



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Ontario Federation of Labour
Executive Board Meeting, April 11, 2011



REMEMBER

APRIL

28

Kill a Worker
Go to Jail



**Day of Mourning for Workers Killed
or Injured on the Job.**



The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) represents 54 unions and one million workers. It is Canada's largest provincial labour federation.

President's Report, Ontario Federation of Labour, Executive Board Meeting, April 11, 2011

General inquiries regarding this document should be directed to:

Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) | Fédération du travail de l'Ontario (FTO)

15 Gervais Drive, Suite 202, Toronto, Ontario M3C 1Y8

Telephone: 416-441-2731

Fax: 416-441-1893

Toll-Free: 800-668-9138

Email: info@ofl.ca

TDD: 416-443-6305

Web: www.OFL.ca

Follow the OFL online:

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1. OFL President Sid Ryan



2. TCHC tenant activists



4. Rally hosts: Good Jobs for All Chair Winnie Ng & Toronto and York Region Labour Council President John Cartwright



3.



5.



PART 1: CAMPAIGNS & GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

10,000 Flood Toronto to Demand Respect

Over 10,000 took to the streets of Toronto for the largest protest against Mayor Rob Ford's "Wisconsin North" agenda since he took office in December. The OFL played a central role in pulling together a broad-based coalition of labour unions and community groups to organize a rally that included people from all walks of life. Dubbed the "Rally for Respect," the protest called on Toronto City Councillors to protect "our communities, public services and good jobs."

Since taking office, Mayor Rob Ford has begun implementing his own personal agenda—an agenda that is frighteningly similar to the Tea Party Republicans in Wisconsin and Ohio whose actions have sparked massive protests. Ford has made it clear that he is hell-bent on selling off public services, derailing public transit, targeting trade unions and rolling back Toronto's environmental plans. This style of "aggressive conservatism" is designed to usher in a new wave of Harris-style cuts across Ontario. With Conservative sweeps of municipal elections in Windsor, Sudbury and several other Ontario cities, it has become clear that no city is isolated and that what happens in Toronto could be adopted in any city or town.



Immediately after taking office, Mayor Ford turned the city’s surplus into a deficit by cutting the city’s revenue stream. This manufactured financial crisis was then used as a central argument for attacking public sector jobs. With the collusion of the McGuinty government, Ford was successful in having the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) declared an essential service and stripping the right to strike – an essential democratic right – from over 10,000 transit workers.



His next target is the privatization of waste removal, despite evidence that privatization is more costly and less efficient. However, Ford’s aggressive plan for a comprehensive public service review has made it clear that every Torontonionian will be negatively impacted by his agenda through service cuts, closures, user fees and privatization. Community groups, public services, public housing, public transit, libraries and recreation centres are all in his cross hairs.

“Drunk on his new power, Mayor Ford is making a fundamental mistake in advancing a personal agenda at the expense of the public interest,” said OFL President Sid Ryan, who was a labour spokesperson at the rally. “By ignoring the electorate, axing jobs and gutting services, Ford is attacking peoples’ livelihoods and communities. Wielding power recklessly creates blowback. And the blowback is just beginning.”



Women’s organizations, transit riders, student groups, environmental activists and social service agencies were joined by public and private sector trade unionists in staunch opposition to the politics of division that Ford sees as the key to his success. The OFL donated 500 bright blue placards to carry the central message of the Toronto rally, but the thousands of hand-made placards and banners that decorated the march were a testament to the deep passion of the diverse community that mobilized to demand respect.

Rob Ford's Toronto ... **BY THE NUMBERS**

41 bus routes have been cut



10. CUPE 79 & 416 Members

2 shelters under threat of closure by June



11. CUPE Local 79 members

23 million dollars in new user fees for recreation programs

100 thousand dollars cut from Tenant Defence Fund

70 thousand on waiting lists for affordable housing

22 public housing units to be sold off



12.



Labour Takes Action to Support NDP Bill to Ban Scabs

The urgent need for Anti-Scab legislation was the focal point of a long and intense day of action and protest at Queen's Park March 31. The day was kicked off by a rally at the legislature in support of Private Member's Bill 45, the *Labour Relations Amendment Act*, proposed by NDP MPP France G  linas. The Bill called for banning the use of replacement workers during labour disputes and restoring workers' rights stripped away by the Mike Harris government.

"Employers continue to exploit Ontario's lax labour laws that protract and inflame labour disputes for months, and sometimes years on end, causing financial hardship and injury to workers and communities," OFL President Sid Ryan told the crowd.

The rally included union members who have been on strike and lockout, including employees of Engineered Coated Products (ECP) in Brantford who

have been kept out for two and a half years. ECP has been able to avoid bargaining through its use of replacement workers. ECP has now announced it is closing in June.

The action moved inside the legislature as USW members and allies packed the legislature gallery to hear G  linas present the Bill. The Liberals manoeuvred to ensure the Bill's defeat as angry workers demonstrated in the gallery and refused to leave. The sit-in continued for hours with workers demanding Premier McGuinty take action. They pledged to redouble efforts to secure the crucial legislation to restore the balance of power.

"The failure to ensure second-reading passage of Bill 45 means lengthy labour disputes in this province are doomed to continue as companies refuse to negotiate and continue to operate by using contracted replacement workers," said United



13. NDP MPP France Gélinas



14. Three Presidents: Rod Sheppard (IFPTE Local 160), Sid Ryan (OFL) & Sam Hammond (ETFO)

Steelworkers' Ontario Director Wayne Fraser, who led the sit-in at Queen's Park.

"The government's actions are a disgrace," Ryan told the media. "They are so afraid that debate and public hearings would expose the lies they have been putting forward that they'll do anything to prevent it. This is an absolutely vital piece of legislation and a priority for the labour movement. We are never letting it go."

The Bill was defeated 28-16. The OFL and affiliates are demanding legislation similar to Québec and B.C. that bans the use of scabs during a labour dispute.

"The McGuinty Liberals had a chance to reverse the Mike Harris' labour laws," Gélinas said. "Instead the Liberals sided with the Conservatives and their anti-workers, anti-families, anti-communities agenda."



15. IAMAW President Dave Ritchie

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News | Toronto & GTA
50 protest defeat of 'anti-scab' law at legislature
By ANTONELLA ARTUSO AND JONATHAN JENKINS, QUEEN'S PARK BUREAU
Last Updated: March 31, 2011 8:01pm

OFL Officers Downey & Kelly with USW District 6 President Wayne Fraser



16. Honourable Greg Sobara meets with labour presidents: Fraser (USW District 6), Hahn (CUPE Ontario), Thomas (OPSEU) & Ryan (OFL)



17. Workers call on Prime Minister Harper and Bay Street to have a heart for pensions



18. 84-year old USW 1005 widow Mary Fiori talks about struggling on a pension

Valentine's Day Action on Bay Street

The momentum against U.S. Steel that began with the massive Hamilton Day of Action on January 29 continues. On Valentine's Day, hundreds of protesters joined the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and members of USW Local 1005 in rallying against Scotiabank and Brookfield. These Bay Street executives sit on the board of U.S. Steel, which has locked out its workers since November 2010. The foreign-owned company is demanding that workers agree to de-index the pensions of 9,000 retirees and widows.

The protesters called on the Harper government to look out for the interests of Canadians and stop aiding foreign investors that are seeking to exploit Canada's workers and resources, while driving down the standards of living – especially for retirees.

USW 1005 will take its demands directly to Parliament Hill. Join them in Ottawa on May 1 to call on the next government of Canada to support retirement security.

Ontario Budget Cuts Jobs

On March 29, the Ontario government tabled a pre-election budget that slashed public services, entrenched tax cuts for profitable corporations and imposed austerity measures on virtually every sector. The measures come at a time when Ontario has nearly 10 per cent fewer jobs than three years ago, and food bank usage has reach record levels.

Budget Low-Lights:

- Elimination of 1,500 public sector jobs, on top of 3,400 jobs cut in 2009;
- Lack of funding for child care that will result in the closure of child care centres;
- \$9 million cut to Children's Aid;
- No poverty relief measures;
- No expanded access to retraining programs for laid-off workers; and
- Continue chronic underfunding for health care, education and other vital services.

While the budget does provide modest funding to create 60,000 new spaces for college and university students, it provides no funding to improve the affordability or quality of higher education. After eight years of McGuinty's self-appointed reign as the "Education Premier," Ontario's per-student funding for post-secondary education remains among the lowest in Canada.

The budget also announced a "Commission on the Reform of Ontario's Public Services. It will be headed up by former TD Bank Chief Economist Don Drummond. (CBC news reported that TD Canada Trust had earned a 29 per cent profit margin in the third quarter of 2010, clearing \$1.18 billion. This is up \$0.91 billion from 2009). Drummond, who is an outspoken opponent of health-care spending levels and an advocate for a larger "private sector presence" in the delivery of services has been tasked to find more ways to cut, privatize and out-source public sector services.

The cornerstone of the Ontario budget's job creation strategy is a \$4.5 billion give-away to profitable



19. OFL Secretary-Treasurer Marie Kelly in post-budget media scrum

corporations, without any obligation on them to actually create jobs. In fact, a 2004 report prepared for the Federal Finance Ministry noted that reducing the Corporate Income Tax rate was the least effective tax incentive for improving job creation.

When fully phased in, Ontario's corporate income tax will be dropped from 14 to 10 per cent which will be lower than the average OECD rate, or competing jurisdictions in the United States. In order to make up the shortfall of corporate tax revenue, the McGuinty government is seeking to cut millions by contracting out services and increasing public-private partnerships.

Secretary-Treasurer Marie Kelly was on hand, representing the OFL and the voice of labour in the post-budget media scrum.



OFL Meeting with Ontario Labour Minister

OFL President Sid Ryan chaired a labour delegation meeting with Minister Charles Sousa last week in a full and frank discussion on Bill 160, the WSIB Funding Review and the need for Anti-Scab legislation. Also in attendance at the April 4 meeting were OFL officers Marie Kelly and Terry Downey, OFL staff and representatives from OPSEU, ONA, CAW, USW, UFCW, COPE and CUPE, as well as senior staff from the Minister’s office.

Bill 160

We elicited some forward movement and reassurances from the government, notably:

1. The strong and restated commitment that the role and autonomy of the Workers Health and Safety Centre (WHSC) and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) would be respected;
2. That there would be no more surprises on Bill 160. We noted our anger and sense of betrayal when our clause-by-clause review found numerous sections that were not in keeping with the intent and spirit of the Expert Panel recommendations. We asked for a commitment to the provision of some responses to our stated areas of concern in advance of the amendments.

Ryan warned Minister Sousa the labour movement was on the cusp of pulling support for Bill 160

and may have no alternative but to attempt to kill the legislation. “Don’t try to insert labour relations issues into this legislation and do not vest bureaucrats with the power to make law and policy. It is unacceptable.”

At issue is the section of the Bill that allows a Director to establish written policies on the interpretation, administration and enforcement of the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*. It allows a Director to write law (powers reserved for the Legislature and Cabinet) and enables civil servants to directly undermine any of the Expert Panel recommendations. It also makes it a legal requirement that an inspector follow those policies and undermines their enforcement role. The Ministry argued it was needed to address “inconsistencies” in enforcement.

The OFL outlined the following six concerns:

- The Chief Prevention Officer should be vested with the powers that have been allocated to the Minister;
- The role and autonomy of the WHSC and OHCOW must be retained;
- Senior bureaucrats must be prohibited from publishing policies that have the force of law;
- Workers must be protected from reprisal;
- There should be no limitations on the ability of inspectors to provide testimony and evidence to protect workers; and
- There should be no obstacles placed on the ability of JHSC labour co-chairs’ recommendations.



20. Ryan calls for a ban on scabs



21. Ryan presents before government on Bill 150

WSIB Funding Review

We urged the Minister to enable an expanded scope that would include the missing element of coverage. Currently, 38 per cent of workers are not covered by Workers' Compensation and are therefore not even on the Ministry's radar screen when it comes to inspections. Mandatory coverage for the more than one million workers would help spread the risk among a larger pool of employers, many of whom are not now paying their share for prevention and enforcement.

There did not appear to be any willingness on the part of the MOL to expand the scope of the review. They replied that they were attempting to prevent push-back from employers for cuts to injured workers' benefits.

Anti-Scab Legislation

The need for anti-scab legislation is as urgent as ever. The OFL took issue with the government's determination to kill Private Members Bill 45, introduced by NDP MPP France Gélinas. "You've pulled the right to strike off of TTC workers and left thousands of workers rotting on picket lines at ECP, St. Mary's Cement, Vale Inco and numerous other places. And then you close down all public debate," Ryan said and put the Minister on notice that the labour movement views this as a priority and is determined to achieve an end to the use of scabs.

Hearings on TTC Workers' Right to Strike, Bill 150

On March 21, President Sid Ryan presented to the Standing Committee on General Government concerning the *Toronto Transit Commission Labour Disputes Act*.

Ryan challenged the need for the legislation that removes the right to strike from approximately 10,000 workers and told the committee that the government has manufactured a crisis where none exists. The TTC workers are members of ATU Local 113, CUPE Local 2 and the IAMAW Local 235. Agreements are to be settled by binding arbitration if collective bargaining reaches an impasse.

The government claimed the need for depriving workers of the right to strike arises from "serious public health and safety, environmental, and economic concerns," but Ryan told the committee that a City of Toronto 2008 staff report said just the opposite: Toronto Fire Services, Emergency Medical Services and the Police Service reported that there had been no noticeable effect upon their response times or ability to respond due to a strike by TTC employees and the interruption of services.

"The Liberals are attempting to shore up votes for the October election by courting Ford's electoral base," Ryan said. In February, the city refused the voluntary and unconditional no-strike commitment made by all three unions at the TTC.

“Free collective bargaining gives workers a stake in the outcome of bargaining and without this, you remove the possibility for a smoothly running system. Imposing agreements on workers - who will most certainly take action if their working conditions become deplorable - is not the solution. You upend the collective bargaining process at your own risk.”

Ontario is the only jurisdiction in North America that refuses operating funding to its largest municipal public transit system. Toronto is the only city in the world that has deprived all transit workers of the right to strike.

You can view the Q&A session and Ryan's responses on the OFL's new YouTube site. Go to www.ofl.ca and click on the YouTube icon under the search button.

OFL Challenges Ontario Finance Ministry Pension Regulation

The OFL has registered its serious concerns with the government's proposed “Temporary Solvency Relief Program for the Broader Public Sector.” The proposals (found in the Feb. 10 consultation paper) mark a reversal of government support for Defined Benefit Plans and are premised on the view that what is called a “sustainability” problem is the simple result of excessive benefit costs.

The regulation is designed to create powerful incentives for employers to slash pensions. It elevates employer cost reduction as the overriding objective of a new policy that is being advertised as simple assistance – “relief” – for plans in financial difficulty. In effect, workers who have sacrificed to establish and secure the kind of pensions that the Minister claims to support are being scapegoated by this measure.

The promise of its implementation appears to have had its intended effects. Several employers potentially subject to this framework have already begun to submit applications for the relief measure, including the required commitments to cut benefits, shift costs onto employees, or close down their Defined Benefit Plans altogether.

The OFL's full submission, including proposals for an alternative approach to protect pension benefits, is available on the website, www.ofl.ca. Our 2010 submission on Bill 120, *An Act to Amend the Pensions Benefit Act* and the *Pensions Benefits Amendments Act*, is also posted.

McGuinty Axes Minimum Wage Increase

On February 13, Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty announced plans to cancel increases in the minimum wage for the first time in seven years. Ontario's low-income workers had hoped to see their wages reach \$10.50 per hour this year to help offset the rising cost of living.

The OFL responded by blasting the Premier for turning his back on Ontario's working poor while maintaining his policy of generous corporate tax cuts for profitable corporations. In the 2009 Ontario Budget, the McGuinty government announced that he would hand \$4.5 billion over to the private sector through cuts to the Corporate Income Tax and exemptions to the Corporate Minimum Tax.

OFL President Sid Ryan accused the government of handing over the public purse to corporations while workers are left with empty pockets. “The members of the Canadian Federation of Independent Business appear happy to help themselves to public dollars but reluctant to uphold their end of the bargain. If taxpayers are expected to subsidize businesses, the least that can be expected in return is that they pay a living wage. Not a shred of credible evidence has ever shown that raising the minimum wage actually hurts job growth or the economy.”

The freeze on the minimum wage will hit workers at a time when cost of living increases are topping three per cent and food bank usage is up by seven per cent. The combined effect will mean the real earnings of many low-income people will fall below \$10 an hour.

Heading into a provincial election, Ontario workers will be demanding more than just a promise from the Premier to “review” the impact of his minimum wage freeze. The OFL will be demanding action.

Union Dialogue on *Labour Relations Act*

Given ongoing concerns about the impact of the current statutory and regulatory labour relations regime on union density and successful organizing, the OFL has convened a working group to explore a wide range of needed reforms that would not only make it easier for workers to join unions and defend their working conditions, but also to better reflect the reality of today's labour market. The working group is expected to meet over the next several weeks to develop a comprehensive vision for labour law reform that better suits workers, including those facing barriers to the labour market.

Law Commission of Ontario Consultation

Through its Vulnerable Workers and Precarious Work Project, the Law Commission of Ontario is currently reviewing the “nature of precarious work, the identity of vulnerable workers, the existing protections and enforcement mechanisms for people engaged in these forms of paid work and the impact of precarious work on the daily lives of vulnerable workers and their families.” As part of that consultation process, the OFL hosted a consultation through the OFL's Labour Adjustment Committee that introduced Mohan Sharma, the lawyer who is heading up the project, to laid-off workers, including older and newcomer workers. A variety of issues were discussed, including impact of temporary employment agencies, the lack of enforcement mechanisms within the *Employment Standards Act* and the implications of recent changes that download responsibility for enforcement onto vulnerable workers themselves.

Federal Election Campaign 2011: Ryan Calls on Liberals to Vote NDP to Unseat Harper

With the May 2 election date fast approaching and 308 seats up for grabs, Canadians have the long-awaited chance to rid themselves of a Stephen Harper government whose contempt for Parliament has been matched only by its contempt for Canadians.

As Globe & Mail columnist Brian Topp wrote in last week's column, “Jack Layton's campaign is on fire. A week into the campaign, in the April 1st EKOS poll, the party is at 17.2 per cent – a 3.1 per cent increase in support in one week. Meanwhile, the Liberals dropped to 26.2 per cent from 28.1 per cent during the first week of the campaign – bleeding to the New Democrats.”

There are many crucial ridings in which the NDP is strongly positioned to win. Ontario's Oshawa riding with candidate Chris Buckley is one of these and one of the country's “must watch” ridings.

OFL President Sid Ryan, two-time federal NDP candidate, told the Toronto Star that unseating the Conservatives' Oshawa candidate, Colin Carrie, depends on Liberal voters understanding that the only way to get rid of the Harper candidate is to vote for the NDP's Buckley. “This is a pivotal race. The NDP vote is strong and if Liberals don't split the vote and come in behind Buckley, then we'll take it—as well as other federal ridings.”

The OFL is urging all workers and their families to volunteer their time with the NDP candidate in their area. There are many ways to get involved. Find out who your local candidate is, how you can help and how to avoid lineups on election days.

To find your local NDP candidate: www.ndp.ca/your-riding

Information on advance polls and identification required: www.elections.ca



22.

23. ODRT Director of Operations & Communications Clarence MacPherson with Ryan and instructors

HEALTH & SAFETY/WCB

Occupational Disability Response Team

The OFL's Occupational Disability Response Team (ODRT) have been making significant strides. OFL President Sid Ryan played a pivotal role in working with the ODRT to secure a \$1.2 million funding increase to expand training and advisory services. The project recently advertised for three Regional Services Coordinators for South Western, South Central and North Eastern Ontario and plans to fill these positions later in April.

The ODRT has booked 40 training courses and staff are working to update curriculum with new policy and legislative revisions. The ODRT project hosted a series of advanced week-long spring training seminars dealing with Workers' Compensation essentials, return-to-work programs, medical orientation and appeals and dispute resolutions. Ryan welcomed the 52 worker representatives that attended the seminars. He stressed the importance of advocates helping injured workers to secure

benefits, develop effective work re-integration plans and get fair treatment from employers', health care and insurance providers. He highlighted the unacceptably high rates of serious and fatal injuries suffered by Ontario workers and spoke of recent OFL campaigns to lay criminal charges against negligent employers and reform Ontario's health and safety and workers' compensation legislation.

Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Tune in to www.OFL.ca for the April 28 fact sheet for the Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job. The Officers will attend events around Ontario.

Sid Ryan: Lindsay, Northumberland, Toronto & Waterloo

Marie Kelly: Mississauga, Brampton & St. Thomas

Terry Downey: Smith Falls

OFL Directors will also be attending events across the province.

WSIB Funding Review Deadline: Feb. 18

The Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB) funding review is now in its second phase with public consultations taking place across Ontario. It is chaired by Professor Harry Arthurs, former Dean of Osgoode Hall Law School and President Emeritus of York University. The OFL has registered its serious concern with the government-imposed constraints that prohibit Arthurs from considering the issue of coverage. In a letter to MOL Minister Charles Sousa and in last week's face-to-face meeting, the OFL pointed to the more than one million workers who have no coverage and the many employers who are allowed to escape their financial obligations. "To do a review of the funding of the system and exclude coverage does not make any sense, considering the section of the *Act* that defines who is covered and who is not has not been amended since the Meredith Report of 1913," wrote President Sid Ryan. In addition to mandatory coverage of all workers, the OFL is also calling for the elimination of Deeming and Experience Rating.

The OFL lobby kit contains Fact Sheets on Deeming, Universal Coverage, Cost-of-Living Indexing of Benefits and Experience Rating, as well as a full list of lobby questions and contacts for Ontario MPPs. The Public Hearing Schedule can be viewed at www.wsibfundingreview.ca. Ryan will present at the April 26 Toronto hearing. For further information, Laurie Hardwick, Organization Services Director, 416-443-7657.

Bill 160: Occupational Law Amendment Act

OFL President Sid Ryan will present the OFL's perspective to the Standing Committee on Social Policy, April 18. The Federation expects to have the government's proposed amendments April 29. A teleconference call will take place with union leaders and the OFL's Interim Prevention Council Labour Discussion Group, which is made up of experts from all of the affiliates and organisations such as the WHSC and OCHOW, to determine if the



24. OFL Health and Safety Director Vern Edwards appointed as labour representative

Bill is acceptable. A clause-by-clause review will be held May 3. All information will be sent out as it is received. For further information, Vern Edwards, Director Health & Safety, 416-443-7662.

OFL's Vern Edwards Appointed to Interim Health and Safety Prevention Council

The OFL is pleased to announce the appointment of Health and Safety Director Vern Edwards to the Ontario government's Interim Health and Safety Prevention Council (IPC). Led by Paavo Kivisto, retired Deputy Minister of the Environment and former Deputy Minister of Labour, the IPC is mandated to help the province implement the key recommendations of the Expert Advisory Panel on Occupational Health and Safety, including the recruitment of a Chief Prevention Officer. Announcing the appointment, OFL President Sid Ryan praised Brother Edwards for his expertise, professionalism and outstanding representation of the labour movement. "Vern's contributions have significantly changed the lives of all workers. We are fortunate to have him."

TRADES & APPRENTICESHIP

College of Trades

The Ontario College of Trades is the first self-regulated body in Canada dedicated to professional tradespersons - established by the trades, for the trades. Its mandate will be to self-regulate all trades within Ontario. When implemented, the College and its regulations will replace the two separate pieces of legislation that currently govern the trades: the *Trades Qualification and Apprenticeship Act* (TQAA) and the *Apprenticeship and Certification Act* (ACA).

Apprenticeship staff within the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities were transferred to the College April 1, 2011, with the expectation the College would be fully functional by spring 2012. The Ministry issued a call for applications for all available positions within the College of Trades.

The OFL Trades and Apprenticeship Committee continues to monitor developments within the College of Trades. The deadline for applications to positions within the College of Trades was March 31st and the Committee spent considerable effort to encourage as many labour applications as possible from among affiliates in the Services, Industrial, Motive Power and Construction Trades Divisions. It was the Committee's goal to maximize labour's voice within the College of Trades.

OFL Secretary-Treasurer Marie Kelly, the Officer responsible for the OFL's Apprenticeship Committee, said: "Labour's voice will be critical if the College of Trades is to fulfill its mandate to promote high quality, authentic apprenticeship training, and not replicate the shortcomings of other professional colleges."

The College of Trades has been established on a bi-partite basis with equal representation from employers and employees in the decision-making bodies. However, there is no stipulation that employee representatives will be selected from among trade union members and the Ministry has made it clear that they are seeking a balance of union and non-union individuals. Unfortunately, the College has already incorporated numerous occupations that—

however important and valuable they are—should not be considered trades, especially within the College's Services division. Nevertheless, the OFL will remain active in defending authentic trades and authentic apprenticeship training.

Canada-European Union Comprehensive Economic & Trade Agreement (CETA)

The federal government is currently negotiating a new trade deal with the European Union. According to the Council of Canadians, Canadian and European corporations are insisting on "full access to procurement by sub-national governments including municipalities, school boards, universities, hospitals and other provincial agencies which could significantly reduce or eliminate the right to specify local priorities when public money is invested in goods, services or capital projects." This mechanism has already been implemented in Canada under the Trade Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement signed between Alberta and British Columbia. A similar provision is being implemented through the inter-provincial Agreement on Internal Trade. However, unlike these provincial deals, the CETA will ensure that procurement bids are opened up, not just to other jurisdictions within Canada, but to other jurisdictions across Europe – 27 European Union countries.

These procurement regulations will preclude local school boards, municipalities and other sub-national governments from implementing policies designed to nurture local communities. Such policies could include: local hiring and job creation strategies, equity practices, fair wage policies, or even local procurement policies. The Council of Canadians is currently circulating a petition to oppose the application of CETA to municipalities and school boards. Download the Council of Canadians Petition: <http://www.canadians.org/action/2011/CETA-schools.html>



25. CLC Executive Vice-President Marie Clarke Walker with "And Still I Rise" exhibit



26. Panelists at OFL Black History Month event



EQUITY & HUMAN RIGHTS

Celebrating Black History Month

The OFL celebrated February as Black History Month and 2011 as the United Nations' International Year for People of African Descent by issuing a statement and co-hosting a travelling exhibit that explored the legacy of Ontario's black community.

The OFL's statement paid tribute to Ontario's proud tradition of Black labour activists, such as Fred Upshaw, Ann Newman, Herman Stewart and June Veacock, all of whom have helped to advance the struggle for social and employment equity, while building community and inspiring leadership.

"The resilience and perseverance of Black workers in the face of racism, prejudice and discrimination is an inspiration to all workers in Ontario – and indeed for equity and social justice advocates everywhere," said OFL President Sid Ryan.

On February 24 and 25, the OFL co-hosted "And Still I Rise: A History of African Canadian Workers in Ontario" with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), Public

Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC), Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE), CUPE Local 4400, Workers Arts and Heritage Centre, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 1, Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA) and Latin American Trade Union Coalition (LATUC). Originally developed by the Workers Arts and Heritage Centre, this powerful exhibit attracted nearly two hundred participants at the opening reception. OFL President Sid Ryan gave an opening address prior to a lively panel discussion featuring guest speakers Carmen Henry, Adrienne Shadd and Natasha Henry.

"We still face many challenges, but ours is an incredibly diverse and united movement of Black trade unionists and community activists," said OFL Executive Vice-President Terry Downey.

Visit the OFL website to view the statement on Black History Month.

For photos of the exhibit, visit: www.flickr.com/OntarioFedLabour

QUICK FACTS

Racialized people in Canada are:

500
per cent Growing in numbers within the general population

300
per cent More likely to live in poverty

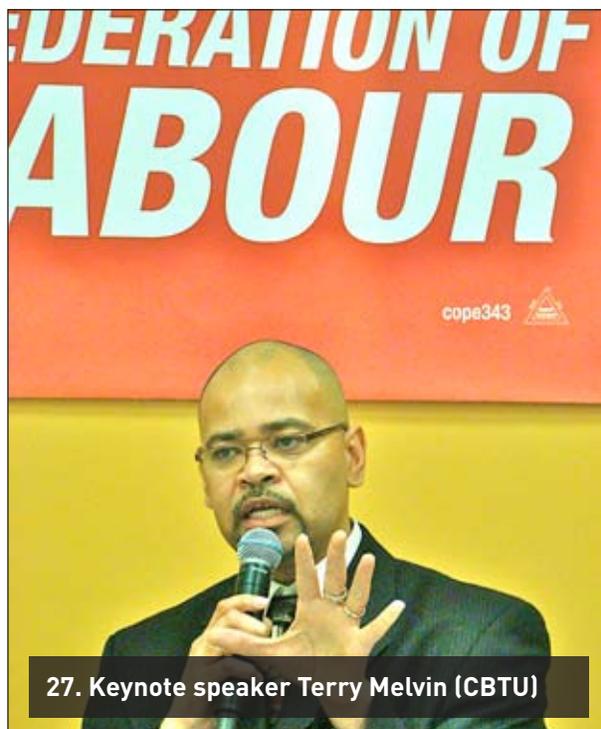
-15
per cent Earning less than non-racialized workers

OFL Workers of Colour Assembly and Educational

March 25 and 26, the OFL hosted its first ever Workers of Colour Assembly and Educational in Toronto. The impressive event was held in collaboration with the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), the Latin American Trade Unionists Coalition (LATUC) and the Asian Canadian Labour Alliance (ACLA) and drew more than 150 delegates from across Ontario.

The central theme of the Assembly was “Educate, Organize, Mobilize: For Racial Justice, Anywhere and Everywhere.” OFL Executive Vice-President Terry Downey introduced the keynote speaker, CBTU International Executive Board Member and New York State AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Terry Melvin.

The Assembly gave participants the opportunity to discuss barriers to equality, including access to good jobs, affordable housing, pensions and education. “Racialized workers are coming together to on develop short and long-term strategies for challenging legislators, employers, communities and individuals to become allies in the struggle for racial justice,” said OFL Executive Vice-President Terry Downey.



The key recommendations of the Assembly were:

- Host the Workers of Colour Assembly annually;
- Provide ongoing financial support to CBTU, LATUC and ACLA to assist them in combating racism within unions and society; and
- Financially support the implementation of the Action Plan resulting from the Assembly.

The Assembly objectives were:

- Strengthen solidarity between union-based and community-based anti-racist activists;
- Build common ground among our three coalitions, while recognizing the differences among ourselves in terms of culture, history, and other social identities;
- Integrate an anti-oppression analysis that includes race, class and gender analysis, as well as other forms of oppression;
- Deepen our understanding of the systemic and historical nature of racism;
- Challenge racist behaviour while working for institutional and cultural change; and
- Build a strong analysis and educational component into our strategy and planning.

“This historic gathering provided a much needed forum to bring together voices that are often on the margins of the labour movement,” said Elizabeth Ha, OFL Vice-President Representing Workers of Colour.

“Coming out of the Assembly, we have a plan, but now it is time for action. Racialized workers need to bring our voices forward and we need the rest of the labour movement to stand with us. Fighting to eliminate racism is everyone’s duty,” said Edgar Godoy, OFL Vice-President Representing Workers of Colour.

Among the provincial and national unions and community organizations represented at the Assembly were: CAW, Carpenters, CEP, community groups, COPE, CUPE, CUPW, IAMAW, IBEW, Justicia for Migrant Workers, Labour Education Centre, OPSEU, OSSTF, PSAC, SEIU, UFCW, UNITE HERE Local 75, United Steelworkers and Waterloo Regional Labour Council. Delegates from the Brampton-Mississauga and District Labour Council, the Toronto and York Region Labour Council and the Canadian Labour Congress also attended.

International Day for the Elimination of Racism

The OFL issued a statement on March 21 to recognize the 45th anniversary of the United Nations’ International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination. Across Ontario, workers are uniting to challenge racial prejudice and discrimination in their workplaces and in their communities.

Established six years after the 1960 Sharpeville Massacre, in which South African police opened fire and killed 69 people peacefully protesting apartheid “pass laws”, the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has become a focal point for the struggle for equality and human rights.

The OFL used this opportunity to raise awareness about the persistent income gap between racialized and non-racialized workers and to promote its historic Workers of Colour Assembly.

Visit the OFL website to view the statement on the International Day for the Elimination of Racism.



28. Workers of Colour Co-Chairs Elizabeth Ha & Edgar Godoy



29. OFL Executive Vice-President Terry Downey



30.



31.



Provincial Child Care Tour Hits the Road

The Ontario Coalition for Better Child Care (OCBCC) and the OFL launched a provincial tour, “Will Child Care Survive?,” to call for new provincial investments in affordable public child care.

The tour launched in Belleville in January visited 10 cities. All three OFL officers travelled to communities throughout the province and generated local media coverage. Despite the broad public support for affordable and accessible public child care, the McGuinty government tabled a 2011 budget that ignored the importance of child care to communities and the economy.

“Because of McGuinty’s neglect, Ontarians can expect to see child care fees increase from 15 to 30 per cent and the closure of many programs,” said OFL Secretary-Treasurer Marie Kelly. “It is disgraceful that new parents are struggling to make ends meet because of exorbitant child care costs. Ontario’s child care crises is a national embarrassment and it hurts families across the board.”

In Ontario, only 20 per cent of children have access to a licensed child care space. Without subsidies that reduce fees to affordable levels, like those in Manitoba and Québec, many Ontario parents are paying between \$40 and \$60 a day for each child. At this rate, child care fees can run between \$10,000 to \$15,000 a year and are often the second highest expense for young families.

The OFL will continue to work closely with the OCBCC to make child care a central issue in the 2011 provincial election.

For tour materials, visit: www.ChildCareOntario.org

International Women’s Day



This year was the 100th anniversary of the first International Women’s Day (IWD). March 8 is marked around the world as a day to celebrate women and reaffirm women’s rights to full equality. The OFL issued a statement on IWD and helped to promote IWD events in cities across the province.

On March 8, 1908, women garment workers took to the streets to make the same demands their sisters had made 50 years earlier. Fifteen thousand women garment workers marched to demand shorter working hours, an end to child labour, safe working conditions and equal pay. Their slogan – “Bread & Roses” – rang through the streets. Bread symbolized economic security and roses, social justice and a better life.

This year, the OFL Women’s Committee chose to celebrate IWD by producing a beautiful poster and commemorative pewter pin. The project reflects women’s spirit, sisterhood and solidarity. The theme reflected the many roles women play in our society—in the family, at work and as activists. The “Many Hats: Sisters Sharing Hope Vision Solidarity” project was an overwhelming success, with 14,000 pins and 9,000 posters distributed.

Officers Kelly and Downey attended various lead-up events for IWD. On March 6, Kelly was the keynote speaker at the Sudbury & District Labour Council event to commemorate IWD. On March 12, Downey attended the Toronto IWD rally.

Visit the OFL website to view the statement on IWD.

Human Rights for Trans People

This past session of Parliament marked an historic victory for equity and human rights. On February 9, Bill C-389, *Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and Criminal Code* (gender identity and gender expression), narrowly passed its third reading with a vote of 143-135. This Private Member's Bill, which was introduced by NDP MP Bill Siksay (Burnaby—Douglas), would enshrine gender identity and gender expression in the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Criminal Code of Canada*. OFL President Sid Ryan sent letters to each of the four federal party leaders, calling for their support of the bill, and issued a media release on the issue.

Unfortunately, Bill C-389 died once the government fell and the federal election was called. However, equity activists still recognize this as a significant step forward. The consideration of this bill marked the first time that issues of gender identity and gender expression have been debated in the House of Commons, and the first time that the voices of trans-Canadians have been entered into the Canadian public record. These are significant steps toward explicitly recognizing and affirming the equality-rights of trans-identified Canadians.

“There is much more to be done to ensure that discrimination, harassment and hate-motivated violence against the trans-identified community are not permitted in Canada,” said OFL Solidarity and Pride Vice-President Stephen Seaborn. “The OFL will continue our work with Equality for Gays And Lesbians Everywhere (EGALE) and the Federal NDP to ensure the legislation is introduced in the next session of Parliament.”

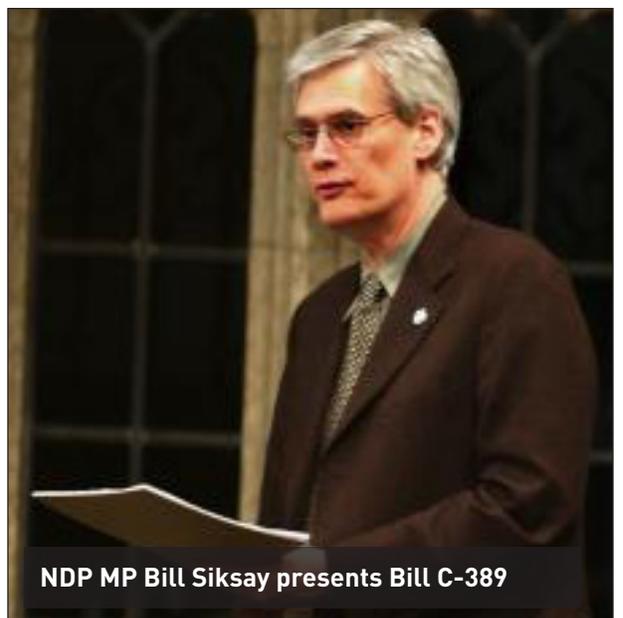
Visit the OFL website to view the media release and letters to parliamentarians in support of Bill C-389.



32. Sister Downey at Toronto IWD Rally



33. Solidarity & Pride VP Stephen Seaborn



NDP MP Bill Siksay presents Bill C-389

PART 2: OFL SUPPORT



34. OFL Government Relations Director and Liaison to the President Lynn Simmons

Staff Changes

The OFL was honoured to grant a request from Federal NDP Leader Jack Layton to book off Sandra Clifford, Government Relations Director and Liaison to the President, to work on his cross-country election tour. In her capacity as Wagoneer, Sandra ensures that Layton's tour runs smoothly as he delivers his message about doubling the Canada Pension Plan and defending the interests of working families.

To keep the labour movement's Queen's Park profile from being overshadowed by the Federal election, the OFL has added expert communicator Lynn Simmons to its roster to fill in for Sandra. Since stepping in at the end of March, Lynn has handled a heads of unions meeting with Minister of Labour Charles Sousa and coordinated the delivery of two

submissions to the Ontario government. Lynn's background with the OFL goes back nearly 10 years, heading up various projects and contracts. Her experience as a CBC broadcaster, newspaper reporter and communications director for various unions makes her a tremendous asset to the OFL team. Welcome, Lynn!

OFL Labour Honour Roll Scholarships

Every year for the past 27 years, the OFL has awarded two scholarships for post-secondary studies worth \$2,000 each to a member, or the child of a member, of a local union affiliated with the OFL. The scholarships are awarded in honour of distinguished trade union activists who have made a significant contribution to the life and growth of the labour movement in Ontario.

The OFL is currently soliciting nominations of retired or deceased trade unionists who can be recognized through this year's awards. The names of nominees should be sent to the OFL, along with a short biography, no later than April 15, 2011. For more information on the application criteria and process visit www.OFL.ca.

The deadline for scholarship applications is May 27 and this year's winners will be announced July 5, 2011. Applicants must be a member or child of a member of a local union affiliated with the OFL. Scholarship winners will be selected based on a brief résumé outlining non-academic interests and activities, such as community or political involvement and evidence of understanding of the role and significance of the Canadian labour movement. Applications must be accompanied by a 1,000 word essay on this year's topic.

For further information, application forms and this year's essay topic, visit: www.ofl.ca/youth.

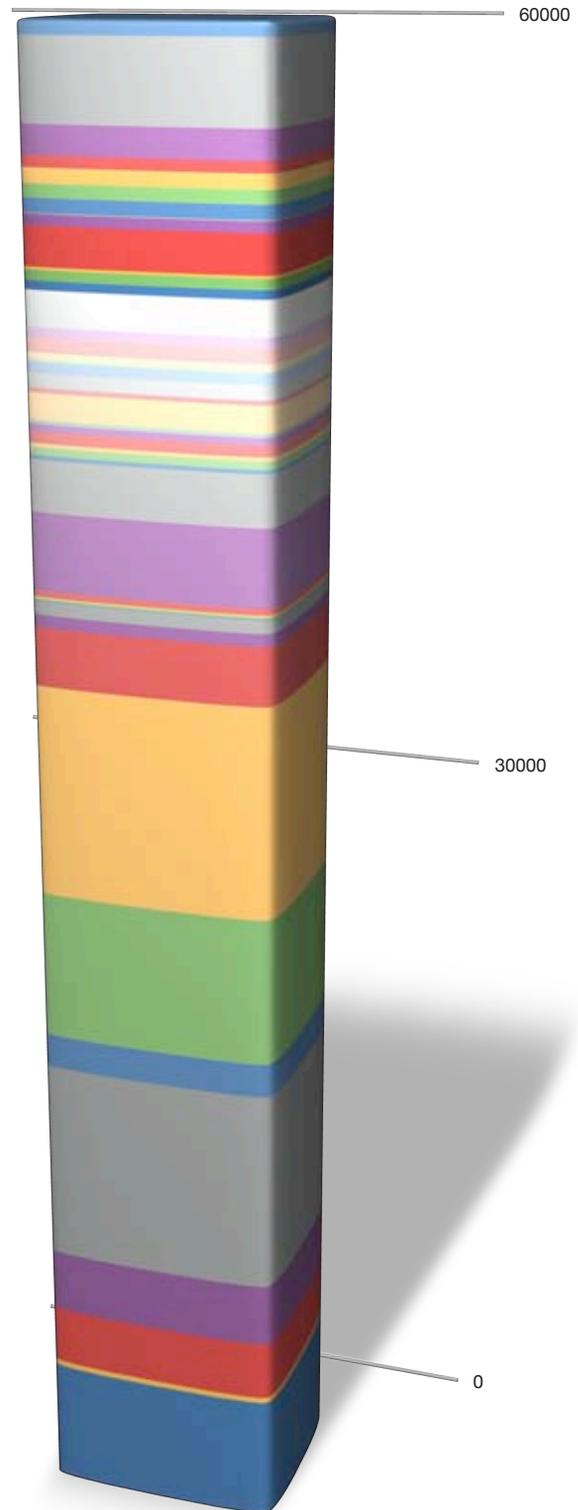
PART 3: AFFILIATIONS

OFL GROWS BY
60,427
SINCE SEPT. 2010

OFL Membership Leaps By Over 60,000!

In February, the OFL reported a leap in membership of over 26,000 in only five months. However, only two months later, we are pleased to report that this number has more than doubled. With 36 new locals affiliating to the OFL since February, the accumulated membership growth since September 2010 has now reached 60,427. As of the date of printing, new affiliations from CAW locals have contributed 54,344 new members to the OFL, making it the largest private sector union in the Federation.

Welcome to our newest members from the Brock University Faculty Association and CAW Locals 27, 35, 80, 88, 112, 252, 302, 444, 504, 523, 524, 557, 580, 584, 887, 1136, 1256, 1459, 1498, 1530, 1575, 1688, 1769, 1839, 1917, 1996, 2003, 2098, 2163, 2168, 4003, 4266, 4304, 4308 and 4457.





35. Striking USW 1-500 member Gerald Lasalle

PART 4: AFFILIATE & LABOUR MOVEMENT SOLIDARITY

ECP Closure to Strand USW 1-500 Members

Nearly 100 workers learned that they will lose their jobs as a result of a March announcement by Intertape Polymer, the parent company that owns the Engineered Coated Products (ECP) plant in Brantford, that the plant will close its doors this June. This shameful news follows a grueling two and a half year strike, during which time the McGuinty government failed to intervene to ensure a fair settlement.

The OFL helped to organize a three-day solidarity campaign for the striking ECP workers in September of last year and has maintained support for the union ever since.

“Premier McGuinty should be ashamed of his government for letting these workers rot on the picket lines for two and a half years while busloads of replacement workers rolled past them on a daily basis,” said OFL President Sid Ryan. “When there is a protracted labour dispute that devastates the livelihoods of workers and their families, the government has a responsibility to intervene. McGuinty failed miserably in that responsibility.”

Tough Bargaining Wins UFCW Victory; Saves Pensions, Plant & Dignity

During the annual holiday shut-down, UFCW employees of the Colonial Cookies factory in Kitchener received news that the plant was in receivership and nearly 350 employees would face a bleak New

Year. With over 60 per cent of the workforce having served the company for more than 20 years, the grim prospect of unemployment and a looming unfunded pension liability of nearly \$3 million, the news was particularly devastating.

When a buyer for the factory came forward, UFCW representatives were able to bargain a new collective agreement that saved jobs, protected pensions and recognized outstanding vacation pay. Negotiations with the employer ended with a nearly \$11 million buyout and buydown package, in addition to funding for almost \$3 million in deficiency and shortfall monies in the employee pension plans.

“It looked like the plant had no future but we fought to turn things around and get the workers their future back. Fighting for choices and for respect gives you a dignity that cannot be taken away,” said Rob Nicholas, Union Representative for UFCW Local 175.

“Because of the work of UFCW, the ovens are getting fired back up and they are keeping industry in their community. There’s a lot to be proud of,” said OFL President Sid Ryan, who sent a letter to acknowledge the significant accomplishments of the union in defending jobs during tough economic times.

Toronto Hydro Caught Spying on CUPE Local One Reps

In February, dirty employer tactics made national news when Toronto Hydro Management was exposed for hiring private detectives to conduct dozens of hours of surveillance on union health and safety representative, Joe Pessoa. Documents obtained by CUPE Local One show that as many as three investigators tailed Pessoa for 13 hours a day.

Local One President John Camilleri called the tactics “disgusting” and a “disgraceful mismanagement of taxpayer dollars.” He said that the surveillance took place during the latest round of bargaining, in which health and safety issues were a contentious matter.

The OFL has joined many affiliates in attending solidarity events to support CUPE Local One.



UFCW Local 175 workplace, Colonial Cookies



CUPE Local One Health & Safety Representative Joe Pessoa



36. CUPE Presidents: John Camilleri (Local One), Fred Hahn (CUPE Ontario) & Paul Moist (CUPE)



Locked-out airport limo drivers

Toronto Airport Limo Drivers Fight for Rights

Nearly 200 Toronto airport limo drivers have been locked out for over four months after the owner of three taxi firms refused to issue the drivers their provincial vehicle registration stickers and effectively locked them out of their cars and their jobs.

CAW President Ken Lewenza said that the McIntosh Group of Companies has shown a complete disregard for the limo drivers by leaving negotiations after demanding an increase to already highly-inflated fees collected by the company.

OFL Officers Marie Kelly and Terry Downey attended a solidarity rally for the drivers.

New Hamilton Taxi Union

After a year-long organizing drive, the Ontario Taxi Workers Union (OTWU) has received Ontario Labour Relations Board certification at Hamilton Cab, despite threats from Hamilton Cab Chairman that, "It's not over yet!"

In February 2010, drivers voted 76 per cent in favour of the fledgling OTWU. However, Hamilton Cab management challenged the application, claiming the drivers are not employees but independent contractors. The ballot box was sealed after the vote, but after Ontario Labour Relations Board hearings, it was opened to reveal a 215-67 pro-union result.

The OTWU's list of grievances includes: heavy hours, low wages, lack of benefits, favouritism by dispatchers and unfair discipline and dismissals.



Honoured labour activist Peter Leibovitch

J.S. Woodsworth Award for Peter Leibovitch

On March 21, Peter Leibovitch, a well-known Hamilton labour leader and activist who died suddenly last year, was honoured with an anti-racism award named after the first leader of the Co-operative Commonwealth Federation (CCF). Leibovitch was given the J.S. Woodsworth Award posthumously by Ontario NDP leader Andrea Horwath at a reception at Queen's Park.

The J.S. Woodsworth Award, founded by former Ontario NDP leader Howard Hampton in 1996, is presented to an individual or an organization who has made contributions towards eliminating racial discrimination. It is handed out annually by the NDP leader on the United Nations International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

Support UFCW Members, Boycott Nasty Rental Car Companies!

On Friday, March 11, 2011 UFCW Canada members at Enterprise, National and Alamo Car Rentals at the Toronto Airport went on strike. UFCW President Wayne Hanley called upon supporters to boycott Enterprise, National and Alamo Car Rental facilities across the country until the labour dispute is settled. An email was sent out from OFL President Sid Ryan to all affiliates calling on them to encourage their members to take their business to other UFCW Canada unionized companies including: Avis, Budget, Hertz and Dollar Thrifty.



PART 5: COMMUNITY & INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Wisconsin: Citizens, Workers Creating New Hope

Tens of thousands of teachers, students, farmers, small business owners, workers and citizens have been at the forefront of one of the most important fight-backs to take place in the U.S. in decades. The ongoing and huge protests against Republican Gov. Scott Walker's attempt to break public employee unions, cut public services and make the middle and lower classes carry the burden of a deficit they did not create is a familiar story.

What is extraordinary is the response. In one demonstration alone, 80,000 people turned out. More than 10,000 people filled the Statehouse. The 2011 budget calls for the most extreme cuts to public education and public services ever proposed in Wisconsin history.

The OFL's letter of solidarity noted: "Your strength, dignity and determination in the face of these attacks have been truly inspiring. You are proving that when working people and their families stand together, we can beat back even the most aggressive and inhumane agendas, and give confidence to others."

President Sid Ryan was a guest on the TVO's panel that raised the question of whether "Wisconsin can happen here." He pointed to Toronto Mayor Rob Ford's removal of the right to strike for TTC workers and wide-ranging attacks on pensions, benefits and wages. "The Ontario government wanted public sector workers to take a wage freeze while handing \$2.4 billion to already healthy corporations. Federal and provincial governments are all implementing the same agendas. Working people are not the problem: we're the solution."



Egyptian Federation of Independent Unions

On February 11, OFL President Sid Ryan wrote a letter of solidarity to the Egyptian Federation of Independent Unions and to the Egyptian Independent Property Tax Collectors Unions and other workers to celebrate and support the historic emergence of independent unions, and the strike wave that tipped the balance in favour of the democratic movement. These actions resulted in the overthrow of the former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. In the letter, Ryan stressed the importance of workers' right to freely organize into democratically controlled trade unions as a cornerstone of any meaningful democracy.

"The popular uprising of youth and workers in Liberation Square has been truly inspiring. We are witnessing the birth of free and independent trade unions, the cornerstone of any legitimate democracy," said Ryan. "Millions of workers have defied the emergency laws and staged strikes and sit-ins throughout the country to send a message that never again will a privileged elite be allowed to run their country—be it a corporate elite, a military elite, or a religious elite."

Despite the overthrow of Mubarak and the critical role that unions played, the interim government re-criminalized strike action. At the March 23rd meeting of the Egyptian Cabinet of Ministers, a decision was made to impose harsh penalties—not only for taking strike action, but also for calling for strike action.

Penalties include imprisonment for at least a year and fines of up to one-half million Egyptian pounds.

The fledgling independent labour movement urgently needs political solidarity. Messages can be sent directly to the interim Egyptian Prime Minister: pm@cabinet.gov.eg, but please also copy the Egyptian Federation of Independent Unions and the Egyptian Independent Property Tax Collectors Unions at the following addresses: reta.union.reta@gmail.com and menasolidarity@gmail.com. Also copy canada.egypt.solidarity@gmail.com.

Solidarity with the Arab and North African Democracy Movements

The fantastic revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt inspired uprisings throughout North Africa and elsewhere in the Middle East, including Libya. Colonel Qaddafi has ruled Libya with an iron fist for 42 years with no parliament or constitution. He is the longest-serving dictator in Africa and the Middle East. Under his regime, no foreign press are allowed in Libya, and the government has shut down the Internet and mobile phone networks in an attempt to hide the brutal violence. Libyan protesters were demanding regime change as well as political freedom, health, education, and a decent wages. On February 26 OFL President Sid Ryan attended and spoke at a rally in solidarity with the Libyan people and others in the region demanding democratic and political reform.



Anti-Apartheid Solidarity with South African Hero

OFL President Sid Ryan met with South African anti-apartheid activist, Archie “Zola Zembe” Sibeko, during his visit to Canada in April. Zola, an African National Congress (ANC) veteran, is a former freedom fighter and a trade union political leader.

Zola’s political activities started in the 1950s and continued through to the demise of the apartheid regime. In 1961, he was arrested for his political organizing and forced to flee into exile. Zola travelled to Western Europe where he helped organize the international trade union movement in support of the struggle against apartheid. In 1990, after more than two decades in exile, Zola was able to return to South Africa where he worked as Deputy Chairman of the ANC in the Western Cape. Shortly after the 1994 elections, Archie Sibeko retired from active politics and relocated to the United Kingdom (UK) where he still resides with his second wife Dr. Joyce Leeson.

Zola is an inspiration to human rights and labour activists around the world. While in Canada, he was invited to give greetings at the Toronto Rally for Respect where he received a warm reception.

G20 Police Review

On March 4, the OFL made a submission to the Review of Systemic Issues Resulting from the Policing of the 2010 G-20 Summit in Toronto. The



Review was conducted by Independent Police Review Director Gerry McNeilly but a date for the release of his results has not yet been set.

In the submission, the OFL supported the February 2011 Report issued by the Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) and the National Union of Public and General Employees (NUPGE). The OFL has consistently called for a full public inquiry into all aspects of policing and decision-making during the G-20 Summit.

The OFL submission focused on the shortcomings of the provincial political and senior leaderships responsible for the unfolding of events, not only on June 26, but also in the days leading up to the demonstration. In particular the following four issues were highlighted:

- 1) The deliberate promotion of a false public perception that the police had been given new—albeit temporary—authority under the *Public Works Act* to subject citizens to extraordinary search and seizure were they to be within five meters of the so-called security fence.
- 2) Gross violations in the application of this false law—well beyond five-meters from the fence.
- 3) The conspiracy of silence among senior law enforcement officers and the provincial government with respect to unlawful search and arrest.
- 4) The secrecy with which the *Public Works Act* was originally modified.

PMP Action Centre Graduation Ceremony

On March 28, the PMP Action Centre organized a graduation ceremony for hundreds of workers who completed a variety of Second Career training. The PMP Action Centre was formed in 2008 after 2,000 non-unionized workers—most of whom were newcomers to Canada—were thrown out of work on Canada Day, when their employer Progressive Moulded Products (PMP) closed without notice and barred workers from entering the premises. In response, these courageous workers staged a 16-day picket to demand their wages and severance and to stop the company from removing and selling assets.

The CAW partnered directly with the workers and ongoing support was provided through the Toronto and York Region Labour Council, the Labour Education Centre and the Ontario Federation of Labour. The PMP Action Centre has become the vehicle through which some of the most vulnerable workers helped each other become leaders, advocates, and graduates in their own right. At the graduation ceremony, hundreds of workers and their families were recognized and thanked for their courage in pursuing new training pathways, for their tenacity in advocating for their rights, for their inspiration to the entire labour movement and for creating a model of labour-community partnerships that can and must be replicated.

The Action Centre received funding through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities' Adjustment Advisory Program which in turn plans to carry some of the lessons into future projects.

OFL President Sid Ryan said: "These workers raised the bar for the labour movement, not only for their resistance against a heartless employer who paid itself before it met its obligations to the workers, but also for creating a model for genuine partnerships between union and non-union workers."



39. Ryerson Gindin Chair of Democracy and Social Justice Winnie Ng with graduates & family members



40. PMP Action Centre graduation ceremony



41. CAW President Ken Lewenza with Minister John Milloy and graduates



PART 6: ONLINE AND SOCIAL MEDIA PROFILE

Promoting Labour Online

Since the beginning of the year, the OFL has begun to redefine its online profile through more regular updates to the website and an integration of social media tools. The OFL website features icons linking to its Facebook, Twitter and Flickr accounts. Until a more interactive website can be developed, this integration will enable trade unionists, community members, media and government representatives to more easily follow the Federation's work and activity.

Facebook: Building an Online Labour Community

The OFL's Facebook profile has continued to grow daily since the beginning of the New Year. Used as an organizing tool to spread messages quickly and to build an online network of labour and community activists, the Federation's Facebook profile and Fan Page. The OFL's Facebook "friends" have doubled in number over the past three months, from just under 600 to 1153 at press time. The Federation used Facebook actively to promote the March 31 action to support anti-scab legislation and the April 9 Toronto Rally for Respect.

"Friend" the OFL on Facebook at: www.Facebook.com/OntarioLabour

Promote the OFL Fan Page at: www.Facebook.com/OntarioFedLabour



YouTube: Online Labour Television

The OFL has launched its new YouTube channel and begun uploading short clips and videos to promote the work of the labour movement. Affectionately called “Sid TV” by some, these videos have been getting hundreds of hits.

Watch our videos:
www.YouTube.com/OFLCommunications

Twitter: Spreading the Word

The OFL has entrenched itself as a go-to news source online primarily through the soundbite format of Twitter. Frequent posts and commentary from OntarioLabour have expanded our followers by 300 per cent.

Follow the OFL at
www.Twitter.com/OntarioLabour

Flickr: Sharing Labour Photos

The Federation continues to document its work extensively through photos that are posted within 24 hours to the OFL’s open access photo sharing site. Affiliates and coalition partners are invited to use these photos as a resource in their local and community organizing.

The OFL’s photos can be found at:
www.Flickr.com/OntarioFedLabour

The OFL Daily: Labour News Digest

The OFL’s daily online news paper is published every afternoon and delivered to hundreds via Facebook and Twitter. A compendium of stories pulled from affiliate Twitter accounts, this publication gives profile to the work of affiliates, as well as the OFL.

Read the OFL Daily at: paper.li/OntarioLabour.



THE TWEET KEEPS A-COMIN' TWITTER FOLLOWERS UP 300%



611

422

201

DEC 2010 FEB 2011 APR 2011

PART 7: EXTERNAL MEDIA

During this reporting period, the OFL has received significant media coverage and has established itself as a reliable and positive source of information and commentary. It has been featured in the following media outlets:

- 570 News-KGL-AM Kitchener
- 105.3 CISS FM Ottawa
- CBC Radio One CBE-AM Windsor
- CBC Radio Two CBL-FM Toronto
- CBLFT TV
- CBON-FM Sudbury
- CBT TV Windsor
- CP24
- CFMJ-AM Toronto
- CFRB-AM Toronto
- CFTO TV
- CHBX TV Sault Ste Marie
- CHCH TV
- CHEX2 TV Oshawa
- CHOD-FM Cornwall
- CICI TV Sudbury
- CITO TV Timmins
- CJBC-AM Toronto
- CJFO-FM Ottawa
- CKLW-AM Windsor
- CKNX-AM Wingham
- CKNY TV North Bay
- CKOT-FM Tillsonburg
- CP-24
- CTS TV
- CTV
- Global TV
- Newstalk 1010 CFRB-AM
- Radio Canada
- Radio Premiere Chaine SRC-R Montreal
- TFO TV Toronto
- TVO TV

A clippings compendium is appended to this report.



PART 8: UPCOMING EVENTS

April 18-20: OFL Women's Committee Strategy Session

The OFL Women's Committee will be hosting its annual strategy session at the CAW Education Centre in Port Elgin. Over 50 local and provincial women leaders, representing both public and private sector unions, will come together to develop a campaign plan for 2011-2012. Stay tuned for the action plan.

For more information, contact OFL Director of Women's Rights / Solidarity & Pride Carrol Anne Sceviour: 416-443-7670 or csceviour@ofl.ca

April 27: National Day of Action for Shannen's Dream

The Shannen's Dream campaign was launched to support the right of every First Nations child in Canada to attend a safe, well-maintained school, with high quality, relevant curriculum and adequate teaching and staff support.

The campaign seeks to build support for a private members motion introduced by NDP MP Charlie Angus (Timmins-James Bay) that would enshrine these rights in law.

A national day of action will be organized on Wednesday, April 27 to promote Shannen's Dream. For more information, contact OFL Human Rights Director Janice Gairey: 416-443-7655 or jgairey@ofl.ca

April 27: Education is a Right Committee

The Education is a Right Committee will be meeting from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Wednesday, April 27 at the OFL building. The meeting will review developments in the education sector, including the primary, secondary, and post-secondary systems. For more information, contact OFL Research and Education Director Pam Frache: 416-443-7663 or pfrache@ofl.ca

April 28: Day of Mourning for Workers Killed or Injured on the Job

Under the banner “remember the dead, fight for the living,” April 28 has become an important day in the labour movement calendar to recognize workers who are killed or injured on the job. Events are being planned in communities around the province. Information will be posted on the web site as it becomes available.

For more information, contact OFL Health and Safety Director Vern Edwards: 416-443-7662 or vedwards@ofl.ca

April 28: 50th Anniversary Ontario NDP Gala Dinner

This year marks half a century of a strong labour voice in Ontario politics. The New Democratic Party has a proud history of standing up for working women and men, and advocating for issues that matter to every Ontario community. With an inspiring 50-year history, including the recent election of Andrea Horwath as the first woman leader of Ontario's New Democrats, there is a lot to celebrate in 2011.

Join the Ontario NDP in marking this occasion by attending a special anniversary gala on Thursday, April 28, starting at 6:00 p.m., at the Allstream Centre Ballroom (CNE), 105 Princess Blvd, Toronto. For more information, contact: 416-591-5455 x386 or Events@on.ndp.ca

May 1: USW 1005 Take the Fight for Decent Pensions to Ottawa

Join locked-out members of USW 1005 when they take their demands to Parliament Hill on the eve of a federal election. Call on the Canadian government to restore the rights of all workers and to ensure that Canada's budgetary priorities serve the interests of the people, not corporations.

For information on buses to Ottawa, contact USW 1005: 905-547-1417 or info@uswa1005.ca

May 2: Federal Election

In a historic vote, NDP, Bloc Québécois and Liberal Members of Parliament joined forces to bring down the Harper government and trigger a May election. Voting 156-145, members of parliament cited the Conservative government for contempt of Parliament and expressed non-confidence in the government. This is the first time in the history of the Commonwealth countries that a government has been held in contempt by majority vote. The May 2nd election will be the fourth election in seven years.

For information on registering and voting, visit <http://www.elections.ca/>

May 3: May Day & South Asian Heritage Month Celebration

The OFL and CLC Ontario will sponsor a May Day event hosted by the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians (CASSA) at the OFL Auditorium. The reception will begin at 5:30 p.m. and admission is free. Be sure to RSVP by Tuesday, April 26. Contact Sinduja Kumarasingam: 416-932-1359 x14 or sinduja@cassa.on.ca

May 9-13: CLC Convention

The 26th Constitutional Convention of the Canadian Labour Congress will be held at the Vancouver Convention Centre from May 9 to 13, 2011. For information, visit: www.canadianlabour.ca

May 17: International Day Against Homophobia

Help challenge homophobia in your own community. May 17 is the International Day Against Homophobia and serves as a rallying point to challenge homophobic prejudice and discrimination. For more information, visit: <http://www.homophobiaday.org> and stay tuned to www.OFL.ca for the annual statement on homophobia.

May 27: OFL Labour Honour Roll Scholarships Applications Deadline

The OFL will award two scholarships for post-secondary studies worth \$2,000 each to a member or the child of a member of a local union affiliated with the OFL. For more information on the application criteria and process, see page 20 of this report, or visit www.OFL.ca

The deadline for applications is May 27 and this year's winners will be announced on July 5, 2011.

Month of June: Pride Events

Pride events begin in June and take place across Ontario throughout the summer. Check the OFL website in late May for event listings for your community: www.OFL.ca

June 1: LEAF Equality Day Event

On June 1, the OFL will join the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF) in celebrating Equality Day. The event will recognize women's "boot prints" in workplaces where few women have tread before. Details will be posted soon.

June 1-7: Sexual Harassment Awareness Week

Recognized annually as Sexual Harassment Awareness Week, the first week of June is a time to raise awareness about sexual harassment and to honour the memories of all women who have been victimized.

June 17-19: OFL Aboriginal Circle 2nd Gathering

The OFL's Aboriginal Circle 2nd Gathering, "Walking in our Moccasins," will be held at the CAW Family Education Centre in Port Elgin from June 17 to 19, 2011. See the OFL website for registration materials, or contact OFL Human Rights Director Janice Gairey: 416-443-7655 or jgairey@ofl.ca

June 17-19: Federal NDP Convention

The next Biennial Convention of the New Democratic Party of Canada will be held June 17, 18 and 19 at the Vancouver Convention Centre. The Convention will mark the Party's 50th anniversary. For more information, visit: www.ndp.ca

October 6: Ontario Election

Under amendments passed by the Legislature in 2004, Ontario elections are now held on fixed dates: the first Thursday of October every four years.

The 40th Ontario general election will occur on October 6, 2011. For information on registering and voting, visit: <http://www.elections.on.ca>

November 20-25: OFL Convention

The 11th Biennial Convention of the OFL will be held at the Sheraton Centre Hotel in Toronto from November 20-25, 2011. Stay tuned to the OFL website for details.

PART 9: PHOTO CREDITS

The following photographers contributed to look of this document:

- Front Cover: Pathan
- Back Cover (Clockwise from Top Left): Pathan, Pathan, Bonnar, Bonnar, Duff
- John Bonnar: 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 11
- CAW: 39, 40, 41
- CUPE Local 1: 36
- Joel Duff: 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 33, 35
- Monirul Pathan: 1, 6, 7, 8, 38
- Frank Saptel: 30, 31
- Lynn Simmons: 19, 20, 21, 24
- Brian Willer: 34, 37

*Uncredited photos are borrowed from the internet or the photographer is unknown



DUDLEY LAWS
DUDLEY LAWS

PART 10: IN MEMORIAM

Dudley Laws (May 7, 1934 to March 24, 2011)

A few days after the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Canadian civil rights movement lost a prominent activist with the passing of Dudley Laws. A beloved community activist, Laws was known for bringing labour and community members together to challenge racism in all of its forms. Laws died from complications related to kidney disease at age 76 on the morning of March 24, just hours after finishing a meeting with the Black Action Defence Committee in his hospital room.

Born in Saint Thomas Parish, Jamaica, Laws was a welder and mechanic by trade, working at Standard Engineering Works until he emigrated to the United Kingdom in 1955. There, Laws challenged racism and defended the West Indian community. Ten years later, Laws moved to Toronto and worked as a welder, taxi driver and printer. He became a leader of the Universal Negro Improvement Association in Toronto during the Canadian Black Power movement.

In 1988, after a number of young black men were shot and killed in confrontations with Toronto-area police, Laws co-founded the Black Action Defence Committee along with Charles Roach, Sherona Hall and Lennox Farrell. The group pushed for independent police oversight and Laws became a tough and vocal critic of the force's relationship with his community.



When, in November 1990, Toronto Constable David Deviney was acquitted of the shooting death of Lester Donaldson, a mentally-ill black man, Laws accused police of targeting black youth and he called on then-Premier Bob Rae to establish an independent body to investigate police shootings. Laws' campaign in the wake of the Donaldson killing led to the establishment of the Special Investigations Unit, which now investigates all incidents that result in serious injuries or deaths involving police officers.

“Dudley Laws was a fearless social activist with a working-class politics and an uncompromising commitment to justice,” said OFL President, Sid Ryan. “He understood the importance of the labour movement and always pushed union leaders to take principled stances and to fight for social justice.”

Laws never gave up fighting for rights. His advocacy extended beyond African-Canadians to embrace Aboriginals, new immigrants and other minorities fighting for respect and recognition in Canadian society.

“Dudley’s activism motivated many and affected us all. His advocacy moved governments to fund social agencies and adopt new programs to support disadvantaged youth,” said OFL Executive Vice-President Terry Downey, “but his principled tenacity inspired us to keep fighting even when victories were hard to come by.”

Dudley Laws leaves behind his wife, Monica, and five children. Nearly 3,000 people attended the funeral service for Dudley Laws on Saturday, April 2.



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