



Convention Capsule 1

50th Annual CUPE Ontario Convention - Toronto Sheraton Centre. May 29, 2013

Our members are our strength

In a rousing speech, CUPE Ontario President Fred Hahn laid bare the attack on working people by Conservatives and Liberals at all levels of government, and highlighted how we can overcome these challenges through province-wide, grassroots mobilization.

“In the past two years Harper’s taken away thousands of Canadians’ right to strike, stripped environmental protections and used his legislative power to attack any organization that stands in his way,” he said.



With federal threats such as Bill C-377 and provincial threats such as changes to interest arbitration and Tim Hudak’s plans for right-to-work legislation, working people’s rights are under attack from every corner.

“I want to be clear that if any government moves to attack the fundamental fairness of contract arbitration– if they dare to go after our members who have already

had their basic right to strike stripped from them – that our entire union must stand ready – as we were with our school board workers – to do whatever it takes to defend the rights of those members,” he said.

Together, we can resist these challenges, Hahn said. Mass mobilization against Bill 115 helped bring down the McGuinty government and force the repeal of a law that stripped education workers of their democratic rights.

“In the history of our movement, repeal of legislation is often called for, but it is rarely achieved,” said Hahn. “This year, we proved it could be done.

This year, CUPE Ontario is launching a new initiative to strengthen our union through one-on-one conversations between members in every community.

For more information on the Stand Up For Fairness campaign, visit the booth outside the Convention hall or visit StandUpForFairness.ca.

CUPE members stand strong

Three CUPE locals were presented with certificates of recognition by CUPE Ontario for their courage in taking to the picket lines in a strong stand for workers’ rights.

Local 966 public works members went on strike in the Region of Peel on June 4 and were on the picket lines for 52 days, joined on June 10 for 30 days by Local 966 Transhelp members. Local 3902 members at St. Michael’s College won a first contract after an eight-day strike in November, and Local 3393 members at St. Christopher House in Toronto reached an agreement after an eight-day strike last May.



Paul Moist: You take on one of us, you take on all of us



CUPE National President Paul Moist celebrated the many accomplishments of our union over the past five decades in his address to CUPE Ontario's 50th convention, by saluting our history and encouraging CUPE members to continue standing up for fairness in an era of austerity and legislative attacks on workers' rights.

Reflecting on our history, he reminded delegates of the commitment the first National President, Stan Little, made at CUPE's first national convention to secure full collective bargaining rights for all public employees, to confront contracting-out, and to organize the unorganized. Citing achievements of workers over the past 50

years, from Medicare to CPP, Health and Safety legislation, pay equity, more comprehensive benefits and millions of new members joining unions in Canada, Moist asked members to not just stand up to defend past gains, but to forge a new vision for our country, including national public child care, public long-term care and home care, universally accessible post-secondary education and national pharmacare.

Thanking and encouraging members and locals for their continued activism, he listed many recent fightbacks by our locals—Local 1600 at the Toronto Zoo fighting concessions, local 4705 at the City of Sudbury standing up for workplace health and safety, and Ontario school board workers fighting for collective bargaining rights.

Brother Moist stressed the importance of remaining united and vigilant in fighting off the right-wing agendas of Harper, Hudak and the like. "The key to our future is how we respond to these attacks and to unite and work with our membership, starting with the 'Stand Up for Fairness' campaign," said Brother Moist, promising the full support of our national union in standing up for workers. "You take on one of us; you take on all of us."

Year of the new and young worker

CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick opened the 50th Convention by recognizing our Young Workers' Committee. 2013 is our union's Year of the New and Young Worker, and events throughout Convention will focus on young workers.

In 1976, fully 67 percent of young workers were employed full-time. Today only 40 percent are. Casualization, low wages, two-tiered benefits, rising student debt and the erosion of pension benefits make young workers particularly vulnerable today.

Be sure to visit the Young Workers' table to learn more, pick up forms to nominate a member to the committee and to sign the commemorative banner.



Mark the time and location! Day 2 Events:

- ⇒ 7:15 to 8:30 a.m.—Secretary-Treasurer and Trustees Breakfast (Osgoode)
- ⇒ 9:00 a.m. - Call to Order (Grand Ballroom)
- ⇒ 9:05 a.m. CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick
- ⇒ 11:20 a.m. – National Secretary-Treasurer Charles Fleury
- ⇒ Noon to 1:30 p.m.—Equality Lunch (Osgoode)
- ⇒ 2:00 to 5:00 p.m. - Call to Order (Grand Ballroom)
- ⇒ 2:05 p.m.—Sylvia McAdam, Idle No More
- ⇒ 5 to 6:60 p.m. —All Candidates Forum (Grand Ballroom)
- ⇒ 6 to 7:30 p.m. —Child care kitchen table (Sheraton Hall C)
- ⇒ 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. —International Solidarity Forum (Civic Ballroom)