

Oppose Bill-78 in Quebec! No to Government Violence & Attack on Political Opposition!

- May 22, 2012 -

Interested in learning more or getting involved? Join us for an Open Meeting!
Wednesday, May 23 at 5:30pm
North Hamilton Community Health Centre, 483 Hughson St N
Email: opposebill78@gmail.com

Today, students, workers and concerned individuals across Quebec mark 100 days of resistance. Across the province, students and their supporters are taking to the streets to oppose the recently passed Bill-78, and to continue to defend the right of all to education. We, a group of concerned community members, stand in Hamilton with them, joining our voices to theirs in opposing the austerity agenda of governments and the attempts to silence such opposition through force and violence. Join us!

Last week, the Liberal Charest government in Quebec officially passed Bill-78, a law that makes the student and social movements basically **illegal**. It is a desperate move by a government which has lost its legitimacy to stop political opposition to its wrecking of the education system. For over three months, the mass of students and their supporters across Quebec have been demonstrating and organizing daily, in the streets and in public halls, in opposition to the proposed tuition fee hikes, which would see university costs to students soar by close to 80% over seven years. This movement began when the main college and university unions called a strike against the fee hikes, after holding a vote in which students in large numbers favoured a strike. The government has attempted, through fraud negotiations and outright police brutality, to stop the movement but has failed. In fact, the movement has only grown. Artists, teachers, workers from many sectors and concerned community members have joined and broadened the student movement. In the face of this growing opposition, the government continues its refusal to find a political solution that would address the concerns of people. Instead, the undemocratic Bill-78 has been passed.



Wear the Carre Rouge - red felt patch symbolizing the right to education worn by students and supporters across Quebec.

What Is Bill-78?

Bill-78 is a special law that the Charest government adopted on May 18, which deprives students of their basic civil liberties and negates the right of all Quebecers to organize against government policy. Among other things, it shuts down affected post-secondary institutions, forces employees back to work, bans public assemblies of 50 or more people, and permits the government to arbitrarily defund student associations. It also imposes heavy fines (ranging from \$1,000 to \$135,000) on individuals and organizations who exercise their right to demonstrate. Also, the law empowers the Ministers of Education, Justice and Public Security to violate the very laws of Quebec in dealing with the student unions and their supporters. Quebecers from all walks of life have denounced this attack on civil liberties of not just the students but the entire society. The law negates the rights of all to freedom of assembly, freedom of speech and the right to conscience, as well as their right to oppose and resist government policies which are not in their interest. Once governments refuse to negotiate and instead resort to draconian law and order measures and launch brutal police attacks against students, workers and others fighting for their rights, what is left? It must not pass!

As Hamiltonians we are very concerned about the unfolding events in Quebec, and in Ontario where the McGuinty government is refusing to negotiate with the teachers and federally where the Harper government has been passing back-to-work legislation which sanctions the refusal of monopolies to negotiate conditions of work and violating the rights of Canadians in the name of public security. We encourage everyone to join us to inform themselves about these alarming developments. Oppose the disinformation against the students which blames them for the police violence! Support the students!