

If that wasn't enough, Bill 136 tried to take away the firefighters' right to a fair and impartial arbitration system. But Harris was forced to back down.

### Bill 98, Development Charges Act

From now on the costs of serviced land -- including water and sewer -- are switched from developers to property taxpayers.

### Bill 57, Environmental Approvals Act

From now on, polluters not only don't pay, they write the rules. But, citizens have to pay for information.



### Bill 105 Police Services

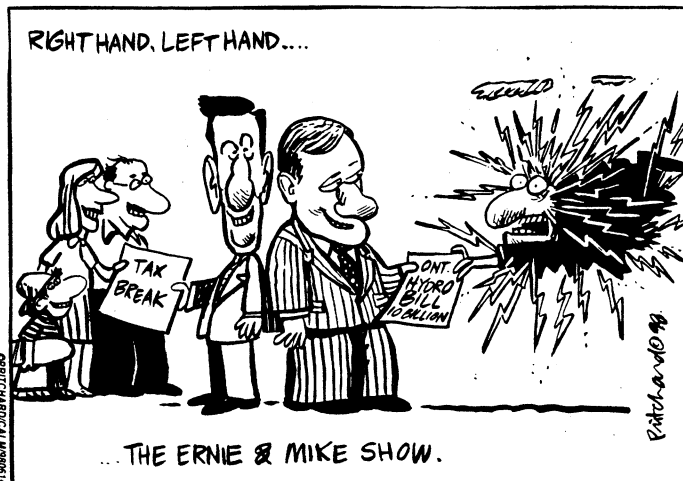
This Bill reduces independent civilian control of the police. And it dumps more police costs onto municipalities.

### Bill 106 Fair Municipal Finance

A variety of market value assessment is imposed on Metro Toronto under this Bill. And the business occupancy tax of \$1.6 billion is abolished. This boon to business is paid for by property tax payers.

### Red Tape Commission

This collection of crazed proposals from a Tory Commission calls for a 50 hour work week, limits on the right to refuse unsafe work, amnesty for corporate polluters, an end to pension protection laws, rollbacks on pay equity from small firms, and limits on Human Rights complaints.



# WORKER PROTECTION LEGISLATION: DECIMATED

## **Bill 7**

The NDP Labour Law reforms were totally wiped out by Bill 7 on Tuesday, October 31, 1995, allowing scabs to steal workers' jobs again in this province. The card-majority system of union certification which has been in place since 1950 was replaced by mandatory certification votes. This permits the employer to organize an anti-union election campaign every time workers try to form a union. In addition, employers are permitted to instigate petitions for a decertification vote.

Successor rights were stripped from Crown employees. This means that when the Harris gang wants to privatize public services, the workers will lose both their collective agreement and their bargaining rights whenever a department is sold.

And workers in the contract service sector, like building cleaners, lose successor rights and their jobs whenever a contract changes hands, pounding wages back to minimum wage levels. Already the workers who clean the Tories' Queen's Park offices have lost their jobs.

This draconian legislation, Bill 7, was introduced on October 4 and rammed through the legislature on October 31 without a single day of hearings.

## **Arbitration & Bill 26**

Bill 26, the *Savings and Restructuring Act*, introduced with the 1996 Budget, imposed legislated restrictions on the power of boards of arbitrators to make awards. The ability of the employer to pay, the possibility of service reductions, and the economic situation of the government are among the new legal fetters placed upon arbitrators. The new law affects firefighters, hospital workers, the police, public servants, teachers, and other school board employees.

## **Ministry of Labour Shrinks**

The Ministry of Labour took a 46% cut in its budget, effectively cutting it in half. A total of 457 Ministry staff were surplus. A third of the Employment Standards Inspectors were laid off, and the support for health and safety inspectors was virtually eliminated. This means that the enforcement of employment standards is a thing of the past. And employers will be under less pressure to maintain safe workplaces. The result will be more workers injured or killed.

## **OLRB Threatened**

The Chair of the Ontario Labour Relations Board, Judith McCormick, was dismissed in 1996 in an unprecedented act of political vindictiveness.

The OLRB vice-chairs and members who the Tories disliked were fired in mid-term, without cause. The Court has forced Harris to back down from his attempt to crush the independence of the OLRB.

## **Health and Safety Attacked**

On August 23, 1995 the Workplace Health and Safety Agency was disbanded. The labour directors were fired. The Agency was taken over by the Workers' Compensation Board, removing any input from workers to this vital area.

Accident prevention is where it was before the Agency was set up -- out the window.

The Occupational Disease Panel will be terminated when Bill 99 is passed.

The funding of the Workers Health and Safety Centre has been reduced and the hours required for certification training have been cut in half.

Mandatory inquests when workers are killed on the job will be abolished.

The Tory Red Tape Commission has called for changes to the right to refuse work.

And the new business plan for the Ministry of Labour calls for a "review" of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act* while cutting \$8.2 million out of its workplace health and safety budget

### **Minimum Wage**

Ontario's minimum wage is frozen, and it won't be raised until the American border States catch up to our level!

### **Wage Protection Killed**

The Wage Protection Program, which guarantees wages, benefits, severance and termination pay to laid-off workers was chopped back to wages and benefits only, and the maximum was cut from \$5,000 to \$2,000. Under Bill 136 it was terminated.

### **Pay Equity**

Ontario's Pay Equity Program was slashed by \$50 million, cutting payments to the lowest paid women. Pay Equity payments are placed under a cap.

Pay Equity proxy was abolished in the broader public sector.

### **Employment Equity**

Ontario's Employment Equity Program was scrapped, the Act was repealed, the Commission abolished, and the employees fired.

## **BILL 49 - GUTTING THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ACT**

After promising "minor housekeeping amendments" to the *Employment Standards Act*, Minister of Labour Witmer introduced Bill 49. Among its reactionary provisions, Bill 49 would:

- ▶ Strip union workers of the minimum floor of rights by allowing "flexible standards" for hours of work, public holidays, overtime pay and severance pay. The old minimum standards would be gone.
- ▶ Shorten time for claims and investigations against employers.
- ▶ Impose a limit of \$10,000.00 on the amount of money workers can claim from the employer, no matter how much is owed.
- ▶ Allow the Ministry of Labour to weasel out of enforcement. Unionized workers cannot make a claim to the Ministry -- instead they must use the grievance/arbitration provision of the collective agreement. Non-union workers must choose between either a claim to the Ministry or a court action.
- ▶ Turn collection of money owed to workers over to private collection agencies, while the Ministry washes its hands of responsibility.

Under pressure from labour, social action groups, and the NDP, the Minister removed the "flexible standards" from the Bill. But it will be back as part of an even bigger review of Employment Standards later in their term.

## BILL 31

In June 1998 the Harris gang continued their assault on worker protection law with Bill 31, titled in the totalitarian language of this Government "*The Economic Development and Workplace Democracy Act*". This bill completes the dirty work of Bill 7 by taking away the only effective penalty protecting workers from intimidation and harassment during a union organizing drive. Until now, the OLRB could punish an employer found guilty of misconduct under the *Act* by awarding automatic union certification. This was done by the Board in the Walmart case, where the Board ruled that the employer had so poisoned the workplace that a fair election was impossible. This deterrent against employer retaliation is now gone.

There's more. Access to interim orders from the OLRB, to get speedy protection from employer harassment in a certification contest is eliminated. The employer is also given the power to dispute the union estimate for the number of persons in a proposed bargaining unit.

And the construction unions are dealt a heavy blow with provisions which exempt "non-construction employers" from the requirement to abide by the terms of the construction industry collective agreements. It means that thousands of construction workers who have had union protection for decades will be stripped of their bargaining rights at the "declaration" of the employer, with massive loss to wages, benefits and job security.



## WORKERS' COMPENSATION BILL 99

Following the proposals to gut Workers' Compensation in the Jackson Report, Bill 99 was introduced in November 1996. Bill 99 will:

- ▶ Take \$6 billion in benefits from injured workers and give it to employers.
- ▶ Allow employers to force injured workers back to work prematurely.
- ▶ Remove the independence of the Workers' Compensation Appeal Tribunal.
- ▶ Give workers private medical records to employers.
- ▶ Erode inflation protection for WCB benefits.
- ▶ Terminate the Occupational Disease Panel.
- ▶ Force injured workers to get their accident claim forms from the employer. Accident cover-ups will be massive.
- ▶ Return Ontario to the days when the burden of proof is on the worker and the benefit of the doubt goes to the employer.
- ▶ Outlaw compensation for chronic stress, and limit benefits for chronic pain.

### Privatization

Whole sections of the Workers' Compensation Board were privatized. Vocational rehabilitation, claims and benefit management and medical management will all become profit-centres for business. Hundreds of WCB employees will lose their jobs.

### Business Takeover

Under Bill 15, passed in 1996, the bi-partite Board of Directors with equal membership from labour and management, was replaced by a Board of bosses.

### "Reform"

The independent Royal Commission on Workers' Compensation was disbanded.

## HARRIS KILLS HEALTH & SAFETY

The Workplace Health and Safety Agency was set up in 1991.

During the next four years the Agency trained 33,000 certified health and safety committee members.

Workplace accidents were reduced by 30%.

Workplace fatalities were reduced by 40%.

	Workplace Accidents	Deaths
1990	411914	139
1995	359436	72

On August 23, 1995 the Workplace Health & Safety Agency was disbanded by Harris, and moved into the WCB head office. Bill 99 abolishes it completely.

### Occupational Health and Safety Discussion Paper

The paper proposed a host of revisions to OHSA, to remove "barriers to job creation" by limiting the right to refuse work, reducing the rights of labour on committees and making it easier for employers to break the law.



## **BILL 26: THE OMNIBUS SAVINGS AND RESTRUCTURING ACT**

Bill 26 gave the Harris government the powers it needs to carry out their agenda. It was introduced on November 29, 1995 with no warning and at a time when most members of the opposition were still in the budget lock-up. It amended a total of 44 statutes, as well as creating three new Acts and repealing two others entirely. It took a sit-in by opposition MPPs to force the Harris government to even hold public hearings on the Bill. The Bill itself was 211 pages thick, and the compendium of background explanation was over 2,000 pages long. There has never been anything like Bill 26 in Ontario's history. Here is some of what it does.

### **Health**

Bill 26 gives the Minister of Health dictatorial powers over Ontario's community hospitals, with the authority to depose hospital boards and to take over hospitals directly, to run them, shut them down, or to force mergers. He can dictate what medical services a given hospital can or cannot provide.

Bill 26 deregulates drug prices and introduces user fees and deductibles for seniors. It also paves the way for the privatization of medicare.

It tears up the government's Agreement with the Ontario Medical Association, strips doctors of collective bargaining rights and gives the Minister the power to decide where a doctor can work.

### **Pay Equity**

Bill 26 rolls back the laws which provided pay equity for the lowest paid women in the public sector, by abolishing the use of the proxy method.

### **Municipal Affairs**

The Bill gives enormous arbitrary power to the Minister of Municipal Affairs to abolish local government by decree and to force mergers and amalgamations of local municipalities. It allows for privatization and new forms of local taxation, including new user fees, forms of direct taxation like gasoline tax and even a head tax, also known as the hated poll tax. At the same time it takes away traditional democratic checks and balances, such as the Municipal Referendum and accountability to the Legislature.

### **Public Employees**

Arbitration for workers in the public sector, such as police, fire fighters, teachers and hospital workers will be severely fettered and constrained.

Bill 26 permits the legalized theft of up to \$400 million in pension benefits from its own employees in the OPS who are facing a mass lay-off by exempting them from the wind-up provisions of the Pension Benefits Act.

### **Plus**

Environmental Laws governing the clean-up of abandoned mines and forest protection are scrapped.

Freedom of Information Laws are changed to make it much harder for the citizen to gain access to their own personal files, or to information about their government. But at the same time, the Minister of Health is given unprecedented power to see and distribute the confidential health records of individual citizens.

Bill 26 was rammed through the Legislature on January 29, 1996 after a scant three weeks of hearings.

## MEDICARE

Ontario's Health budget was cut by an incredible \$1.5 billion in November 1995. This makes a lie out of the Harris election promises that Medicare funding would not be touched.

### Hospitals

Ontario's hospitals bore the brunt of the attack, with a cut of 18% over the three years, as follows: \$365 million cut in 1996/97, \$435 million in 1997/98 and \$507 million in a postponed third installment, for a total of \$1.307 billion. The actual cuts by 1999 totalled \$800 million.

Bill 26 gave the Harris government awesome dictatorial powers to close hospitals at will and to force hospital mergers and shutdowns in any community in Ontario.

35 hospitals will be closed. The first twelve hospitals were put on the chopping block in Metro Toronto on September 29, 1997.

Despite the election promise of a 20% increase in the health budget over 5 years, real per capita spending for medicare will be lower in 2003-04 than it was in 1994-95.

### Seniors Get User Fees

User fees will be imposed on the Ontario Drug Benefit plan for seniors, breaking the second major Harris election promise of "no user fees". This tax on the sick will raise \$225 million in savings for the Tories. All seniors eligible for OAS-GIS will pay \$2.00 for each prescription. All other seniors will be charged a \$100 deductible for their essential medicines.

### Long Term Care Cut

The "Neighbours" homecare and home support agencies for seniors and the disabled were

abolished and \$33 million was cut out of long term care in 1996.

### Plus

All Community Health Centres funded by the Ministry of Community and Social Services are hit by budget cuts, including agencies providing services to ethno cultural and immigrant groups. Toronto's only Francophone Health Centre lost all its social workers on October 31, 1996.

The home oxygen program was cut by \$10 million.

Five birthing centres, which were intended to provide a low cost alternative to hospital-based obstetrics, were scrapped.

Three million dollars to fund new abortion clinics were eliminated.

Hearing aid assistance was slashed by \$5 million.

Community mental health programs are chopped by \$2 million and even AIDS prevention programs have been cut.

A total of \$20 million was cut from the 1995-96 Health Capital Budget.

## THE HEALTH SERVICES RESTRUCTURING COMMISSION HITS ONTARIO HOSPITALS

### The Health Services Restructuring Commission

Bill 26 gave the Government the power to set up the Health Services Restructuring Commission to do the Government's dirty work of closing public hospitals all across Ontario. The following page is a summary of their recommendations and the impacts, city by city.

## **THUNDER BAY**

- ▶ 3 out of 5 hospitals closed
- ▶ \$41 million cut from hospitals
- ▶ 870 jobs lost
- ▶ bill for renovations - \$42 million

## **SUDBURY**

- ▶ 2 out of 3 hospitals closed
- ▶ beds cut from 558 to 365
- ▶ \$41 million cut from hospitals
- ▶ jobs lost - 915 full-time, 748 part-time

## **OTTAWA**

- ▶ 2 hospitals closed
- ▶ Montfort, the only Francophone teaching hospital in Ontario is turned into ambulatory care only
- ▶ \$90 million cut from hospitals
- ▶ over 2,000 jobs lost

## **PETERBOROUGH**

- ▶ major layoffs at Civic and St. Joseph's hospitals

## **GREY-BRUCE**

- ▶ 28 beds cut from Grey-Bruce Health Centre
- ▶ Wiarton and Kincardine hospitals to close

## **BELLEVILLE**

- ▶ \$5 million shortfall at Belleville General
- ▶ 50 beds to close, layoffs coming

## **KITCHENER**

- ▶ St. Mary's to close

## **HAMILTON**

- ▶ Hamilton Civic to merge with Chedoke-McMaster
- ▶ 2,000 layoffs
- ▶ 1 hospital to close

## **KINGSTON**

- ▶ 3 of 4 hospitals announce voluntary restructuring to head off the HRC

## **BURLINGTON**

- ▶ Joseph Brant hospital to lose 200 beds

## **SARNIA**

- ▶ Sarnia General to merge with St. Joseph's
- ▶ \$25 million shortfall in needed renovations
- ▶ Petrolia Hospital to become clinic

## **PEMBROKE**

- ▶ Civic Hospital to close
- ▶ 1/3 of Pembroke's beds will close
- ▶ 300 jobs lost

## **BROCKVILLE**

- ▶ Psychiatric Hospital closed

## **LONDON - ST THOMAS**

- ▶ London Psychiatric and St Thomas Psychiatric to close
- ▶ 1,500 jobs lost
- ▶ 744 beds overall closing

## **HURON-PERTH**

- ▶ beds to be cut from 527 to 406
- ▶ no 24 hour emergency

## **NIAGARA REGION**

- ▶ 3 hospitals closing in Port Colborne, St. Catharines and Niagara on the Lake
- ▶ hospitals in Fort Erie and Grimsby converted to chronic care

## **TORONTO**

- ▶ \$430 million cut from budgets
- ▶ 10,000 jobs lost
- ▶ 11 hospitals to be closed:  
Women's College Hospital, Wellesley, Doctor's, Branson, Northwestern, Orthopaedic and Arthritic, Runnymede, Salvation Army, Toronto Grace, Dewson, Our Lady of Mercy in St. Joseph's, and Bellwood.

The slashing and shutdowns from the Hospital Restructuring Commission is on top of the \$800 million cutbacks to Ontario's overall hospital budget. The total cost of hospital restructuring is estimated at \$2.3 billion by CIBC.

## EDUCATION

Minister of Education, John Snobelen, told his bureaucrats to "invent an education crisis". The Harris government did exactly that.

### **Huge Cuts to Public Schools**

Grants to school boards were given a horrendous cut in the November 1995 budget. What was announced as a \$400 million cut turned out to be for only part of the year. So far, Harris has cut \$573 million from the annual classroom budget. The Deputy Ministers contract called for the cut of another \$687 million. The new grant formula reduced real overall funding by a further \$987 million for a total schools cut of \$1.5 billion.

### **Colleges and Universities**

Another \$400 million was lopped off the core budgets for Community Colleges (cut \$120 million) and Universities (cut \$280 million); a 15% cut overall. The shortfall will be made up by huge increases in tuition fees. Effective September 1996, college fees rise 15% and university fees are hiked up by between 10 and 20 percent. The day after the 1998 budget, tuition fees were totally deregulated. It will cost over \$8,000 a year to go to medical school.

A new student aid program was promised in the first budget. It turned out to be a major cutback to OSAP. Graduating students will be sure of one thing...a huge loan debt

### **Junior Kindergarten**

Junior Kindergarten has been made optional, which means that many school boards will wipe it out. More than 100,000 children were enrolled in Junior Kindergarten before Harris was elected.

### **Benefits**

Sick leave benefits for teachers will be stripped from the Education Act as of August 31, 1998.

### **Child Care**

Child care subsidies have been cut. Metro Toronto alone lost more than 4,000 subsidy spaces. The huge cuts to municipal grants will devastate child care.

The NDP program to convert all child care centres to non-profit has been ended.

In August 1996 Janet Ecker released a Child Care Review paper. It will de-regulate child care in Ontario, lower standards, lower child care workers wages and switch from a non-profit system to private for-profit child care.

### **Plus**

The new College of Teachers will download the costs of licensing to teachers and will impose user fees.

On October 6, 1995, the Ontario Training and Adjustment Board had its 1995-96 training budget cut by \$20 million. OTAB itself was then disbanded

### **School Boards Blamed**

After making these funding cuts, Snobelen blames school boards for all reductions to classroom teaching.

## Bill 160 - The Attack on Public Education

Bill 160 was introduced in September 1997 in order to enable Harris to cut another \$1 billion from Ontario's elementary and secondary schools budget. This is to be done by stripping teachers of essential collective bargaining rights, stripping school boards of their democratic responsibilities and putting all power over education into the hands of the Harris Government.

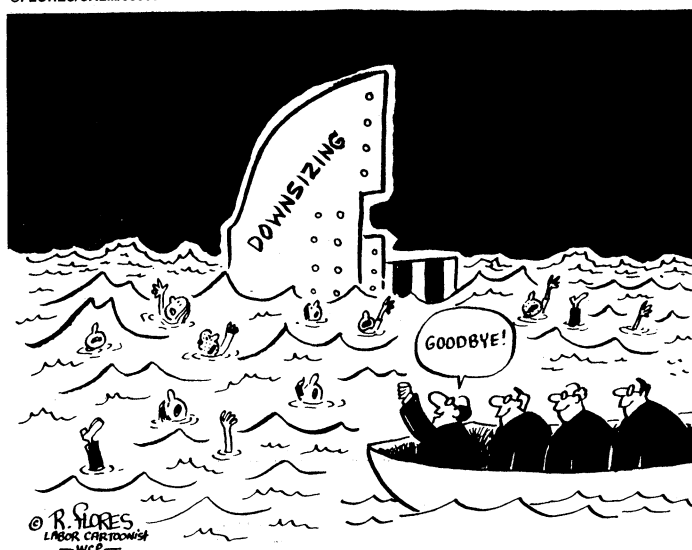
As of Labour Day 1998, thousands of teachers had already been removed from the education system. Bill 160 is designed to force the remaining teachers to increase their teaching time from 6 periods a day to 7, leaving no time for preparation, marking, individual student attention or extra-curricular activities.

Specifically, teachers lose the right to bargain working conditions and school boards lose all power to set education tax rates. The purpose is simple: to empower Harris & Co. to cut \$1 billion from the schools budget to pay for their income tax cut.

A new Provincial funding formula imposes lower average per pupil grants to our schools (\$3500/pupil vs \$4500 before). And now school boards are unable to top this up.

Ontario's 126,000 teachers staged an historic two week protest against Bill 160, leading what became a Province-wide teach-in about the Harris education agenda.

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## SOCIAL WELFARE

### **Cuts hurt children**

Social assistance rates were cut by 22% in October 1, 1995. This took food off the table for 500,000 children across Ontario.

### **Welfare Diet**

David Tsubouchi issued a welfare diet for a single person, with \$90 a month total for food. That is, \$3.00 a day. If this was a diet for prisoners of war, it would be a war crime under the Geneva Convention.

And despite Harris' promise not to touch the disabled, the papers are full of stories about welfare cuts to single moms caring for disabled children.

Special relief to municipalities with extra-high welfare caseloads is terminated, shifting the full load on to the property tax.

\$46 million in Job Link training for young people was cut from the Social Service Ministry's budget.

### **Grants Cut**

The 13,000 social service agencies, which depend on Community and Social Services for funding, had their grants cut by 5% in October 1995, a hit of \$44 million.

This affects children's aid, child abuse services, ESL programs for new Canadians, job training, and thousands of other services across the province.

A \$2.6 million cut to the budgets of Ontario's shelters for battered women has put abused women at risk of being stalked, injured or killed.

Eliminating counselling services for perpetrators of domestic assault saves another \$1.1 million.

Funding for the Ontario Association of Internal and Transition Houses -- the womens' shelters -- was terminated on the first day of Wife Assault Prevention month, 1995.

The Spouse-in-the-House rule was reinstated to cut single moms off Family Benefits if it is alleged they are living with a man, even though the law requires a three year residency to establish a common-law spousal relationship.

Welfare workers can cut off separated women if there is deemed to be a "possibility" of a reconciliation.

A three month wait for welfare was imposed as a penalty for quitting a job or being fired.

Youth welfare was restricted, throwing young people onto the street.

"Fraud" snitch lines were set up to scapegoat the poor .

### **Family Support Plan**

Millions of dollars worth of child support payments have gone unpaid as a result of the Tory destruction of the Family Support Plan.

Over 200 FSP workers were fired, leaving the program a total shambles.

### **Workfare**

Workfare has been introduced for all able-bodied welfare recipients, even single moms, raising the question of whose jobs will now be done for welfare-level wages.

Anyone who refuses a workfare job is severely penalized: three months loss of benefits for the first refusal; six months for subsequent refusals. The first workfare projects started in the fall of 1996.

Some municipalities have refused to participate because -- surprise -- there are no jobs!

In 1998, a special law was rammed through the Legislature to make it illegal for workfare workers to have or join a union.

In July 1998, the Minister announced that workfare will be extended to the private sector later that year.

So instead of providing the unemployed with decent work through jobs creation, the Harris gang will create a new class of slave labour which it can serve up to any employer interested in untrammelled exploitation.

### **SOCIAL ASSISTANCE - BILL 142**

On June 12, 1997, came the *Social Assistance Reform Act*, Bill 142, one of the most reactionary pieces of legislation ever to see the light of day in Ontario.

Prior to Bill 142, the legal right of persons in need to a subsistence allowance was enshrined in the welfare laws. That right is now taken away. The legal obligation of society to provide for the poor has been abolished.

Bill 142 also imposes the forced labour of workfare as a condition of eligibility for assistance, even for single mothers of dependent children. Workfare victims are excluded from employment protection laws.

The definition of disabled person will be changed, so that only the most severely disabled will qualify for benefits under the Ontario Disability Support Program. Many disabled people will fall into a new low in benefits from their current GAINS rate. The impact of disability upon a persons ability to obtain work will be ignored altogether.

Impoverished senior citizens who now get family benefits will be transferred to the municipalities and their allowances will be cut in half.

The amount of cash savings allowed to single parents will be cut from \$5,000 to \$1,200. People who own their own home will have to put a lien on it and will have to eventually repay the government. It will still be okay for government to pay the mortgages of private landlords through the shelter allowance. Recipients will also be required to sign an agreement to repay the government out of future earnings.

## PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS

### Mass Layoffs

Public sector workers have been singled out for special punishment.

A minimum of 13,000 employees will be fired from the Ontario Public Service and Harris has said that up to 22,000 jobs are at risk.

The first installment of 10,600 layoffs was announced on April 11, 1996, with the release of the so-called business plans.

Some Ministries, like Natural Resources with 2,170 job cuts, Transportation with 1,239 job cuts, Agriculture with 954 job cuts, and Environment with 752 job cuts are literally chopped to shreds.

As huge as the first wave of job-chopping is, there will be many more jobs cut to pay for the tax cut for the wealthy.

While planning for these massive layoffs, the government is dismantling the job security and adjustment measures put in place by the NDP government.

### Business Plans Good for Business

The real reason for the business plan exercise is to prepare for the privatization of billions of dollars of public assets, which will be sold to Harris business supporters. The list already includes Ontario Hydro, the LCBO, Provincial Parks, and billions of dollars worth of service contracts. Road maintenance and building maintenance for hospitals and schools will generate hundreds of millions of dollars worth of profit for Conservative entrepreneurs.

That's why successor rights have been taken away from both Ontario government employees and contract service workers; when their jobs are privatized wages shoot down and profits shoot up.

### BROADER PUBLIC SECTOR: UNDER SIEGE

The huge cuts to Ontario's transfer payments to municipalities, schools, colleges, universities, and hospitals announced in the November budget statement, threatened tens of thousands of jobs in the Broader Public Sector. The megadump off-loads another \$1 billion in new local costs. Over 100,000 jobs are now at risk.

### Hydro

Ontario Hydro is under the privatization gun, since Tory hack Bill Farlinger, an avowed advocate of privatization, was appointed chair. To smooth the path to what could be the biggest giveaway of public assets in any country, the Hydro Board was cut from 22 to 14 members, and 5 Board members were unilaterally dismissed, including union President John Murphy. Fortunately, the Court ruled that this action was unlawful, and ordered the government to reinstate those they had dismissed to the Hydro Board.

### Bill 35

In 1998 a new Energy Act was passed. Thanks to a vigorous public campaign, the hydro workers fully protected their collective bargaining rights. But Bill 35 could be the trojan horse for the dismemberment and privatisation of hydro, which remains the Harris goal.

### LCBO

LCBO officials were given 6 months to create a model for privatization; the first of many fire sales of public assets. Again, when public services are privatized, the employees will be stripped of their collective agreements and their bargaining rights.



## **Hospitals**

With \$1.3 billion cut from Ontario's hospitals budget, tens of thousands of health workers are facing termination all across the province.

Our hospitals are in a state of crisis.

## **Schools**

Bill 160's assault on education paves the way for a \$1 billion cut from our schools.

The proposal to strip teachers of classroom preparation time is really a threat to eliminate up to 10,000 teaching jobs.

And thousands of Ontario students will be denied access to higher education because of huge increases in tuition fees.

See page 20.

## **Local Government**

The huge cutback in municipal grants -- cut 50% -- followed by the 'Who Does What' megadump, will create huge strains upon local government. Services will be cut and jobs will be cut, but property taxes will still have to go up. And when services are privatized we will all pay user fees on top of taxes for our reduced municipal services.

## **Social Services**

All provincial welfare programs have been dumped into the lap of local government to run and to pay half the cost.

The Ministry of Community and Social Services, which funds over 13,000 social service agencies across the province, cut its payments by 5% in 1996.

Among the first cuts announced were the closure of 25 half-way houses, which serve to help offenders re-enter the community after serving time.

Solicitor General Runciman was also planning Alabama-style chain gangs to do road work in Eastern Ontario.

We are still waiting to see how many well-paid public service jobs will become workfare jobs for welfare wages.

## **ARTS, CULTURE, SPECIAL AGENCIES**

### **Goodbye**

The November budget slashed grants to what are called "agencies, boards and commissions" by 28%, or \$220 million. This will hit a body blow to art galleries, museums, public and non-profit broadcasters, and many regulatory bodies. The April business plan announces that Ontario has bowed out of promoting the arts.

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## **AGRICULTURE**

### **Agriculture Decimated**

Ontario's Ministry of Agriculture has been slashed by 954 jobs and more than \$57 million. Consumer protection and food safety inspection are among the services to be cut. Effective support for Ontario's beleaguered farmers will be a thing of the past.

### **Farmland Threatened**

As a symbol of this government's indifference to preserving our agricultural land, the program to protect the Niagara tender fruitlands has already been killed.

## THE DISABLED

Harris & Co. have broken their promise not to cut services to the disabled, by chopping transit grants to Wheel-Trans and by shutting down the Advocacy Commission as a prelude to repeal of the *Advocacy Act* this Fall.

Thousands of disabled people on general welfare assistance received the 22% rate cut, breaking the Harris election promise to exempt the disabled.

Now Bill 142 threatens their total impoverishment.

It remains to be seen whether the more restrictive definition of disability will strip benefits from people who used to qualify for GAINS-D. Two guesses.

The Harris promise of a Disabled Persons Rights Act has not been kept, and a totally secretive consultation process has kept everybody in the dark about the Government's intentions.

### SOME JOB FACTS

In February 1990 Ontario went into the worst recession in 60 years.

Pre-recession employment in Ontario peaked in February 1990 at 5.310 million jobs. The toxic combination of Free Trade, the GST and high interest rates created a slump that lasted two terrible years. Ontario lost 343,000 jobs.

But recovery did not take place until 1997.

The Bank of Canada's zero inflation policy deliberately kept unemployment above 8% with sky high interest rates between 1989 and 1996.

When Harris was elected in June 1995, there were 499,000 unemployed Ontarians. In July - August 1998, there were still 432,000 people unemployed. By April 1999 it was back to 446,000 jobless people seeking work.

The month Harris was elected the unemployment rate was 8.8%. As of April 1999 it was 7.2%. Worse, the 'employment rate', which is the percentage of working age people who actually hold a job has declined from the high sixties to a steady 61%, and down again in June. This is the measure of discouraged workers who have dropped out of statistical sight. Hidden unemployment remains huge in Harris Ontario.

#### **Ontario's jobs deficit: a million jobs**

As a result of job loss from the 1990-92 recession and subsequent low growth, Ontario needs at least 600,000 new jobs just to catch up. And we need another 400,000 jobs by the year 2000 to accommodate annual growth in the labour force. That's a million jobs. Harris brags that he created 549,000 jobs in 4 years. He doesn't mention that half of them are either part-time or "full-time self-employment".

Harris has failed to meet his 750,000 job creation targets. According to both the Royal Bank and Wood Gundy the huge spending cuts have squeezed growth out of Ontario's economy. And thousands of public sector workers have lost their jobs.

## JOB

On the job creation front, the Harris Government has put up a “going out of business” sign.

It is obvious that the Harris tax cut had nothing to do with economic recovery. The recovery was export-led, and it is hard to know how a tax cut in Ontario helps the sale of our cars in the United States.

In fact the Harris cuts to the public sector delayed and slowed the economic recovery, which began when interest rates were lowered by the Bank of Canada.

### *jobsOntario gone*

Harris has killed all the job creation programs of the NDP government. *jobsOntario Homes* is ended, and 390 approved co-op and non-profit housing projects were cancelled on July 26. *jobsOntario training*, which got 60,000 unemployed people off welfare or UI and back on a payroll, has been scrapped. *jobsOntario Community Action* is gone. Ontario’s industrial strategy, based on support for key economic sectors is gone, replaced by ..... nothing.

jumpstart, the NDP jobs program for young people, was killed and with it first-time job-support for 66,000 young people.

*JobsOntario* capital was cut by \$2 billion so far. Cancellation of the Eglinton subway alone cost 36,000 direct and indirect jobs.

Transportation paid the heaviest price, as \$500 million was slashed out of rapid transit, roads, highways and Go Transit projects. Cuts of \$16 million in municipal operating subsidies left the Wheel-Trans service for the disabled on the chopping block.

The Canada-Ontario Infrastructure jobs creation program was cut by \$287 million.



*Fight Back Facts* is an attempt to keep a running record of the Harris governments actions. Please send comments and suggestions to the OFL. Budget details are set out in the 1995 Fiscal and Economic Statement of November 29, 1995, and the budget of May 7, 1996 is available at the Ontario Government bookstore. A detailed analysis of the Bill 7 attack on the Labour Relations Act, the Bill 15 changes to WCB, Bill 26, the Savings and Restructuring Act, Bill 49, the Employment Standards Act changes, the Harris Rent Control proposals, and Bill 136 and 31 are also available from the Federation. Also listed are the Ontario Alternative Budget and its papers.

Web site [www.ofl-fto.on.ca](http://www.ofl-fto.on.ca)

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