

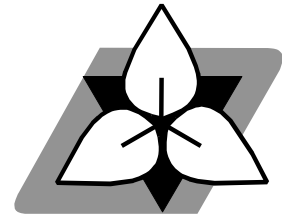
# 5<sup>th</sup> BIENNIAL CONVENTION

*Building for Tomorrow  
Together*

**November 22-26, 1999**

## Document 5

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**OFL/FTO**

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## THE EROSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO, EDUCATING & ORGANIZING FOR THE 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY

***“...RECOGNITION OF THE INHERENT DIGNITY AND THE EQUAL AND INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF ALL MEMBERS OF THE HUMAN FAMILY IS THE FOUNDATION OF FREEDOM, JUSTICE AND PEACE IN THE WORLD.”***

***Preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948)***

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Last December, we celebrated the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. It was in 1948, just over 50 years ago, that the United Nations (UN) established the “*Universal Declaration of Human Rights*” following the atrocities of the Second World War. A Canadian, John Humphrey, who later founded the Canadian Human Rights Foundation, played a key role in the development of the Declaration.

A fundamental objective of the Declaration was to promote “a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.” While not binding on countries that signed the Declaration, it was envisaged that the Declaration would set the standard for the signatory countries to follow.

The Declaration, which recognizes the inherent rights of all human beings to be protected against human rights abuses, sets out a number of

principles to promote respect for the rights of all members of the human family.

Two provisions of the Declaration are legally binding human rights agreements. These are:

*The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* – the right to life, liberty, security of person, freedom from torture and slavery, political participation, rights to property, marriage and the fundamental freedom of opinion, expression, thought, conscience and religion, freedom of association and assembly; and

*The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* – the right to work, a reasonable standard of living, the right to education and freedom of cultural life.

Since the evolution of the Declaration, several countries have introduced legislation prohibiting violations of human rights of their citizens. Many

of these countries, however, have not lived up to the intent of the Declaration.

## HUMAN RIGHTS IN CANADA

Laws promoting human rights and equality rights in Canada flow from the United Nations' Charter and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to which Canada is a signatory.

Over the years, a number of federal and provincial laws was developed to protect Canadians from violations of their human rights. Notwithstanding these instruments of protection, individuals and groups continue to experience discrimination in employment and other areas of civil society. One only has to look at the abysmal history of governments in Canada with respect to the denial of aboriginal and treaty rights for Canada's first inhabitants as evidence of our country's disregard for the principles and values of the UN Declaration.

As well, a decade after the Supreme Court of Canada recommended a "political remedy" for the false extradition of Leonard Peltier, a North American aboriginal activist, the Leonard Peltier Defense Committee is still awaiting a resolution of this breach of extradition treaty.

The *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, which was introduced in 1981, enshrines certain rights in the constitution. Section 15 of the Charter gave hope to women and other groups disadvantaged by systemic discrimination. This section of the Charter guarantees equality before and under the law, as well as equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination on the grounds of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability. Subsection 2 allows for affirmative action programs as a remedy for systemic discrimination based on gender, race, religion, age, mental or physical disability.

The Charter was meant to "complement and add to anti-discrimination provisions found in federal

and provincial human rights legislation." For the most part, however, access to charter rights has remained elusive. Far too few cases have prevailed.

The *Federal Human Rights Act*, enacted in 1977, covers workers in federally regulated workplaces. Workers in federal departments, agencies and Crown corporations, Canada Post, chartered banks, national airlines, interprovincial communications and telephone companies, interprovincial transportation companies and other federally regulated industries are protected under this statute.

This *Act* prohibits discrimination in employment and services within federal jurisdiction on the grounds of race, colour, national or ethnic origin, sex, age, religion, marital status, family status, physical or mental disability, pardoned conviction and sexual orientation. However, for workers covered under this legislation, discrimination is still a reality. For example, the federal government as an employer continues to delay and legally challenge payment of a human rights tribunal pay equity award for female-dominated occupations in the public service, which affected 200,000 members and former members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada.

According to the 1999 report of the Canadian Human Rights Commission, an independent body with the primary responsibility to investigate and resolve complaints:

*"Sexual harassment remains a serious workplace issue.*

*"Systemic discrimination of visible minorities in the public service is pervasive. Less than half of the qualified minorities available for work were hired.*

*"Aboriginal people lost ground in the private sector and were concentrated in the Department of Indian and Northern Development in the public service.*

*“32% of all new complaints came from people with disabilities.”*

Recently, the government announced a review of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*. While it appears that the government is contemplating adding “social condition” (could be defined as a person’s place in society in terms of occupation or income or physical ability or education) as a prohibitive ground of discrimination under the *Act*, it also appears that there is a move to make a distinction in the way complaints are adjudicated.

## **CANADA’S INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS**

Canada is a signatory to the UN Declaration of Human Rights. They have also signed a number of UN covenants which requires periodical reports to the United Nations. The reports are statements of the country’s efforts to fulfil their obligations under these covenants.

Last March, at its sixty-fifth session, the UN Human Rights Committee reviewed Canada’s report on their efforts to implement the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*. The report covered the period of January 1990 to December 1994.

The Ontario Federation of Labour and a number of community activists attended the meeting to ensure that the Committee had a realistic view of Ontario since the election of the Harris government in 1995.

Due to the effective lobbying of the OFL and other community activists, a number of questions were asked by the Committee. In its concluding observations on Canada’s report, the Committee noted that, “...the delegation was not able to give up-to-date answers or information about compliance with the Covenant by the provincial authorities.”

The Harris government was censured for attacking the most vulnerable groups in Ontario society and

violating the UN Covenant. The text of the concluding observations report cites four articles that challenge the Harris government’s history of human rights violations, particularly in the case of the shooting death of aboriginal protester Dudley George; the plight of the homeless in Ontario; Bill 22 (*The Act to Prevent Unionization with respect to Community Participation under Ontario Works, 1997*) which denies workfare participants the right to join a trade union, to bargain collectively and to strike; and the escalating discriminatory situation of women and children living in poverty in increasing numbers across the province.

## **HUMAN RIGHTS IN ONTARIO**

*“It is public policy in Ontario to recognize the inherent dignity and worth of every person and to provide for equal rights and opportunities without discrimination.”*

*The Ontario Human Rights Code*

In 1962, the first Human Rights Code was proclaimed in Ontario. Since then, a number of grounds prohibiting discrimination has been added. The Code now prohibits discrimination on the grounds of: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, marital status, family status, handicap, sexual orientation, receipt of public assistance and record of offences.

Notwithstanding the fact that the Code prohibits discrimination on a wide range of grounds and, on the surface, gives the impression that human rights violations are a thing of the past, the inadequate enforcement of the legislation results in the continued denial of basic human rights for individuals seeking the protection promised under the Code.

Often, many potential complainants, especially union members, are deterred from filing human rights complaints. When complaints are filed, there are unusually long delays. As well, the Human Rights Commission has a very poor record in sending human rights complaints to a hearing

by a Board of Inquiry. This is especially evident for complaints on the ground of race.

Generally, the Commission rarely uses its power to initiate complaints even when societal issues demand action in the public interest.

It appears that the Commission, not only suffers from a lack of resources but, as well, the lack of political will to properly enforce the Human Rights Code.

## **EROSION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN HARRIS' ONTARIO**

It is obvious that Mike Harris and his band of Conservatives have no respect for the fundamental principles of human rights. The notion of dignity and worth of the human person and of the equal and inalienable rights of members of the human family is lost on this group of Conservatives. Instead of respecting human dignity, Harris seems preoccupied with policies that will ensure the poor and the disadvantaged in our society are stripped of any semblance of dignity.

Since their election to office, the Harris government has introduced draconian legislation which has essentially eroded the rights of working people, the poor, the youth, the elderly and the disadvantaged.

### **Persons with Disabilities**

The definition of a person with disabilities was changed so that only the most severely disabled would qualify for benefits under the Ontario Disability Support Program. Transit grants to Wheel-Trans were cut.

The Tories promised Ontario's 1.5 million persons with disabilities a "replacement" for having lost the protection of the *Employment Equity Act*. The *Ontarians with Disabilities Act*, introduced in late 1998, included no timetable and no enforcement mechanism for removing discrimination with respect to jobs, housing, contracts or public services.

Another Harris promise was broken when the disabled were not exempted from the 21.6% cut in social assistance.

### **Education**

Legislation was passed to enable Harris to cut \$1-billion from Ontario's elementary and secondary school budgets. A new provincial funding formula imposes lower average per pupil grants to the public schools. Budget cuts to community colleges and universities resulted in huge increases in tuition fees for young students.

In addition, the government has disbanded the Ministry of Education's anti-racism unit, and a leaked Ministry document instructed curriculum writers to "delete anti-violence prevention..., anti-discrimination training... (and) education about native people." The Ministry has also failed to release an anti-hate guidebook produced for teachers by the B'Nai Brith League for Human Rights.

Just recently, the Toronto Police Service Anti-Hate Crime Unit released its statistical report on hate crimes for 1998. This report showed that hate crimes were up 22%, with the highest number of hate crimes committed against Blacks, followed by gay and lesbian people.

In Kenora, the nursing programme of Confederation College is no longer being funded by the Ministry of Colleges & Universities. This further adds to the problems that hospitals in the north have in recruiting and retaining health care staff.

### **Employment Equity**

Ontario's Employment Equity Program was scrapped, the *Act* was repealed, the Commission abolished, and the employees fired. Survey information on obvious and hidden workplace barriers to equity groups was destroyed.

### **Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Rights**

The Harris government cut funding to the Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Youth Line as one of their first acts of government.

Since 1995, the Harris government has opposed every court or tribunal challenge

involving same-sex relationship rights and has appealed every positive court case and tribunal decision. In October 1999, the Harris government grudgingly passed omnibus legislation amending 67 laws to extend legal rights to same-sex relationships. They did so by order of the Supreme Court of Canada in the *M v H & Ontario* ruling that the definition of “spouse” in the Family Law Act was discriminatory. In his remarks on the legislation, Harris was very clear his government would never extend rights in this area, if not ordered to do so by the Supreme Court. Bill 5 enshrines the segregation of Lesbian and Gay families and relationships by creating a totally separate category for them. Even by extending these rights, Harris’ approach was homophobic.

Further, the government has delisted from OHIP coverage of medical procedures that are needed by transgendered people.

### **Housing**

For the first time since 1975, rent has been decontrolled in Ontario. All new apartments will be permanently exempt from rent control. 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. Even the Chair of Ontario’s Human Rights Commission testified that the new tenants’ laws violate human rights.

### **Medicare**

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.

User fees are imposed on the Ontario Drug Benefit plan for seniors. The “Neighbours” homecare and home support agencies for seniors and the disabled were abolished.

### **Ontario Human Rights Commission**

During the 1995 election campaign, Harris promised to “properly fund the Human Rights Commission to deal with cases of discrimination.” Instead, this government has closed several

regional offices and contracted out a fundamental aspect of the enforcement of human rights – the investigation of complaints. This function is now being carried out by consultants on a fee-for-service basis, with time limits on the investigative process.

### **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.

### **Criminal Justice**

In Harris’ Ontario, the criminal justice system continues its discrimination against aboriginal people, people of colour and other marginalized groups.

Dudley George, an unarmed aboriginal man, was fatally shot by the Ontario Provincial Police during a peaceful land-rights protest at Ipperwash Provincial Park. Since that time, a number of labour, church, human and civil rights organizations has continually called for a public inquiry to get to the truth surrounding the death of Dudley George. The Harris government has steadfastly refused to initiate a public inquiry.

The policy on strip searches by police officers was reviewed only after two white males, one a citizen of Toronto and the other a visitor from England, were stripped and searched by police officers. For years, aboriginal people and people of colour, in particular African Canadian men and women, have called on the Attorney General’s office to take action, but their complaints were ignored.

### **Welfare**

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

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

Workfare has been introduced for all able-bodied welfare recipients, even for single mothers of dependent children. Anyone who refuses a workfare job is severely penalized through the loss of benefits.

### **Women's Rights**

Funding for women's shelters was terminated or slashed, putting abused women at risk of being stalked, injured or killed. Thousands of subsidized childcare spaces have vanished, including 4,000 in Toronto alone. Construction of new non-profit spaces has ground to a halt, as the Conservative government tries to convince the public to move their children into unlicensed, for-profit childcare.

### **Worker Protection**

The NDP labour law reforms were totally wiped out by Bill 7, 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. When public services are privatized, the workers will lose both their collective agreement and their bargaining rights. And workers in the contract service sector lose successor rights and their jobs whenever a contract changes hands, pounding wages back to minimum wage levels.

Agricultural workers also lost the right to organize when the Harris government introduced the *Labour Relations & Employment Statute Law Amendment Act 1995*, which essentially repealed the *Agricultural Labour Relations Act 1994*. Denying agricultural workers the same rights of other workers in Ontario violates their rights to freedom of association, contrary to the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*.

The Harris government has not only eroded human rights legislatively, but has reduced

funding to agencies, boards and commissions which has had an adverse impact on workers and services. Harris has also stacked these bodies with political appointments that will ensure conformity with his right-wing ideology.

### **LABOUR & HUMAN RIGHTS**

It was through the tireless efforts of trade unions that laws to prohibit discrimination were introduced in Ontario. Leading the struggle for legislation was the Toronto and District Labour Council Committee for Human Rights, which was chaired by the late Eamon Park from the United Steelworkers of America (USWA). Members of the Committee included Gordon Milling of the USWA, Bromley Armstrong and Dennis McDermott of Local 439 of the United Auto Workers (now the Canadian Auto Workers). These trade unionists, working in coalition with the late Kalman Kaplansky of the Jewish Labour Committee, led several delegations to Queen's Park to highlight the need for legislation.

Due to the relentlessness of these activists, several pieces of legislation were enacted for the protection of workers in Ontario – the *Labour Relations Act*, the *Fair Employment Practices Act*, the *Fair Accommodations Act* and the *Fair Wages for Women Act*. The latter three were replaced by the Human Rights Code.

While over the years, a number of laws for the promotion of human and equity rights was introduced, the enforcement of these laws is often less than desirable. However, labour has continued to play a leadership role in the promotion and protection of human rights.

Since the Ontario Federation of Labour launched the "Racism Hurts Everyone Campaign" several years ago, some of the larger unions have established human rights departments. Others have established human rights committees, provided human rights training for local leadership and members, and negotiated no

discrimination and anti-harassment clauses in many collective agreements.

Undoubtedly, much has been done – but much remains to be done.

## **THE COLLECTIVE AGREEMENT OR THE HUMAN RIGHTS CODE?**

Human rights are workers' rights. Unions must take active steps to ensure that the human rights of all workers are respected in the workplace. We must continue to encourage workers to use their collective agreements to file complaints for human rights violations in the workplace. However, it should be noted that, when using the grievance and arbitration provisions for enforcing human rights, the Human Rights Code will prevail if there is a conflict between collective agreement language and the Code.

Section 12 subsection (j) of the *Ontario Labour Relations Act* gives arbitrators the authority to “interpret and apply human rights and other employment-related statutes, despite any conflict between those statutes and the terms of the collective agreement...”

While arbitrators are vested with the authority to “interpret and apply human rights...statutes,” many arbitrators lack the training and expertise to properly adjudicate human rights issues and apply human rights remedies as provided for under the Code. Therefore, unions have an obligation to provide human rights training for their members, so that they may be aware of and seek the full range of remedies available under the Human Rights Code when bringing grievances forward.

It is fair to say that unions, increasingly, are moving human rights higher on labour's agenda. It is also critically important for unions to understand that some of their members view the movement as uncaring when it comes to racism and discrimination. This perception often leads members to seek legal advice and at times they will try to file complaints with the Human Rights Commission, even when there is language in the

collective agreement for their protection. Many of these members, however, are discouraged by the Commission from seeking the protection of the Human Rights Code, instead of using the grievance procedure.

Due to a number of complaints to the OFL's human rights department, the OFL sought clarification from the Commission regarding access to the Human Rights Code for union members. The Chief Commissioner, in a letter to the OFL, has put on record that, “There is no ‘rule’ that complaints from members of unions will not be dealt with by the Commission.”

Workers and their unions must now lobby the Commission and legislators to ensure that we have a system of human rights in Ontario that will give immediate access to complainants, whether they are members of unions or not. As representatives of working people, we must not condone any restriction to our members' rights. Instead, we must take an activist approach to ensure that union members are not discriminated against when seeking to use the Human Rights Commission to bring complaints against an employer.

Indeed, workers must be able to use every means available to challenge employers when they violate the human rights of working people.

## **WE MUST TAKE ACTION**

The labour movement in Ontario has a major role to play in promoting human rights in the workplace in the new millennium. According to Statistics Canada, by the year 2002, racial minorities and women will make up the majority of new entrants into the workforce. This will present new challenges for labour, for these workers will expect unions to take human rights complaints seriously by addressing issues of equality, harassment and discrimination of all forms.

The OFL has played a leadership role in promoting human rights and, over the last decade, has demonstrated our commitment by being the first central labour organization in Canada to establish affirmative action seats for women, visible minorities, aboriginal people, youth, people with disabilities and gays, lesbians and bisexuals.

However, we cannot rest on our track record. We must redouble our efforts to ensure the gains we have made are not eroded by the agenda of the right. We must promote and protect the human rights of all of our members in order to build a united movement to ensure our success as representatives of working people.

We must also maintain our support for legislation to remedy systemic discrimination in the workplace. The Conservatives have deliberately ignored all studies that showed aboriginal people, people with disabilities, women and workers of colour continue to experience widespread discrimination in the labour force. Instead of recognizing the need to remedy discrimination in a systemic manner, they have successfully misrepresented employment equity as “special treatment” for some groups to the detriment of others. There is nothing special about requiring employers to hire fairly and we must be clear about the need for employment equity. We cannot allow this government to turn us around. Rather, we must continue to educate our members and voice our support for legislation to end systemic discrimination.

Just recently, Canada was identified by the United Nations as the best country in the world to live. While we should all be proud of this distinction, we must never forget that many in our society have yet to enjoy the benefits of this distinction. We must now work to ensure that all Canadians share in the benefits of this great country.

It is time for the labour movement in Ontario to provide the kind of leadership that led to an effective lobby for human rights legislation in this

province. We have done it before. We must do it again.

Working with our social justice partners, we must hold Harris accountable for his policies which have led to an erosion of human rights.

For as long as aboriginal people are denied justice, we must take action.

For as long as visible minorities continue to experience discrimination in employment, we must take action.

For as long as women continue to earn less than men, we must take action.

For as long as child poverty continues to plague our society, we must take action.

For as long as people are homeless and freezing to death on our streets, we must take action.

For as long as people with disabilities are marginalized, we must take action.

And the list goes on.

## **PLAN OF ACTION**

1. The OFL will organize a human rights/anti-racism conference in the year 2000.
2. The OFL will develop a generic human rights training manual for labour and community use.
3. The OFL will work with the teachers' federations to ensure anti-racism/human rights education becomes part of the curriculum.
4. The OFL will publicly oppose “targeted policing” and “economic fingerprinting” which unfairly attacks the impoverished and thus expands an inequitable tier system of justice.



5. The OFL, working in coalition with community leaders and activists, will use international human rights forums to highlight the erosion of human rights in Ontario, and encourage the CLC to do the same at the federal level.
6. The OFL will coordinate with affiliates to:
  - a) Review collective agreements, policies and internal procedures to remove discriminatory language, while adding progressive language protecting and advancing issues of human rights.
  - b) Adopt and implement recommendations of the CLC Anti-Racism Task Force Report.
  - c) Provide mandatory human rights training for all local leadership and shop stewards.
  - d) Negotiate employment equity measures to remedy systemic discrimination.
  - e) Through its committee of Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual members, review Bill 5 and formulate suggested actions as needed to ensure full and equal recognition of Gay and Lesbian relationships and families.
7. The OFL will lobby the NDP to:
  - a) Designate a human rights critic to advocate a human rights agenda for working people in Ontario.
  - b) Develop a “full-time jobs-for-all campaign” which must contain a serious employment equity component.
8. The OFL will lobby the Ontario Human Rights Commission to:
  - a) Enforce the Ontario Human Rights Code effectively.
  - b) Take a proactive approach to discrimination.
  - c) Order employment equity programmes as a remedy for systemic discrimination as provided for under the Code.
  - d) Provide human rights training for arbitrators to ensure that they consider remedies consistent with the Code.
  - e) Use its authoritative power to initiate complaints.
  - f) Re-establish the Race Relations Division of the Commission and appoint an Anti-Racism Commissioner.
9. The OFL will pressure the Ontario government to:
  - a) Call a public inquiry into the death of Dudley George.
  - b) Allocate proper funding and resources for the Human Rights Commission.
  - c) Introduce legislation to remedy systemic discrimination in employment.
  - d) Restore and expand funding to the health care, social services and education systems.
  - e) Conduct a province-wide public campaign against homophobia.
  - f) Reinstate coverage of medical procedures under OHIP for transgendered people.

- g) Amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to include gender identity as a prohibited ground.
- h) Ensure access to affordable housing for all, and encourage the CLC to take a similar initiative at the federal level.

# SUMMARY

Laws promoting human rights and equality rights in Canada flow from the United Nations' Charter and the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* to which Canada is a signatory.

Over the years, a number of federal and provincial laws was developed to protect Canadians from violations of their human rights. Notwithstanding these instruments of protection, individuals and groups continue to experience discrimination in employment and other areas of civil society.

In Ontario, the first Human Rights Code was proclaimed in 1962. Since then, a number of grounds prohibiting discrimination has been added. The Code now prohibits discrimination on the grounds of: race, colour, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, citizenship, creed, sex, age, marital status, family status, handicap, sexual orientation, receipt of public assistance and record of offences.

Despite the fact that the Code prohibits discrimination on a wide range of grounds and, on the surface, gives the impression that human rights violations are a thing of the past, the inadequate enforcement of the legislation results in the continued denial of basic human rights for individuals seeking the protection promised under the Code.

Since their election to office in 1995, the Harris government has introduced draconian legislation which has essentially eroded the rights of working people, the poor, the youth, the elderly and the disadvantaged.

It is obvious that Mike Harris and his band of Conservatives have no respect for the fundamental principles of human rights. The notion of dignity and worth of the human person and of the equal and inalienable rights of members of the human family is lost on this group of Conservatives. Instead of respecting human dignity, Harris seems preoccupied with policies that will ensure the poor

and the disadvantaged in our society are stripped of any semblance of dignity.

In March of 1999, the Harris government was censured for attacking the most vulnerable groups in Ontario society and violating the UN's International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The text of the concluding observations report cites four articles that challenge the Harris government's history of human rights violations, particularly in the case of the shooting death of aboriginal protester Dudley George; the plight of the homeless in Ontario; Bill 22 (*The Act to Prevent Unionization with respect to Community Participation under Ontario Works, 1997*) which denies workfare participants the right to join a trade union, to bargain collectively and to strike; and the escalating discriminatory situation of women and children living in poverty in increasing numbers across the province.

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However, we cannot rest on our track record. We must redouble our efforts to ensure the gains we have made are not eroded by the agenda of the right. We must promote and protect the human rights of all of our members in order to build a united movement to ensure our success as representatives of working people.

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9. The OFL will pressure the Ontario government to:
- a) Call a public inquiry into the death of Dudley George.
  - b) Allocate proper funding and resources for the Human Rights Commission.
  - c) Introduce legislation to remedy systemic discrimination in employment.
  - d) Restore and expand funding to the health care, social services and education systems.
  - e) Conduct a province-wide public campaign against homophobia.
  - f) Reinstate coverage of medical procedures under OHIP for transgendered people.
  - g) Amend the Ontario Human Rights Code to include gender identity as a prohibited ground.
  - h) Ensure access to affordable housing for all, and encourage the CLC to take a similar initiative at the federal level.

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