

OFL Action Update

December 15, 2009

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the OFL, one of our key goals is to establish a new relationship with government: a relationship that establishes new channels for dialogue and discussion, and is engaging and proactive rather than defensive and reactive.

At the same time, I am making moves to raise the media profile of the OFL. We must find new and more effective ways to reach out to the public. We must tell the story of the struggles of working people, and highlight the important and positive role our movement plays in those struggles.

December is a busy time for all of us as we work non-stop to clear up year end items before we break to spend some time with our families. However, I thought it important to take this opportunity to provide the Executive Board and Council with a quick update to keep you informed about my initiatives on these two critical fronts.

In solidarity,
Sid

Governmental Relations

- As most of you are aware, immediately following my election, Brother Hassan Yussuff of the Canadian Labour Congress and I met with provincial Finance Minister Dwight Duncan on the issue of pension reform. The meeting was productive and allowed us the opportunity to engage government proactively before decisions are made on this critical issue.
- I have arranged another meeting with Minister Duncan and Labour Minister Peter Fonseca to discuss potential impacts of the looming budget deficit on public services, and public sector employees. Once again, the key is to engage with government in a constructive way before, rather than after, the spring budget is delivered. At this meeting, which is scheduled for January 21, I will be accompanied by heads of unions who have significant membership in the public sector.

Media Relations

- On January 12, I will be doing a feature one-on-one interview with Steve Paikin on TVO's The Agenda. The interview will focus on my vision for the future of Ontario's labour movement, my perspective on the relationship between labour and government, and my views on the jobs crisis and labour's prescriptions for addressing the economic meltdown. Following the feature interview I will be participating in a panel discussion on green jobs.
- On January 13th I will be meeting with the editorial board of the Toronto Star. As you know, the Star is the widest circulation daily in Canada. This meeting will provide an invaluable opportunity to build a relationship and establish an unfiltered dialogue with these important opinion makers.