



Toronto Labour Day Parade 1952



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Ethiopian/Eritrean Workers Network

To join any of the Diversity Networks

Call or Email 416 441 3663
network@labourcouncil.ca



EDITORIAL

This issue of Labour Action just grew a few more pages, because so much is happening that affects workers and their families in greater Toronto, across Canada, and the Globe. From the journey of a young person to become a skilled construction worker, to challenging bigotry, ideas on just transitioning of work in a green economy – it all connects!

Let's start with today's life essential - work! Ontario's labour movement is mobilizing to win new and stronger employment laws that would make life easier for people; to join unions, win decent contracts and create better working conditions. Labour is determined to win new rights for workers without unions, to tackle temp work, wage theft and unfair scheduling. Together, the MakeItFair and \$15+Fairness campaigns are looking to reach tens of thousands of union members this Fall so pencil the date in your schedule and make sure you attend the Rally for Decent Work set for October 1st at Queen's Park. Bring your family, friends, neighbours because this is about EVERYONE in Ontario. Who doesn't want a good job?

What about the impact of trade and technology on jobs? The reason for the resounding force of the Brexit vote in UK and TRUMPmania in US can be found in feelings of betrayal and degradation felt by the working class - a direct outcome of globalization. Feelings entirely human

and now exploited by the select few to futher their agendas of racism and bigotry, disempowering citizens, causing chaos and creating greater profits for the 1%. This is why Labour stands strongly against all forms of discrimination, and have done so for many decades – as the cover page of this issue reminds us. The Canadian labour movement has also been fighting unfair trade deals since 1988.

Today, Labour continues to demand changes to CETA and calls on the Trudeau government to firmly scrap and not recycle the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) negotiated by the Harper Conservatives. This is about making sure that the rights of all Canadians is made a priority for generations to come and not sold to corporates interests in drawn out legal battles consuming precious tax money better spent on creating improved lives for our most vulnerable and deeply wounded, our Indigenous communities.

But even jobs that can't be exported are under attack, as we see with the nasty tactics of Canada Post CEO Deepak Chopra. The Canadian Union of Postal

Workers has launched an absolutely brilliant strategy to build a better future for themselves and all of Canada – by becoming true changemakers that deliver not just mail but also green jobs and affordable financial services! Called *Delivering Community Power* and taking pride of place in the centre-spread of this issue, postal workers are showing that leadership and innovation is well and alive in Canada. It shows how the principle of “just transition” can be applied to an organization that owns the largest chain of retail outlets in the country. A Canada greenjob network that is owned by us for generations to come. Imagine if every union in Canada develops such a far-sighted plan to look at the opportunities in their sector to combat climate change. Just imagine...

Let us take time to celebrate victories hard won. Like the expansion of Canada Pension Plan after seven long years of struggle. And the election of Chris Moise to the Toronto District School Board. Not forgetting the leadership of the Toronto Community Benefits Network. Victories

hard won, essential inspiration for challenges on the horizon for surely, together we prove we are stronger.

Hope you enjoy this issue. When you have finished pass it on to a friend or co-worker, perhaps add it to a waiting room table for others to read? Find us on Facebook or Twitter, and get our weekly e-message by signing up at labourcouncil.ca and send your feedback to kkulendiren@labourcouncil.ca

Together we can make Labour's voice louder!

In Solidarity,
Kiruthiha Kulendiren

Your Family and Precarious Work – Take the Survey!

Today in Ontario, well more than a million workers earn minimum wage or just above it. Too many of our neighbour or family members are trapped in precarious work - part-time, temporary, contract and subcontracted jobs. This changing economic reality has brought the Government of Ontario to examine the out-dated *Employment Standards Act* and the *Labour Relations Act*, and the labour movement is hoping to seize this historic opportunity to win real improvements in the law.

The OFL's **Make It Fair** campaign aims to reach a million union members to engage in building a movement for change. It will partner with the \$15 and Fairness campaign for public events, and

hopes to create a strong narrative around workplace justice. Unions across the province are undertaking a major survey on precarious work – an issue that is fast becoming the 'new normal' for Ontario workers.

Is there anyone in your immediate or extended family who finds themselves in part-time, contract or temp agency jobs with lower pay, fewer benefits or unpredictable schedules?

If yes, please take the survey. At the July Labour Council meeting, Delegates interviewed each other and came up with astounding results. Nearly everyone had someone in their family who was affected. It makes the issue a whole lot more relevant if it impacts on

you directly, and that's what the survey is designed to find out.

We want to hear from everyone, so please share your thoughts by arranging for a survey through your union or by visiting www.makeitfair.ca. Participants will have a chance to win a \$200 gift card for either Loblaws or Metro grocery stores. Check out the website regularly to see the results and updates on the campaign.



labourcouncil.ca
makeitfair.ca
15andfairness.org

WHAT IS "DECENT WORK"?



DECENT WORK IS WORK THAT...

- ➔ is meaningful and productive
- ➔ pays a living wage
- ➔ provides benefits and social protections
- ➔ is protected by strong labour laws that guarantee workers' rights, including freedom of association (the right to join and be represented by a union)



Decent work benefits both individuals AND communities. It helps maintain family stability, creates peace in communities, promotes healthy democratic participation, and leads to more equitable and productive economic growth.



Welcome Mohammed Hashim – Labour Council Organizer!

Mohammed Hashim may be a new Organizer for Labour Council, but he is a familiar face to many of our affiliates. Before being chosen as TYRLC Organizer, he served for three years with Labour Community Services, helping to build workplace United Way campaigns and outreaching to young workers. He was very involved in the efforts within the Muslim communities across Canada to challenge the Harper government's bigotry and build strong

voter turnout in the federal election. Prior to LCS, Mohammed worked for its sister organization in Peel. A leader in the Canadian Federation of Students before he joined the labour movement, Mohammed is helping to build the Young Workers Network and has major assignments at Toronto City Hall, the School Boards and York Region. You can reach him at mhashim@labourcouncil.ca

Filipino Workers History Tour

Toronto's history includes countless stories of working people fighting for equality, social justice, and to make a living for themselves and their families. 100 years ago, the Ward, a neighbourhood in central Toronto centred on the intersection of Bay and Dundas Streets, was the centre of immigrant, working class community in the city. Today, the transnational nature of labour has shaped the

geography of Toronto, and has led to the development of a number of suburban working class immigrant communities. Little Manila is one of these neighborhoods, located North York's Bathurst-Wilson area. After the Second World War, Filipino migrant-workers began moving to Bathurst and Wilson.

And today Toronto has a vibrant Filipino Workers Network, including

Union members from a wide variety of occupations.

To register for the Migration, Food and Identity in North York's Little Manila tour on September 3, visit heritagetoronto.org.

 **HERITAGE
TORONTO**
PEOPLE.PLACES.EVENTS.



Chris Moise Wins Ward 14 TDSB By-Election!

Thirty-six hours after winning the Toronto District School board trustee by-election in Ward 14 Toronto Centre-Rosedale on June 20, Chris Moise was sworn in as the new trustee and then whisked into his first board meeting. He hasn't stopped since.

The by-election was a hard fought campaign on the ground in the riding and the newly-elected trustee knows his victory came about because of the time and commitment from the community and the Toronto labour movement.

"I am humbled by the many volunteers who came and worked so hard to win this. They

came from all over the city – from Scarborough to Etobicoke and many parts in between,"

Chris said at his victory party.

And many of those volunteers included union members who on their own time came and canvassed at many doors during the by-election. Chris spent much of his first couple of weeks as an elected trustee attending graduation ceremonies at both the high schools and elementary schools in his ward. And he has also already started meeting with parent groups, other trustees and board staff. We're sure Chris will be a strong voice for public education in our communities.

Not Just Bigots and Boors

The decision of British voters to leave Europe has been treated as evidence that they're intolerant xenophobes keen to seal themselves off from the world. That Donald Trump is on their side only helps make the case that they represent a boorish throwback, a desire to make the English-speaking world great again by turning it into a giant gated community surrounded by sky-high walls.



Having such a collection of bigots and boors opposing “globalization” may turn out to be a boon for those promoting globalization — that is, the laws that govern the global economy.

This is unfortunate, since these laws — and the international trade deals that enforce them — have delivered benefits almost exclusively to those at the top in recent years, and should be thoroughly overhauled.

But with Neanderthal wall-builders lurking in the background, it may be easier for the Trudeau government to convince Canadians to accept these badly flawed and increasingly unpopular trade deals as part of living in an open, modern world.

U.S. President Barack Obama helped make this case in his address to Parliament last week, urging us to resist “sealing ourselves off from the world,” as he derided opposition to foreigners and opposition to international trade deals with the same broad brush.

But whoa, Nelly! Let's not lump Trump's scurrilous Muslim ban in with legitimate resistance to trade deals such as NAFTA, as well as the highly contentious new Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), the sweeping 12-nation trade deal Obama is keenly promoting.

There's a litany of reasons why any sensible person would resist these trade deals.

But the most outrageous aspect of them has always been the special set of legal rights they bestow on foreign corporations and investors. These rights — which go beyond anything that exists in domestic or international law — enable wealthy foreigners to sue governments over policies the foreigners

don't like, and to have their lawsuits decided by closed tribunals.

The TPP, rather than removing this indefensible, anti-democratic set of rights for wealthy foreigners, actually extends them.

Indeed, the TPP could open a floodgate of new claims by wealthy foreigners, according to a powerful report by Osgoode Hall law professor Gus Van Harten, released last month but ignored by the media.

“With the TPP, many more such claims will become possible,” notes Van Harten, an expert in international law and investment treaties.

The report documents how corporations and wealthy investors have taken advantage of the bizarrely generous legal rights available to them under NAFTA, suing Canada 39 times and winning more than \$190 million in compensation from Canadian taxpayers. There is no cap on how high the compensation can be, and the vast majority of it goes to the ultra-rich — corporations with annual revenues over \$1 billion and individuals with net wealth above \$100 million.

Globalization pacts, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, give too much power to corporations over elected officials

Oh, and let's not forget what it is these foreign interests are objecting to: laws passed by democratically elected governments to protect the public.



TORONTO & YORK REGION LABOUR COUNCIL 145th ANNIVERSARY GALA & BROMLEY ARMSTRONG AWARDS



Labour Council celebrated 145 years of working for justice with a gala dinner dance combined with honouring two dynamic leaders. Keynote speaker CLC President Hassan Yussuff praised the work of the Toronto & York Region Labour Council over its history, and credited its activism with helping to win major struggles on behalf of working people. A slide show featured images from 1871 to today, and can be seen on the LabourCouncil.ca website. David Onyalo and Winnie Ng both received the 2016 Bromley Armstrong Award, and a birthday cake appeared for Council staffer Maureen King. It was a great night to celebrate!

For instance, Philip Morris challenged anti-tobacco regulations in Australia, Lone Pine Resources challenged fracking regulations in Canada. Just last month, TransCanada sued the United States for \$15 billion to compensate for Obama's decision not to approve the Keystone pipeline.

And the cases are decided by private sector lawyers acting as arbitrators. Unlike regular judges, these arbitrators, paid exorbitant hourly rates, have a direct financial interest in encouraging foreign investors to bring claims and to stretch them out, and have so far earned "well over \$1 billion in fees," Van Harten says.

OK, so the TPP offers sweetheart legal

protection for some of the richest people on Earth, making it easy for them to sue us for uncapped amounts, in closed tribunals adjudicated by lawyers with a financial interest in siding with the rich foreigners.

But surely there's also got to be something in the TPP for foreign banks?

Yes, there is: the TPP goes beyond NAFTA in creating new opportunities for foreign banks to sue for compensation. Who would have thought of that!

Last February, Trade Minister Chrystia Freeland flew to New Zealand to sign the TPP. While Canada still must ratify the deal, Freeland sure sounded keen as

she told reporters "we are a party that believes in trade, and a government that believes in free trade."

The Trudeau government will no doubt fill us with dark Brexit and Trumpian images to warm us up to the TPP. But not even revulsion for Donald Trump will provide enough lipstick to pretty up this pig.

Linda McQuaig is a journalist and author. Her column appears monthly in Toronto Star.

To learn more about TPP, go to canadianlabour.ca and share the video!

Published in the Toronto Star
July 7, 2016

Asante: A Man With a Plan



It's a hot summer day in Toronto. With the mercury approaching 32 degree celsius, it'd be hard to find anyone with a burning desire — pardon the pun — to be in the sun all day. Yet, that is exactly where you'll find Asante Obeng along with six other construction workers, hammering away at a bridge over the QEW, near Cawthra.

Asante recalls being interested in construction work since he was a little boy. "I was always the one tinkering with stuff, taking things apart" he says. Now 24, he is the youngest member of the Torbridge crew on this particular site, but he is certainly not inexperienced.

Back in grade 11, Asante was recruited into the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program (OYAP), a government initiative that introduces high school students to the trades. For two consecutive summers he attended the LIUNA local 183 Training Centre where he learned the necessary skills to become a construction craft worker (CCW). "They do really good work out there" Asante says, speaking of

Local 183's training center on highway 50. After learning basic skills like measuring and use of tools, "we took on projects, like putting up walls, building slabs, stairs, etc." says Asante, clearly impressed by the comprehensive training he received from the union. Moreover, his training allowed him to find the right balance between productivity and safety when he started to work in heavy constructions throughout the city, right after high school.

Asante has no doubt that he can have a successful career being a CCW. "If he wasn't for school, I would've been well off, owning my own house already" he says. But his plans are multilayered. When he's not in Toronto working in the summertime,

he is in California playing football at a Junior College. Asante is a man with a plan. Ultimately he wants to be playing in the NFL or the CFL — at 6'5" he has the stature to succeed. In the meantime, to the great satisfaction of his Ghanaian-born parents, he's taking his academic studies very seriously, hoping to complete a degree in Construction Engineering.

Asante recognizes that his life could have been very different today if it wasn't for the OYAP and the training he received at Local 183. Sure, he would probably still be helping his neighbour on his renovation gigs, but he doubts that he would be in a safe, well-paying union job that has opened up a great future.

Connect + Follow + Share

Did you know? Have you heard? Did you read? Got a campaign?

No .. No .. No .. Yes!

Stay connected with Twitter & Facebook

Follow @torontolabour and Like facebook.com/labourcouncil

Visit www.labourcouncil.ca and [youtube/labourcouncil](https://www.youtube.com/labourcouncil) for video, articles, press releases & much more!

Got feedback about Labour Action? Comment on an article? Story ideas?

Email kkulendiren@labourcouncil.ca

Toronto Workers' History Project

Did you know that the first women organized into a union in Toronto were boot-and-shoe workers in 1870? Did you know that Toronto printers got the eight-hour day in 1907? Did you know that 5,000 unionists marched on Queen's Park in 1918 to end prohibition and bring back beer?

Toronto's working people have a long, rich history, but it is not well known, either by activists or the public. A new group wants to do something about that. The Toronto Workers' History Project started up in May, and includes a large number of workers, unionists, professors, students, artists, teachers, librarians, educators, researchers, community activists, and retirees who want to preserve and promote working-class history in the city. The group's mission statement promises inclusivity and relevance:

"We are committed to bringing to light the experiences of working people and their contributions as individuals and collectively to the

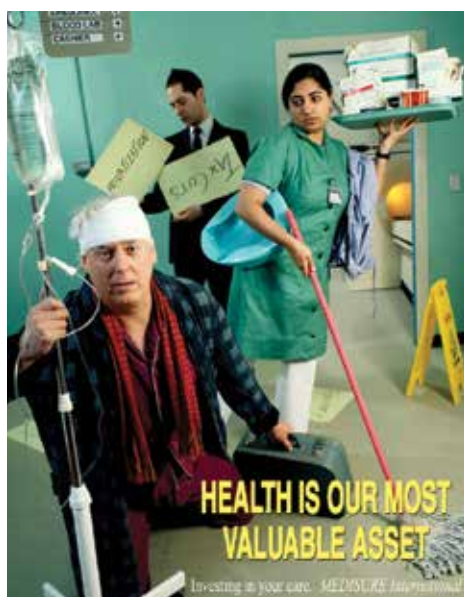
building of this city, in the home, in the paid workplace, and in the community. We want to highlight the vitality and creativity of working-class cultures in the history of Toronto. We are determined to include the full diversity of working-class experience, including women, indigenous people, racialized people, people with disabilities, and gays, lesbians, and trans people. We embrace the histories of people from all parts of the world. We aim to make these stories available through a variety of media for audiences of all ages and backgrounds. We want to educate the people of Toronto and beyond, but also to inspire activists in social-justice and labour movements with the lessons from



the past for the struggles to change the world today. "

To put this vision into action, an interim steering committee and four working groups have been set up and will be reporting to the next general membership meeting on 12 September at the Steelworkers' Hall on Cecil St. Anyone can join - \$10 for the employed, \$2 for students, unemployed, and retirees. Contact Craig at cheron@yorku.ca.

Art-Activism of Condé + Beveridge



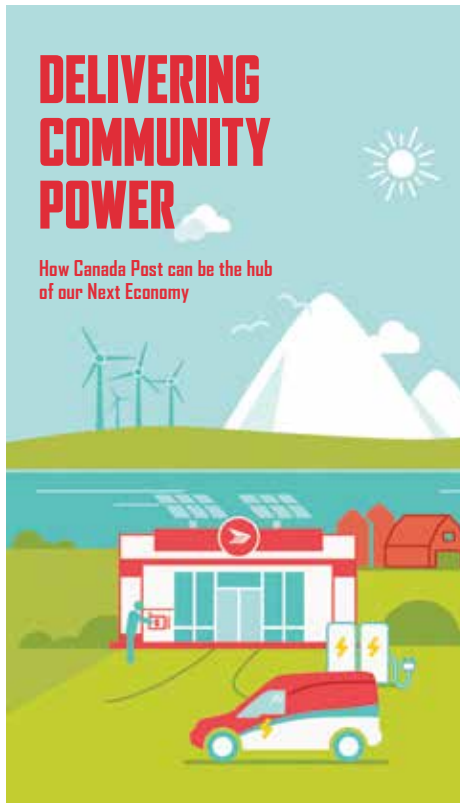
For more than 40 years, Carole Condé and Karl Beveridge have constructed images that illuminate the contest between private interests and collective needs in the workplace, communities, and the environment. A powerful retrospective of their work entitled *Public Exposures* was part of the Contact Festival this summer.

The artists have made the concept of work and working people's stories the central theme in their staged photography. Their first substantial union collaboration came in 1980 when the bitter Radio Shack strike in

Barrie, Ontario, ended with a historic first contract for working women. They have since created numerous other projects involving dozens of unions, and have been a key part of Toronto's progressive arts and culture community for decades. Check them out at www.condebeveridge.ca

Reimagining Our Postal Service

Many think of Canada Post as a place to mail a care package, buy stamps or pick up the latest commemorative coin.



Some consider the post office past its prime: the last decade has seen efforts to cut, devalue and undermine this quintessentially public service. These moves have been fiercely resisted by people across the country.

What if our cherished national institution, with its vast physical infrastructure and millions of daily human interactions, could offer us something completely different? What if the post office could play a central role in building our next economy — an economy that is more stable, more equal, and less polluting?

We're thinking big. Will you join us? Just Imagine...

- Charging stations for electric vehicles at post offices
- A renewable-powered postal fleet that connects farms to dinner tables
- Door-to-door mail carriers checking in on seniors and people with mobility issues as well as delivering locally-produced food and other services
- Post offices as community hubs for social innovation, connecting climate-friendly businesses to customers
- Postal banking services that provide small towns and Indigenous communities with inclusive financial services — like loans to families underserved by commercial banks
- Public-interest financial services that fuel the green energy transition in urban, rural and Indigenous communities

We want a 100% renewable economy that addresses inequality, puts power in our hands and improves our lives.

Our post office can deliver it.

Delivering Our Renewable Future

Canada Post's vast infrastructure and delivery network has the potential to become the hub of a green and social economy. Here's how we could do it:

- It starts with those negatively affected by the old economy. Indigenous communities downstream from polluting projects; neighbourhoods relying on precarious or low-paying work; regions facing job losses in extraction industries: postal banking and new sustainable businesses could provide solutions for all.
- Transition the Canada Post fleet to 100% renewable energy. Canada Post has the largest public vehicle fleet in the country. Federal infrastructure funding could add a nation-wide network for charging electric vehicles — a springboard toward a broad shift to low-carbon vehicles.
- Electric charging stations could be added to every post office and depot, which would encourage public use and build infrastructure for electric vehicles.
- Expand door-to-door delivery services. Door-to-door delivery reduces use of fossil fuels than customers driving to pick up their mail.
- Support for elders and those with limited mobility. Mail carriers,



“Meeting our climate commitments requires a bold vision, and public support for that vision. By working closely with communities, Canada Post could deliver green energy in ways that address their concerns and meet their needs.”

David Suzuki

already the eyes and ears of their neighbourhoods, could check in on elders and deliver medicines and other services.

- Turn post offices into community hubs. Local entrepreneurs can use the post office as a meeting space or pop-up shop to connect with customers and collaborators.

Why Canada Post?

What would you do if you owned...

- The biggest chain of retail outlets in the country?
- A way to easily communicate and connect with every household from coast to coast to coast?
- A logistical network that can mobilize people and move materials to every corner of the world's second-largest country?

WE OWN IT. Canada Post isn't just a mail and parcel delivery service; it's a powerful national logistics network that could address some of our most pressing challenges, such as:

- climate change,
- delivering services to an aging population,

- providing financial services to low-income communities
- using profits to help fund other public initiatives

For over a century, Canada Post has provided the same world-class service to everyone in the country. By reinventing our post office as the engine of the next economy. We will connect people and communities into the next century.

Canada Post offered banking services until 1968

Postal banking is simple: like the big banks, post offices can provide everyday financial services like chequing and savings accounts, loans and insurance. There's one key difference: unlike the big banks, our postal banks are owned by the people who use them.

Canada's major banks raked in \$35 billion dollars in profits in 2015 — while cutting jobs and raising their already high fees for day-to-day services. Hundreds of thousands of Canadians don't have bank accounts at all. access to banking is particularly limited for Indigenous communities; only 54 of 615 First nations communities are served by local bank branches.

About 2 million people a year in Canada use payday lenders, which often charge interest rates of over 400%. For various reasons, these customers are denied overdraft protection, lines of credit, credit cards, and short-term loans.

Every year, workers in Canada transfer billions of dollars in remittances to family members overseas, but the cost of sending money can be as high as 20% on smaller amounts. These high rates hurt the people that depend upon them the most.

Postal banking could provide basic financial services for everyone.

It could also offer affordable loans to boost renewable energy development, including energy-saving retrofits.

By offering banking services through its network of over 6000 postal outlets, Canada Post could overnight become the most accessible — and greenest — bank in the country.

Get Involved

DeliveringCommunityPower.ca

Shape Canada Post's Future

We have a rare chance to push for a bold vision and a leap forward. remember the ideas we've presented in this pamphlet and contribute your own innovative thinking.

Join Us

Visit deliveringcommunitypower.ca to join the call for Canada Post to Deliver Community Power.

Spread the Word

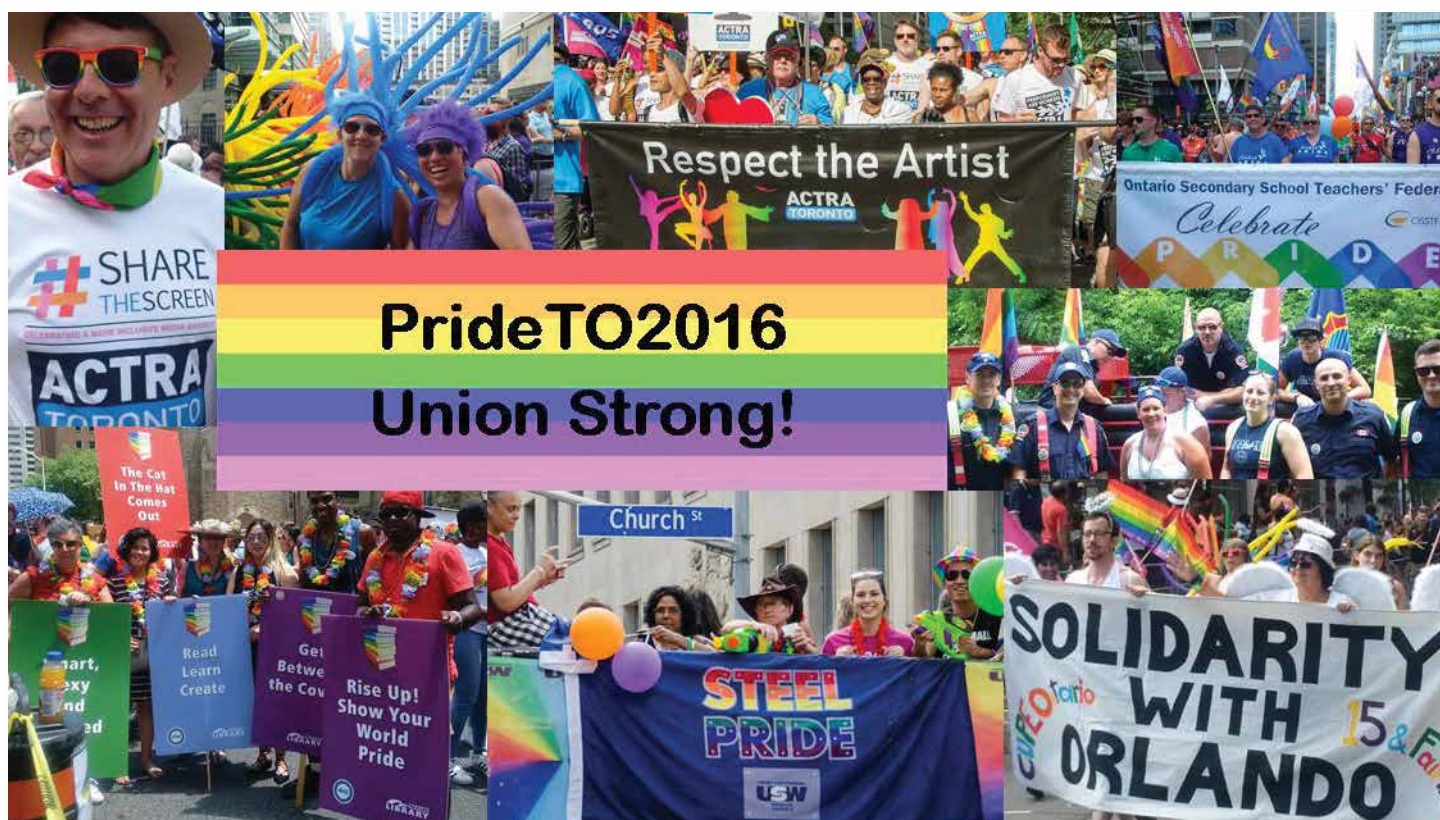
On our web site, you can request copies of this pamphlet to distribute in your community.

Get Your MP On Board

Call your federal Member of Parliament and ask them to support the campaign.

Join or Host a Local Event

Spread the word about the campaign and identify local allies. Details at deliveringcommunitypower.ca



Share the Screen – ACTRA Shout Out for Diversity!

ACTRA Toronto's Diversity Committee, which serves the performer union's self-identified diverse membership, has launched a multi-tiered awareness campaign called #SharetheScreen. The campaign provides links and tools for Canadians to tell broadcasters, producers, funders and policy and decision makers that we want a more inclusive Canadian media industry. Together, we can show the world that Canada is a leader in creating exciting stories led by characters of various ages, genders, cultural backgrounds, and abilities.

A #SharetheScreen video, to be launched later this summer, addresses the realities and experiences of diverse performers in the entertainment industry, while also speaking to larger issues of diversity and gender inequities.

Go to: <http://www.actratontoronto.com/sharethescreen/> to see how you can help.



The Long Fight to Expand the Canada Pension Plan

The Canadian Labour Congress is celebrating the agreement by federal and provincial Finance Ministers on a modest universal expansion of the Canada Pension Plan. The CLC and its member unions have supported an expanded CPP for more than 50 years and have been actively campaigning on this issue since 2009.

"Too many Canadians today are struggling in retirement and change is long overdue. Even though we had asked that the CPP be doubled, we

appreciate that this will be the first increase in the plan's history, and one that will benefit all Canadians," said Canadian Labour Congress President Hassan Yussuff.

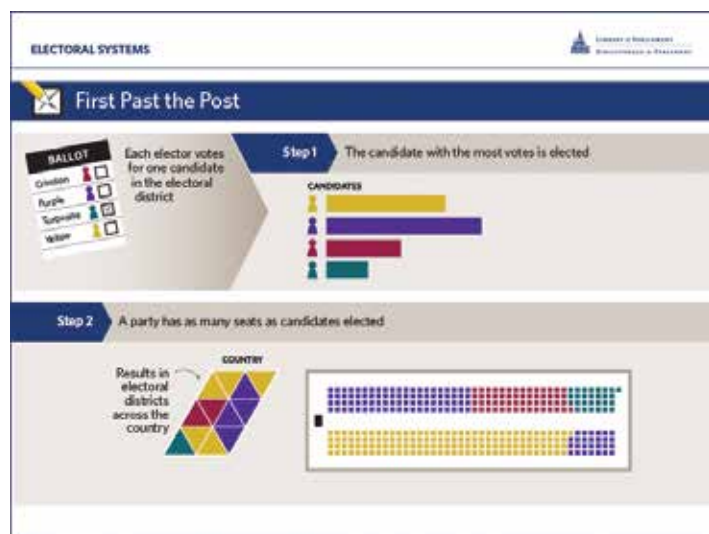
This issue is important for union and non-union workers, because even those employees with a workplace pension plan or alternate savings are vulnerable to financial insecurity in retirement. Fewer employers are offering workplace pensions, and more workplace pensions are seeing reduced

benefits. By contrast, the CPP follows workers from job to job, keeps up with the cost of living, and pays out benefits for life, regardless of how the stock market performs.

"Canadian unions believe we all have a responsibility to work to end seniors' poverty. We know that pensions are crucially important, not just to the well-being of workers and their families, but to the economic health and vitality of our cities and communities," Yussuff said.

Make Every Vote Count

In a democracy, every vote should count equally. But that's not how it works - in the 2015 federal election, it took just 38,000 votes to elect each Liberal MP compared to 57,000 for each Conservative, 79,000 for each New Democrat MP, 82,000 for each member of the Bloc Québécois and 603,000 votes for one Green MP.



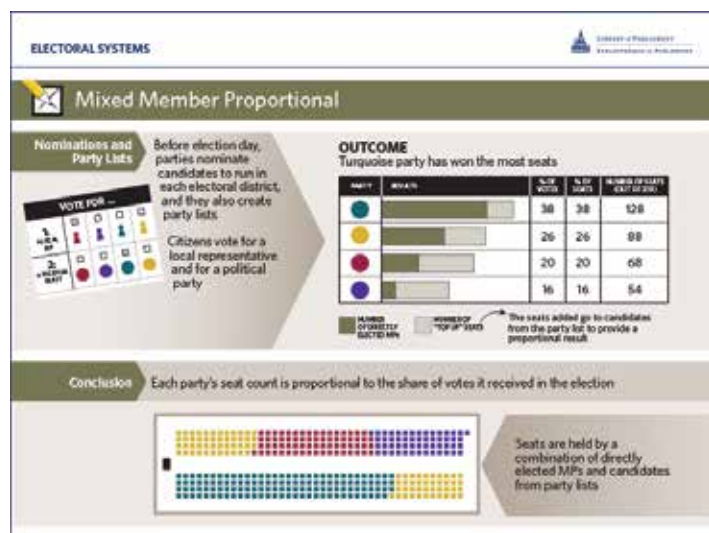
Overall, nine million votes were wasted – meaning they were cast for a candidate who didn't win in our first-past-the-post system. This fundamentally unfair system is now up for review, as Prime Minister Trudeau has pledged 2015 will be the last election run in the traditional “first past the post” method. Trudeau says he prefers Ranked Ballot voting, but that is very different than Proportional Representation (PR), where the party representation in Parliament reflects their share of the votes. The vast majority of OECD countries elect their governments through PR, resulting in stable administrations that rule effectively.

Labour Council has long supported Fair Vote Canada in its efforts to win electoral reform for Proportional Representation. There are different variations of PR. Labour Council is supporting a move to a Mixed Member Proportional system (MMP). That system features one ballot with two choices: a local representative and a party choice. Voters elect their representatives in two ways: in local districts and province-wide. All elected members would serve together in the Legislature.

Local members are elected in MMP in the same way they are elected under the current system. Local candidates are nominated by parties or run as independents. The votes are counted in each electoral district and the candidate with the most votes is elected. The winning candidate represents the district in the legislature.

List members are elected through the party vote on the ballot. Each party nominates a list of candidates, in the order it wants them to be elected. Candidates at the top of the list have a better chance of being elected than candidates farther down the list. This helps voters decide which party to vote for because they know which candidates will be elected if a party wins list seats.

MMP won't guarantee that pro-labour candidates will prevail – the elites will still do everything possible to shape the outcome in favour of business. But it will provide the opportunity for political voices that speak for the interests of workers and their communities to be elected more often. It has also been shown to increase both voter turnout and diversity of winning candidates. We have been saddled with false majorities for too long. It's time that Canada moves to a more representative system that ensures that every vote counts.



Truth and Reconciliation



Truth and
Reconciliation
Commission of Canada

For the child taken,
For the parent left behind

For over a century, generations of Aboriginal children were separated from their parents and raised in over-crowded, underfunded, and often unhealthy residential schools across Canada. They were commonly denied the right to speak their language and told their cultural beliefs were sinful. Some students did not see their parents for years. Others—the victims of scandalously high death rates—never made it back home. Even by the standards of the day, discipline often was excessive. Lack of supervision left students prey to sexual predators. To put it simply: the needs of tens of thousands of Aboriginal children were neglected routinely. Far too many children were abused far too often.

But this story is about more than neglect and abuse. Those painful stories rightfully have captured national headlines. They are central to the story this book tells. But there is more to tell.

- This is a story of loss
- For Canada, this is a shameful story
- It is also a story about the response to a sacred call
- It is a story about Canadian colonialism.
- It is a complicated story
- It is a story of humility and the possibility of change
- Most importantly, this story is a tribute to Aboriginal resilience: a determination not just to endure, but to flourish
- It is a story about how, in crucial ways, our schools failed all of us
- This is a story of destruction carried out in the name of civilization
- This is our story and Canada's story
- This story is not over.

The history recounted in this book will cause many Canadians to see their country differently. It is painful to discover that, as a nation, we have not always lived up to our ideals or the image we seek to project on



The Battleford, Saskatchewan, school cricket team in 1895. In 1899, an Indian Affairs official wrote of the Battleford school, "A noticeable feature of this school is its games. They are all thoroughly and distinctly 'white'. The boys use the boxing gloves with no little science, and excellent temper and play good games of cricket and football with great interest and truly Anglo-Saxon vigor."

the international stage. That does not mean we should abandon our ideals. We cannot change the past, but the future is in our hands. We are called to undertake the ongoing work of reconciliation: to right the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canada. This is no easy or straightforward task. We need to revive old visions in which these communities came together in a spirit of sharing and mutual exchange. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission will be seeking to guide this process throughout the rest of its mandate. We encourage Canadians to read this history, participate in Commission

events, and, in the coming years, to join in the ongoing task of coming to grips with our nation's past and charting a future in which we can all take pride.

The text above is excerpted from the Introduction of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report. Each bullet point introduces a full section that summarizes the long history covered by the report. The Canadian Labour Congress is developing a framework for a labour action plan to address the issues raised by the report. Every Canadian should take time to read this important story — www.trc.ca



ABORIGINAL & WORKERS OF COLOUR CONFERENCE 2016

On May 14th Labour Council held its annual Aboriginal/Workers of Colour Conference (AWOC) at the Don Valley Hotel. Over 250 people turned out to engage in a full day of learning and sharing. Keynote speakers were Chief Leslee White-Eye of the Chippewas of the Thames; and Terry Melvin, President of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. Packed workshops featured topics on Fighting Racism + Islamophobia, Changing Labour Law/ESA, Indigenous Issues, Engaging Members, Building Effective Campaigns, and Young Workers. Thanks to everyone who worked to make this AWOC a great success and to all the participants for being involved.

Chinese Workers Network

Kingsley Kwok of the Chinese Workers Network speaks at the July 1st ceremony remembering the sacrifice of 17,000 migrant Chinese Railroad workers who built the Canadian Pacific Railway through the Rockies. Over 4000 were killed or injured. The government imposed a “head Tax” on would be immigrants, and passed the “Chinese Exclusion Act” on July 1, 1923. It was only repealed in 1947.



Ground-Breaking Work



After almost 4 years of leading the Toronto Community Benefits Network the time has come for the TCBN to have a new, full time leader. Starting as a project from the corner of my desk in 2012, the TCBN has grown to be recognized as the leading proponent of the Community Benefits model in Canada and close to half a million dollars budget.

Community Benefits is a concept that maximizes the economic and social impact of infrastructure spending. It does so by creating pathways for people from historically disadvantaged communities and equity seeking groups to enter the construction industry, with a goal of diversifying workers in the industry. This is done by recruitment of apprentices, and by making it easier for internationally trained professionals to enter the Canadian industry, and through granting of procurement contracts to social enterprise.

The TCBN was able to win support from Ontario's transit agency Metrolinx in 2013 to include Community Benefit Agreements in its major transit projects. In 2014 I signed a historic Community Benefits Framework with Metrolinx CEO Bruce McCuaig, outlining the our common goals and providing for a Community Benefits Working Group to ensure implementation. Metrolinx included Community Benefits clauses in the Eglinton Crosstown contract, and is working to strengthen those clauses in the Finch West contract.

In 2015 the province of Ontario enacted the Infrastructure for Jobs and Prosperity Act, which further enshrines the Community Benefits model. The province has embraced Community Benefits as a mechanism to ensure equity is a strong factor in the social and economic gains that will flow from their massive \$100 billion plus infrastructure investments. Several ministries are engaged in ensuring these equity goals are met, and for the first time the Province and City of Toronto are collaborating on an apprentice pathway

from the City's neighbourhoods to the job site.

By far the most rewarding interactions over the past 4 years have been working in the community. My eyes have been opened as to the structural difficulties faced by many City residents through accident of birth. The willingness of so many to train hard for a difficult career while supporting family members without falling into despair has shaped my thinking on human resilience and silent sacrifice.

A part of that inspiration has come from working with people in the building trades. The willingness of so many in the trades to come to evening and weekend meetings to tell their own stories and to inspire and guide others into the trades has exhilarating. I would also like to thank the hundreds of people who have and continue to make such strong contributions to the Community Benefits movement, especially staff colleagues Rick Ciccarelli and Prince Sibanda.

There are challenges ahead for the TCBN and all the other organizations working on Community Benefits. It is always a difficult to move from good intention to creating effective new structures. TCBN resources have grown, but are still minuscule in relation to the enormity of the task.

These are just some of the challenges to be faced by the new Executive Director of the TCBN. In July Rosemarie Powell began as the TCBN's first ever full-time Executive Director. I wish her all the best in leading the TCBN to the next level.

Steve Shallhorn is Executive Director of the Labour Education Centre.

Rosemarie Will Lead TCBN

Rosemarie Powell is succeeding Steve Shallhorn at the helm of the Toronto Community Benefits Network. A veteran community activist, she has held senior roles in workforce development agencies. While working for the Jane/Finch Centre she developed the multiple award-winning, Green Change Project. Green Change in Jane and Finch promoted environmental stewardship and green jobs among residents of this large multi-cultural community. This project helped to fuel the imagination of the community around the concept of green jobs and the possibilities linked to Metrolinx's expansion of transit in the west end of the city.



Toronto: Uber & Hydro?

In 2014 Torontonians were made to believe that in John Tory's election they could choose a compromise, a reasonable middle of the road politician who respected good governance and generally progressive values. Two years later it is no longer clear what direction Toronto is headed. Uber is a case in point. We know changing technology is going to make a significant impact on our lives and create new ways of living, but the real question is how do we transition responsibly while protecting working people?



In May the Mayor chose to undermine the taxi cab industry in favour of Uber and 'ride sharing' programs. Companies like Uber disguise themselves as 'technology solutions' but in reality are doing the same function as taxi cab brokers without any of the regulations and safeguards. For years, the City regulated the industry to ensure protections for the customer and the driver such as – minimum fare rates, security alarm lights, bi-annual mechanical checks and other protections to ensure that taking a cab was safe while providing a decent income for drivers and healthy profit for brokers and plate owners.

The Mayor's deal did two things - it gutted all those protections by creating

a much lower floor of regulations (to allow Uber to operate) and it agreed to pay out the millionaire plate owners. Over 5,000 professional cab drivers will see their incomes greatly diminished as the market is flooded with unregulated competitors.

Mayor Tory has repeatedly talked about expanding transit infrastructure, but has been reluctant to talk about sustainable sources that provide long term funding and a commitment to long term infrastructure development. Instead he has asked City staff to explore monetizing assets – the most likely targets being Toronto Hydro and the Toronto Parking Authority. Both Hydro and the Parking Authority are revenue sources to the City of Toronto, and selling them would provide one time short term bursts of funding but will also create significant revenue holes for every single future budget.

The City of Toronto is heading towards a financial cliff because the expected expenditures for the 2017 budget are much higher than the projected revenues. But selling off Toronto

Hydro would be ludicrous – as CUPE Local 1 President John Camilleri told the City Executive, **Hydro has given the City \$499 million in revenues since 2006.**

The City has barely survived over the last many years by tightening its belt, gapping hundreds of positions and delaying repairs or new infrastructure. The tax burdens have shifted from property taxes to user fees, such as higher fees for programs and continually rising TTC fares – both of which disproportionate affect the poor. Meanwhile service reduction impacts low-income families and newcomer communities the most. It will take a major fight to keep Toronto from falling into the austerity trap that we tried to leave behind after the last election.

It Takes Money To Build A City

The City of Toronto has seen some significant chronic underfunding of programs and services over the last decade and every year during the budget cycle community organizations, recreation centers, child care programs and workers start feeling the pinch. The reality is that our City, from current expectations, is going to have a deficit of \$516 million dollars for 2017. So how do we fix that?



Our Mayor and many right wing councilors every year chant the same mantra - that the City needs to squeeze its belt some more and just try to do the same with a little less money. Academics from the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and University of Toronto's Institute on Municipal Finance and Governance have repeatedly said that the City of Toronto does not have a spending problem but rather a revenue problem.

Everyone knows there is no gravy train. The City Manager and many of the Councillors know and agree that the City needs to find new sources of revenue in order to maintain the service levels we have now or face dramatic cuts.

The Labour Council has been meeting with City Hall staff and Councillors over the spring and summer to understand the potential revenue streams being made available to the City. During those conversations, and after the release of the Report on New Revenue Sources by KPMG, we know that the City has many good options.

However, the reality is that bringing any new revenue or tax requires a significant amount of public support and a ton of political courage. As the Labour Council, and through our Municipal Committee, we have agreed to focus our push on a variety of new tools based on conversations with our allies on Council and affiliated unions.

The Labour Council has endorsed, among others, the implementation of a new commercial parking levy to be paid by those who have the greatest ability to pay – large commercial landowners. According to KPMG, a Commercial Parking levy which would be charged to mall owners and office towers per parking spot could potentially raise \$171-535 million per year in new revenue. This levy exists in almost every major municipality in North America and the Labour Council and its affiliates believe it's one of the most significant ways we can address Toronto's budget deficit.

The City needs many new things - our transit is outdated, our roads are crumbling, our community programs are suffering and many within our City are struggling to make ends meet. If the City of Toronto is serious about building a world class city that reflects the needs of a diverse community, we need real leadership. We cannot accept cut services as the solution or leave hundreds of jobs at the City unfilled - creating major holes in service delivery, but we need to create a vision of a City that prioritizes the environment, new transit and programs that benefit the vast majority of Toronto.

We need a livable city that inspires creativity and provides sustainably, and we need to work collaboratively with City Council and you to make this happen.

Better activist + better co-worker + better friend = Stronger Union

Sitting across from me in a quiet board room, Matias Valdez recounts the gut-wrenching tale of losing his friend during their final year of high school. After months of enduring an antagonistic home life, this easygoing young man took his own life by jumping out of a 32-story window.



“I was blanked out by shock,” Matias describes. “He landed only a few metres away from where I was standing. But I was scared to approach his body; once I touched him, it would make it real.”

This story is one of many in recent years that remind us of the importance of learning how to address mental health issues.

“Looking back, there were warning signs. A few weeks earlier, he had told me that he’d removed the safety latch from the window.” But at 17, Matias wasn’t equipped to recognize the signs. “It was a cry for help, but I didn’t know.”

For months afterward, Matias struggled with his own guilt: he wished he could have done something more.

Twelve years later, Matias is now a CFQ-certified electrician with IBEW 353. His younger sister Lia is about to enter the same trade. “Now she’ll really be a union sister,” he says with a chuckle.

It was, in fact, a high school teacher who had been close to both Matias and his friend who had encouraged him to consider a construction apprenticeship.

Matias credits the union with exposing him to numerous training seminars – but the most important one, he maintains, was the Labour Community Advocate Training programme.

“I figured it’d be interesting to know

these things,” he explains, recalling his first day in the programme. “But I quickly realized that knowledge isn’t power until you learn how to apply that knowledge.”

Each session of the ten-week course covers a different topic – like addiction, unemployment, divorce, and other issues that face regular working people – and features an expert guest speaker. “They’re not just lectures. We got to ask questions and hear from people with experience in the field.”

“People often talk to you about their problems,” he elaborates, “and you can sympathize. But how can you help them if you don’t know what resources are out there?”

Over the past two years, Matias has completed all three levels of the LCAT programme, and he praises it for making him more aware of the role he can play, both in his union and his day-to-day life.

“This course has turned me into a better activist, a better co-worker, and a better friend. Now that I have the tools and the knowledge, I can help others with their problems. I’m not going to miss any more cries for help.”

The Labour Community Advocate Training courses are open to union members from Toronto and York Region. The next round of the course begins on September 21st, 2016. For more information, contact Najib Soufian at 416.445.5819 x26 or nsoufian@labourcommunityservices.ca.

ALL OUT FOR DECENT WORK!

DECENT WORK

**Saturday, October 1st, 2016
1pm at Queen's Park**

Inequality is growing in Ontario. Nearly every family knows someone who is having a hard time finding a decent job with living wages. The government has to decide if they really want to tackle the crisis of precarious employment. Work needs to be respected – in every sector of the economy. If you want a society where the next generation has a hopeful future, tell the Ontario government to take action:

Fix Labour Laws so workers can join a union without fear? **YES!**

Regulate contract flipping to protect workers' rights? **YES!**

Improve and enforce Employment Standards? **YES!**

Transform temp agency work into good jobs? **YES!**

Come to Queen's Park to raise your voice for Decent Work!



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