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Changes to Ontario *Election Finances Act*

Increased State Funding for Political Parties Reveals the Need to Fund the Process Not the Parties



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Changes to Ontario Election Finances Act

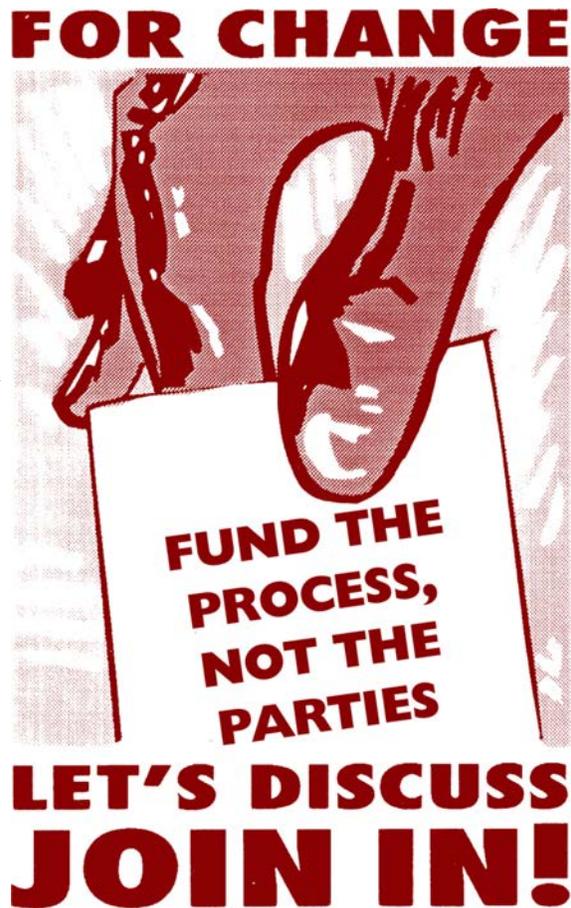
Increased State Funding for Political Parties Reveals the Need to Fund the Process Not the Parties

The June 7 Ontario election is being carried out under an amended *Election Finances Act*. The changes made by the Liberals are not favourable to the polity. On the contrary, in the name of enhancing the democracy and protecting it against corrupt practices, the amendments enhance the privileged positions of the so-called major parties. This makes inequality between registered political parties and candidates even more pronounced. It also increases the gap between those who rule and those who are ruled. In other words, it brings into stark relief the absence of equality of membership in a body politic which is divided between those who rule and have access to privileges and those who are ruled and do not.

All in all, the amendments strengthen the negative features of the *Election Finances Act*, namely that the entire electoral process serves to impose the agenda of the rich and powerful onto the polity and quash any discussion on matters of concern to the people of Ontario and what might be done to provide problems with solutions.

One of the amendments concerns state funding of political parties. This in essence increasingly turns political parties into appendages of the state, not an expression of the people's right to association where it is the members who decide policy and raise funds. State funding makes these organizations accountable to the state, not their members.

In December 2016 the political parties in the Ontario Legislature unanimously adopted legislation providing themselves with generous state funding to compensate for a ban on corporate and trade union political contributions and limits on the amount that individuals can contribute. This is in addition to reimbursements for election expenses already in place for political parties and candidates which meet certain thresholds. For the last election, these reimbursements totalled \$1.2 million for political parties in the legislature and \$3.1 million for their candidates.



The provision of state funding to political parties based on their performance in the previous election is patently unfair for many reasons. It further destroys what is supposed to be a level playing field with everyone standing as equals in the exercise of their right to elect and to be elected. If state funds are to be provided to political parties and candidates, democratic principle would require all to be funded equally or none at all. This problem is compounded by the fact that media of the establishment cover elections based on the outlook that the public need only hear about three political parties which, according to them, have a chance of forming party government. Even a fourth party which is fielding candidates in every riding is not considered a viable contender to form party government and is thus left out of what are called leaders' debates.

Furthermore, the regime of public funding for the political parties the establishment considers suitable contenders for power is a ploy to have the agenda of the rich and powerful imposed on the polity through these parties and media coverage, including what is called leaders' debates. To say these establishment contenders organize politically when their role is to disempower the electorate is a farce. They neither engage in the important function of politicizing the electorate, nor do they inform the electorate about the problems facing the society so as to involve them in providing these problems with a solution. The division of the society into those who govern and those who are governed makes sure the citizens are marginalized and reduced to voters whose sole job is to put one of these parties in a position that they can form a party government. The entire circus is organized to make sure whoever wins appears to have acquired the consent of the governed. All decision-making power reverts to them and they do not represent the people but the sovereign, which in the case of Ontario is the Queen of England as the corporate façade for the most powerful private interests in the world.

The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of Ontario is equal to 40 per cent of the GDP of Canada. This is not small potatoes. Who wields the decision-making power is a decision the rich are not likely to leave to chance! To think otherwise is to be naive to say the least.

A modern approach for funding elections requires that all monies which maintain the power and privilege of the political parties of the establishment must be ended. Instead of funding political parties and individual candidates, public funds should be used by a public authority entrusted with funding the process itself so as to provide the right to elect and be elected with a guarantee. The authority should guarantee the right to an informed vote and create conditions which permit the people to express their concerns and discuss solutions to problems. Candidates to implement these solutions could be selected by the electors from among their peers. Political parties should base their campaigns on funds solely raised by their own members, supporters and activities. Can they involve their members and supporters to sustain their bids for election without the myriad of unfair advantages they now enjoy? The very idea that by electing them there is something in it for those who vote for them is corrupt and corrupting! A publicly administered electoral process where political parties and candidates have equal chances of success is required. Just because a political party or candidate has access to wealthy donors, especially state funding, should not determine their political standing.



Per Vote Subsidies in New Electoral Financing Regime

The new electoral financing regime introduced by the Liberals and approved by all the parties in the Legislature under the Liberal tenure introduced a per vote subsidy to registered political parties.

The subsidies currently in effect are based on the results of the 2014 provincial election. To qualify, a registered party must have received two per cent of the valid votes cast in the province, or five per cent of the votes in the ridings where it fielded candidates. Quarterly payments started promptly in January 2017. To date, with payment of the first quarterly allowance for 2018, the ruling Liberals received \$6.2 million; the Conservative Party, \$5.1 million; the NDP \$3.8 million; and the Greens received \$778,530.54.

In addition, an annual public fund of \$3.1 million was established to finance the riding associations of registered political parties. The riding association's candidate must have received two per cent of the vote to qualify and must be in good standing with Elections Ontario. The riding association funding, divided up proportionally, resulted in the Liberals receiving \$1,182,712.38; the NDP, \$711,188.11; and the Conservatives receiving just over \$500,000 in 2017. The Greens received \$132,331.31. The Freedom Party received \$538.96; the Northern Ontario Party received \$592.60; while the Ontario Libertarian Party was eligible but received nothing since its riding associations were either non-existent or not in good standing.

Needless to say, newly registered parties and independent candidates do not qualify. They will not qualify based on the results of the June 7 election either if the rulers who dominate the electoral process succeed in suppressing information about them. Every obstacle is put in the way of their meeting the required threshold of votes.



A Perennial Unresolved Problem

The issue of how money influences the outcome of an election has been a perennial unresolved problem in the party-dominated system called a representative democracy since its inception. The December 2016 reforms to the electoral act do not fix this problem in the least.

In Ontario, from 1975 through to the present, the governing political parties have repeatedly introduced legislation claiming to "once and for all" eliminate the undue influence of money in elections. The essentials of the financing regime began after it was revealed, among other scandals, that in 1972 the ruling Conservative Party awarded a government contract for a new Workman's Compensation Building in return for a donation of \$50,000. Ten years later, one of several provincial commissions established to study election financing summed up the reason for the 1975 electoral reforms: "... some public questioning of relationships between the government and individuals in the private sector in Ontario had led to widespread concern regarding the morality of the political process, and the risk that large corporations which regularly donated major sums to governing parties, could be in a position to unduly influence government. In order to ensure in the ordinary citizen confidence that his participation in the political process was in fact meaningful, it was essential that Ontario election financing legislation be accepted and enforced."

There you have it. It is all about an election providing the appearance that governments have the consent of the governed. The more agenda are dictated by foreign supranational private interests, however, the less any appearance of consent can be sustained no matter what hype the rich and their entourage manage to rustle up during the election itself. The chickens always come home to roost.



June 7 Election

Independent Candidate Laura Chesnik in Windsor-Tecumseh

On May 14 Laura Chesnik was officially registered with Elections Ontario as an independent candidate in the riding of Windsor-Tecumseh.

Laura is a Windsor teacher well known for upholding the rights of Ontario teachers and education workers. She is running on a platform which calls on the people of Ontario to abstain from bringing party governments to power because they serve the rich. Instead, they can vote in a manner which makes a statement which is empowering, Laura says. She explains:

"Our fight for our rights comes head to head with government dictate in the service of private interests. Teachers have been fighting to affirm their right to have a say over their working conditions for some time now. We faced the dictate of the Liberal government supported by the PCs to impose contracts, to strip billions out of education and use this to pay the deficit and give handouts to companies. We have stood our ground and made headway against the assaults on working conditions which are also students' learning conditions. Then, when an election rolls round, working people are supposed to give up their own experience with party governments which serve private interests. I don't think they should give up the fight for their demands and beg for a line on a party platform making believe that these parties will do what they promise. They are beholden to private interests and will serve them. This is known. "



Laura calls on Ontarians to join her campaign whether or not they live in Windsor-Tecumseh by using this election to make a statement that "we can speak in our own name and represent ourselves." Laura's campaign slogan is Empower Yourself Now! Visit Laura Chesnik's website at empoweryourselfnow.ca or email: info@empoweryourselfnow.ca

Laura Chesnik's Biography

Laura Chesnik has taught for 10 years at all levels from Junior Kindergarden to Grade 8. She currently teaches Grade 1 at Giles Campus French Immersion School with the Greater Essex County District School Board. She is a member of the Greater Essex Elementary Teachers' Federation of Ontario and union steward at her school.

Laura was born and raised in Windsor. While in high school she worked at the St. Cyril's Slovak Centre, attending to weddings and other functions and also worked at Tim Hortons. She was the

top wrestler for her weight class in Southwestern, Ontario.

Laura attended the University of Windsor (Bachelor of Arts 2004) and the University of Ottawa (Bachelor of Education 2007). At the University of Windsor Laura was elected Vice-President of University Affairs of the Students' Alliance and student Senator to the University's Senate. She played on the varsity rugby team.

To put herself through university and teacher's college, Laura worked on the assembly line at Chrysler, at Nemak's aluminum castings plant, at Met hospital and in Chrysler's call centre. To finish paying off her student debt she taught university students in China.

She is an active member of the Windsor Peace Coalition and of the Marxist-Leninist Party of Canada. She has represented the MLPC in federal elections in Windsor-Tecumseh.

Laura is also the mother of Zoya aged 6, Polina aged 4 and Inaya who just turned 3.



On May 15, Laura Chesnik went to Chrysler's Windsor Assembly Plant to inform workers that she is running for election in Windsor-Tecumseh. Workers readily took the flyers and several took extra to distribute inside the plant. This is not the first time Laura distributes literature at the plant gates in support of workers' rights.

(Version française de cet article)



The Future of Ontario's Community Colleges Is an Election Issue!

- David Starbuck -

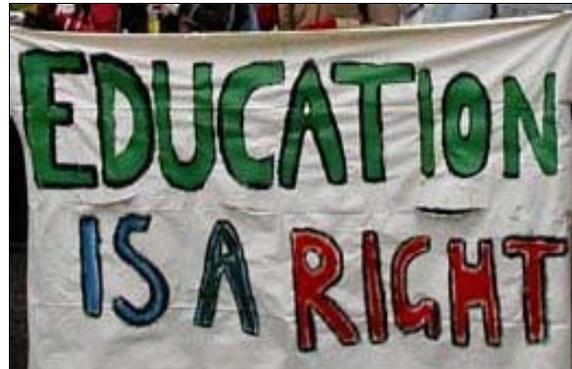
Community colleges in northeastern Ontario have released data on the financial losses suffered during last fall's work stoppage at 24 Ontario colleges. Cambrian College, in Sudbury, saved \$2.2 million by not paying striking professors for five weeks. However, Cambrian says it spent nearly \$3 million because of expenses incurred in its efforts to defeat the attempts of faculty to win wages and working conditions acceptable to themselves which, in this case, meant to secure a contract that recognizes the rights of contract and part-time faculty.



Faculty at Cambrian College in Sudbury prepare to return to work after they are legislated back by the Ontario government, November, 2017.

Cambrian's expenses include about \$1.2 million in tuition refunds to students who withdrew, \$980,000 in extra pay for part-time professors and support staff to partially make up for lost class time and about \$700,000 in unspecified expenses.

In addition, the provincial student relief fund, which paid up to \$500 to students who suffered financial hardship as a result of the work stoppage, made payments to 757 students at the five northeastern Ontario institutions: 286 at Cambrian, 43 at College Boreal, 100 at Sault College, 74 at Northern College in Timmins and 253 at Canadore College in North Bay. This amount in no way satisfactorily reimbursed college students for expenses and lost time incurred.



The responsibility for losses by the colleges and the disruption of the lives of college students and faculty in the fall of 2017 lies with the provincial government for chronically underfunding Ontario colleges and with college management for organizing the delivery of college education within the confines established by the provincial government. Management shunned the human factor and its social responsibility in college education arguing against recognizing the rights of all. By replacing teachers with robots the elimination of the human factor in college education can be predicted.

This will not do. College education must be organized to meet the needs of the youth and the working people for education and training so they become productive members of society. How can the role of colleges be reduced to one of providing the monopolies with skilled labour at little or no cost to themselves?

The future of Ontario community colleges is an election issue. College faculty and students who waged such a heroic struggle last fall in defence of the rights of all must bring their issues and concerns to the fore and keep them on the agenda during the election campaign. The interim report of the College Task Force which was established as part of the back-to-work legislation ending the work stoppage has been submitted to the Minister. Whether it is released and becomes the subject of public discussion during the election campaign is a decision that is reserved to the Minister. Members of the college community are demanding that the report be released. This is an excellent opportunity to make sure that the issues facing the Ontario community college system are fully discussed and that a new government will begin to solve the problems in the colleges.



Growing Poverty and the Need to Set a New Direction for the Economy

Poverty is a matter of deep concern for the Ontario working class and people. The more the rich get richer in Ontario, the more poverty grows. Despite a GDP of \$800 billion, which is close to 40 per cent of Canada's GDP, there is massive poverty in Ontario. This reveals how exploitation and oppression of the working class and people continue to take their toll and the need for a new direction for the economy that is geared towards meeting the needs of the people, not paying the rich. Immediate measures are also required to alleviate the plight of the poor. Their suffering and humiliation are not acceptable. All people in society must be enabled to live in dignity.



Ontario Political Forum is opening its pages to the discussion of this problem and to this fight.



Food Bank Use in Ontario

A indicator of the level of poverty in Ontario is the use of food banks. In its *Hunger Report 2017*, the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OAFB) reports that 2,861,872 visits were made to Ontario food banks during the period between April 1, 2016 and March 31, 2017 and that 33 per cent of users are children. Nearly half a million people (499,415) used a food bank during this time. Statistics Canada estimated the population of Ontario in 2017 at 14.19 million making this 3.5 per cent of the population. The OAFB distributed the equivalent of over five million meals to families in need through 128 direct member food banks and 1,100 hunger-relief agencies, inclusive of breakfast clubs, school meal programs, community food centres, and emergency shelters. The main reasons given for visiting food banks were: benefit/social assistance changes, 29.7 per cent; low wages/not enough hours, 15 per cent; relocation (immigration/moving) 9.8 per cent; unexpected expense 8.2 per cent; sickness/medical expenses, 8.0 per cent; unexpected housing expense, 7.1 per cent; unemployed/recently lost job, 6.6 per cent; homeless, 4.8 per cent; debt, 3.9 per cent; benefits/social assistance delays, 2.9 per cent; family breakup, 2.3 per cent.



These figures, the OAFB explains, are generally consistent each year but there are features that change. For example, this year 50 per cent of households served by food banks identified as single person households which is more than the previous years. Of those that identified as single-person households, almost 70 per cent indicated that their primary source of income was social assistance, disability support or old age pension, which are totally insufficient to allow the recipients to cover expenses such as rent and hydro bills which have skyrocketed in Ontario, and still have enough money to buy food.

As well, every year the OAFB identifies a major factor at play in people having to use food banks. Past years' reports have focused on issues such as the rise of precarious work and the wrecking of manufacturing or energy costs. This report highlights increased difficulty in finding an affordable place to live as the prominent factor in pushing people to food banks. The report says that between 2005 and 2015 the average rent for a one-bedroom apartment in Ontario increased 24 per cent while the median employment income for a single person household only grew by 13 per cent.



During the same period the income support provided through the Ontario Disability Support Program grew by only 15 per cent. As market-rate housing became increasingly less affordable, the wait list for rent-geared-to-income (RGI) housing (units where rent is set to an affordable percentage of household income) grew 39 per cent, reaching over 171,000 households. Increasing rents and lack of affordable social housing contribute to more and more Ontarians having to choose between rent and food and, thus, they "go hungry."

The OAFB proposes a number of measures to alleviate the problems. It recommends that the provincial and federal governments work to implement what they call the portable housing benefit which would be paid directly to tenants to cover the difference between what an individual or a family can afford and what they actually pay. It also recommends that the Government of Ontario increase the support available through Ontario Works and the Ontario Disability Support

Program to reflect the rising cost of living, including rent and food.

Coupled with this, a major concern of the people in this election is the cost of housing and the scarcity of rental units. Speculation in real estate is one of the greatest scams at this time.



Letters to the Editor

Democratic Voting at the Casino

- Bryce Moffat -

With another election coming up, we're once again heading with some degree of foreboding to another round of well rehearsed rhetoric from a whole host of eager candidates, all loaded up with well groomed predictions for our future if we'll only vote for them. With so many irrelevant details, cheap shots and second rate commercials aimed at demeaning other candidates in the eyes of the electorate, elections have become something of a frustrating annoyance; all laced with carefully engineered ambiguity about one particular party's plans for our future.

It's quite disheartening to see many candidates operate on the premise that the voting public is so lacking in common intelligence that they can be won over by simply making other candidates look foolish with tasteless, debasing remarks and frivolous, irrelevant details, often dug up from the

distant past by uncouth candidates in a desperate effort to win at all cost. It appears that one of the rules in the "honourable" profession of politics is that it's quite permissible to crudely drag some other guy through the sewer in hopes, I assume, the voters will suck it up; the rhetoric, that is.

With all this said, however, I agree most candidates are fair and honest, perhaps to their detriment, and there's nothing wrong with a well presented challenge to another candidate's position as long as it's said respectfully. It really concerns me that there's been public discussion about voters being mandated to vote for such flippant people as herein mentioned in future elections when past experience suggests that their offered assurances are unpredictable at best. As for being mandated to vote; inasmuch as I'm "entitled" to vote, I should, by logic, also be "entitled" to not vote if I so choose; and as for it being "my civic duty," I'd be more inclined to vote if I could have the people running for office do "their" civic duty by keeping the promises they make at election time and putting clear intelligible substance into their election speeches. If this was to ever happen, voters might be much more willing to vote, as they could then do it with some degree of conviction instead of having to vote for the guy they distrust the least.



Another issue of concern to me is what happens when my elected candidate gets to Ottawa or Toronto or wherever. In my opinion, the person I vote for is seldom going to get any meaningful support on the issues he said he would personally address for me if he got elected. Private members' bills seldom go anywhere unless the party wants them to and my guy gets shut down because he has to follow party policy; once partly described as "sit down, shut up, and put your hand up when you're told to." While the elite chosen few in the government hierarchy live openly and often lavishly in the lap of luxury at working people's expense, good old John Q. Public, the guy who pays for it all, gets the idea that he's considered little more than an unwanted expense, an obstacle to corporate wealth, while at the same time being expected to dutifully, voluntarily, patriotically march to the polling booth, or off to war, or the volunteer centre or any other place they want him to go, to a tune they don't want him to realize he's marching to.

With such a daunting uncertainty and lack of faith voters have in what they often have to choose from, how can they be criticized for not wanting to vote when they have the feeling that the whole venture has, unfortunately, become something akin to a crap shoot? The message to voters today seems to be "If you can't find a person you want to vote for, vote anyway; vote for somebody, anybody; just get out and vote, it makes the voting statistics look so much better." Finally, the crowning shot to your intelligence comes when they try to convince you it's your "Democratic Right."

If the establishment wants to get more people out to vote, they might start by creating a well-needed change in political candidate discipline by having all candidates held strictly to account for the fulfillment of their own political statements, along with full, complete disclosure of all their plans; not just the parts they think we'll bite on.

Bryce Moffat worked at the former "Stelco" in Hamilton, Ont. and is a retired member of USW Local 1005. Email: Brycemoffat2@gmail.com

Keep Transit Public Campaign

Ontarians Oppose the Privatization of Public Transit



May 8, 2018 rally at Queen's Park.

Transit workers report that they are receiving a lot of support for the campaign underway in Ontario to keep transit publicly owned and operated. One of the main organizers of the campaign is the Amalgamated Transit Union of Canada (ATU), especially its locals in Brampton, Hamilton, Mississauga and Toronto. The campaign is focusing on the Metrolinx plan to build new transit as privatized transit. Metrolinx is the provincial government agency responsible for the coordination and integration of all modes of transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

The ATU writes: "Metrolinx, the provincial arm's length transit planning organization, is only accepting bids from companies that can supply ALL components of new transit builds in Ontario. The components of the bid are: Finance, Design, Build, Operate and Maintain. (FDBOM) Because existing public transit companies don't Finance, Design or Build, they are ineligible to compete in the tendering process, and they are out of the running to Operate and Maintain new transit projects. This effectively means that only large groups of private companies may even bid on the project. The current procurement process leaves the door open to all new transit in Ontario being entirely privatized."



A petition on the campaign website states:

We the petitioners believe that transit should be publicly operated and maintained -- in addition to owned. We know from multiple examples that privatizing transit doesn't work -- it ends up more costly, less safe, and robs our communities of our shared public assets and good local jobs.

The petition puts forward two demands: that Metrolinx keep operation and maintenance of new transit public and remove private consortiums from any current or future tenders, and that provincial MPPs put pressure on the provincial Liberal government to ensure that transit stays public.

Signing the petition online automatically sends emails to all MPPs and confirmed candidates in Toronto, Brampton, Mississauga, Hamilton, St. Catharines and the Niagara area, as well as Metrolinx, the Ministry of Transportation, Infrastructure Ontario, and Premier Wynne's office. Campaign organizers also encourage people to phone MPPs and candidates to mobilize them to take up the demands of the campaign.

Mass leafleting is beginning in major public transit terminals starting on the week end of May 26-27, as well as door to door, according to ATU organizers, to raise awareness about these plans to further privatize public transit, about the demands of the campaign, and about the platforms of the parties running in the provincial election on privatization of public transit.

To sign the petition, [click here](#).

(Version française de cet article)



Interview, Jack Jackson, President, ATU Local 1572 (Mississauga)

Ontario Political Forum: Your local is active in the Keep Transit Public campaign. What are the main concerns of public transit workers in this campaign?

Jack Jackson: I would say that there are two main concerns that are interrelated. First of all, in the organized labour movement we are firm believers that transit needs to stay in the hands of the public, that it should not be operated for the sake of making profit, it is not supposed to be about the bottom line. It is supposed to be about getting people who rely on the system from point A to point B. We are talking about senior citizens, single mothers etc. If the money that is spent on privatized transit is invested in the system we already have, that would mean more buses, more drivers and doing all the things we should be doing. Then we would be able to reduce wait times so that people do not have to wait in the cold, the rain and snow. We would be able to have smaller routes in the city to bring people to the mainlines. That is how you get people out of their cars and get them to take public transit.



We have worked with anti-poverty groups that are working for the protection of people on lower incomes, individuals that rely on this service and on many other public services. Our interests align because we believe that transit is supposed to be affordable and not for profit.

Second, what has transpired with privatized models is that the first thing that goes out the window is the safety of the actual system. A union that represents public transit workers puts forward the safest methods of work. We are skilled people. We refuse to cut corners. We make sure that the buses are properly maintained and are pulled off the road when they need to be. When we look at the privatized models, safety was one of the first things that was cut. A unionized worker is a worker who cares, who is not afraid to make sure that we are always following the *Occupational Health and Safety Act*, that we fulfill safety requirements. When you look at private consortiums,

when the workers may not have this protection of a union, the pressure is on workers to just fall into line and just do what they are told to do.

We can already see this in with the way Metrolinx has organized so that unions and, even to a certain degree, cities cannot get involved with this Finance, Design, Build, Operate and Maintain system as it is set up by the province. They have not asked for our opinions, asked us what we think this new transit could and should be. They have not gone to the professionals who have been operating the system every day for decade after decade. They organized it so that we can't make our voice heard. It can only be a private consortium that has control there.

(Version française de cet article)

York University Slams Door Shut on Talks to Resolve Strike

Summer Terms in Jeopardy

- Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 3903 -



March on Queen's Park by striking York University education workers, April 9, 2018.

TORONTO, ON -- As a strike by 3,000 academic workers moves into its eleventh week [on May 14], York University today appeared to slam the door shut on saving the summer terms by rejecting an urgent meeting request from Local 3903 of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE 3903).

"We are disappointed, but not surprised that once again, York's actions fail to match their many public statements," said CUPE 3903 Chairperson Devin Lefebvre.

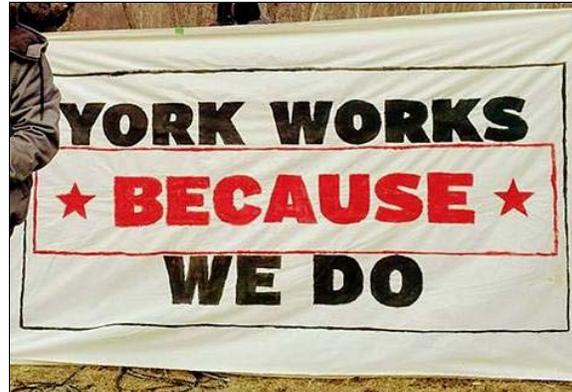
"Over and over again, York University has pressed for a speedy resolution, in the interests of students and the integrity of the academic terms that have been affected. They have repeatedly insisted our bargaining proposals need to be modified before any meaningful discussion can take place. Now that these things have happened, York has once again moved the goalposts, raising serious questions about their commitment to students and to academic integrity," he added.

On Thursday [May 10], CUPE 3903 requested a face-to-face meeting with York University's negotiators to present a revised package of bargaining proposals. York refused to meet, insisting they be permitted to review the proposals prior to meeting.

"We've been down this path with York before during this strike. The employer sets conditions for

meeting, and when those conditions are met, the employer tells us it isn't good enough and doesn't live up to their commitment. Enough is enough," said Lefebvre.

Earlier today, virtually every major faculty and student group at York University held a press conference to condemn York's actions during the strike and urge the administration to return to the bargaining table. As well, the York Federation of Students, representing 50,000 undergraduate students at York, today passed a motion of non-confidence in York University President Rhonda Lenton and her bargaining team for their handling of the dispute, and implored the University to return to the bargaining table.



Units 1, 2 and 3 of CUPE 3903 walked off the job March 5, in an effort to push back concessionary demands that remain on the table and to reduce the level of precarious employment endemic in the post-secondary education sector.

Lefebvre said the Union's amended bargaining proposals remained available as a framework for a resumption of bargaining, until Monday, May 14.

"We are available and ready to bargain, as we have been throughout the past ten weeks. York has an opportunity to finally do the right thing, save the Summer Terms and put an end to this dispute, but time is running out," he said.

For more information, please contact:

Julian Arend, CUPE 3903 Spokesperson, 437-288-6165

Kevin Wilson, CUPE Communications, 416-821-6641

[\(Version française de cet article\)](#)

Justice for Injured Workers!

Preparations Underway for 2018 Bike Ride

This year's Justice for Injured Workers bike ride travels through northern Ontario before heading south to Toronto in time for Ontario Injured Workers' Day June 1. Seminars and other programs, as well as media interviews are being organized in towns along the route. The ride takes place in the context of injured workers' province-wide campaign "Workers' Comp Is a Right" which justly demands that workers be fully compensated when injured or made ill on the job, and that doing so is the responsibility of the Workers' Safety and Insurance Board, funded by employers, and must not be downloaded onto already overstressed public programs such as Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP). This year's bike ride is focussing on "Occupational Disease: The Other Workplace Fatality."

On Friday, May 25 a seminar is taking place in Elliot Lake on Occupational Disease in Mining, with an inaugural reception for the bike ride taking place later the same day. A memorial ride is organized for May 26 from Elliot Lake into Massey in honour of the late Jim Hobbs and all workers who died from occupational diseases -- and in many cases never received compensation for their illness.

Elliott Lake

Seminar -- Occupational Disease in Mining and
McIntyre Powder Research
Friday, May 25 -- 1:00-4:00 pm
Lester B. Pearson Civic Centre Theatre

Inaugural Reception
Friday, May 25 -- 7:00-9:00 pm
Lester B. Pearson Civic Centre Theatre

Massey

Jim Hobbs Memorial Ride & Presentation
Saturday, May 26 -- 7:00 am-3:00 pm
Ride from Elliot Lake Miners' Memorial Park on Highway 108 North
to Massey and District Arena, 455 Government St.

Sudbury

Occupational Disease: The Other Workplace Fatality



Justice for Injured Workers

Occupational Disease: The Other Workplace Fatality

Join the "Justice For Injured Workers Riders" (JFIW) as they
arrive in Sudbury! This is their fourth annual bike ride that
highlights the importance of injured workers being treated with
justice and dignity.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN!

WHEN: Sunday May 27th, 2018 at 4:00 p.m.
WHERE: USW Hall, 66 Brady St. Sudbury (patio)
WHY: Rally in support of the Riders &
remember our fallen workers

Please **RSVP** with Nicole at: n.ayotte@uwcneo.com
or call 705-560-3330 x223.

FREE BBQ will be provided by Miners for Cancer.
First come first serve until we run out!



[click for PDF](#)

Organized by Ontario Network of Injured Workers' Groups.
For information on all Justice Bike Ride events [click here](#).

Coming Events

Upcoming Discussions and Meetings

Barrie

Speakout on Matters of Concern in Ontario Election
Thursday, May 17 -- 5:00 pm
Painswick Branch, Barrie Library -- 48 Dean Ave.
Hosted by the Barrie District Injured Workers' Group

Windsor

Independent Candidate, Laura Chesnik
Weekly Campaign Meeting
Thursday, May 17 -- 5:00-6:00 pm
Riverside Public Library, 6305 Wyandotte St. E.

All Candidates' Meeting on Health Care:
Who Wins, Who Loses?
Tuesday, May 22 -- 6:45 pm
School of Social Work, Pitt & Ferry

How to Ensure the Voice of Workers Is Heard in the Ontario Election
Round Table Meeting
Sunday, May 27 -- 1:00-4:00 pm
547 Victoria Ave.
Hosted by OSSTF District 9 Greater Essex
[**Facebook**](#)

Hamilton

Discussion on the Ontario Election and the Role Workers
Can Play to Turn Things Around in Their Favour
Sunday, May 20 -- 1:00-4:00 pm
USW Local 1005 Union Hall, 340 Kenilworth Ave N
Organized by the Workers' Centre of CPC(M-L)

Mississauga

Town Hall on Public Services and Privatization
Tuesday, May 22 -- 7:00-9:00 pm
Mississauga Valley Community Centre,
1275 Mississauga Valley Blvd. Program Room 1
Organized by Ontario Public Service Employees Union

Toronto

Workplace Violence in Ontario Hospitals
Tuesday, May 22 -- 11:00 am
Institute for Work & Health - 481 University Ave, Ste 800, Toronto
Organized by Institute for Work and Health
Further information email Albana Canga at acanga@iwh.on.ca

We Own it! Townhall
Thursday, May 24 -- 7:00 pm
519 Church St Community Centre
For more information: Ram Selvarajah 647 222 4270, Rselvarajah@gmail.com
or Joseanne Job 416 827 2297 joseannejob7@gmail.com

June 1 Injured Workers' Day

Toronto

Overnight Vigil and Cultural Program
Thursday, May 31 -- 4:00 pm
Queen's Park.

Rally at Queen's Park and March
Friday, June 1 -- 11:00 am

Candidates Townhall Meeting
Friday, June 1 -- 2:00-4:00 pm
OCAD, Auditorium -- 100 McCaul St., Room 190

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Website: www.cpcml.ca Email: ontario@cpcml.ca