

# Fight for a Better Future!

JANUARY 9, 2025



In October of 2024, the Toronto & York Region Labour Council called for broad unity to fight the imminent threat posed to working people by the rise of far-right politics in Canada and across the world. We recognized that the growing strength and boldness of right wing and corporate forces could no longer be ignored and began to take steps to fight back.

Today, following the responses to Justin Trudeau's resignation, we know a federal election is around the corner, with Poilievre eager to harness Canadians' anger in negative ways. In Ontario, a snap provincial election is likely; Doug Ford is desperate to get re-elected before the truth of his government's focus on developers' profits is bared for all to see.

The urgency of the right-wing threat is difficult to understate, with attacks on working people waged directly at home, and abroad in the United States, Europe, South America, and elsewhere; and, in tandem, a sharp increase in scapegoating, leading to a surge in racism, anti-trans attacks, anti-immigrant sentiment, and hate crimes. While these threats have continued to grow over the last several years, the labour movement has fought back and stood in solidarity with all people fighting exploitation and oppression, and in response, our unions themselves are now under threat as well.

To respond to the threat, a unified campaign, to expose the myth-making and scapegoating undertaken by the far-right and corporate forces, was launched. Since then, the Labour Council has worked with its members and affiliates in the region to develop an approach to win more for working people and beat-back further decline.

So, what are we up against? Well, the reality is, working people have had enough. Food costs? Up. Mortgage payments and rent? Up. Gas? Up. Wages? Just not keeping up. Many of us are getting desperate. Yet the rich just keep getting richer.

Working people are angry that the economy is failing us. At how it's harder to get the care we need. And we should be angry. Things have been getting worse for years. At every turn, government leaders have failed to stand up for us, the working people who make this country run.

It's time to stop wealthy corporations putting profits ahead of people. It's time to stop their political friends from making it easy for them to do that. And it's time for a different kind of common sense – one that's rooted in solidarity and focused on the common good. We can create that future together.

## **Corporate Greed Has Caused This Crisis**

Things weren't always this way. Over decades, corporations have used politicians to weaken labour laws, making it harder for people to join a union. They've tried to turn working people against each other, saying that unions are the problem with their 'gold-plated pensions' and sick leave.

Always on the take, corporations have pressured Conservative and Liberal governments to privatize public services that we depend on so they get more profit. Public-private partnerships delayed transit projects by years, while costs ballooned and profits skyrocketed. Deregulation, and underfunding mean longer hospital visits, cramped classrooms, and longer commutes.

Business lobbyists and the politicians they help elect try and distract us from our real concerns by

talking about buck a beer or a two-month only 'GST holiday.' They try to divide us by attacking union leaders or blaming immigrants for our housing crisis.

Even in hard times, like COVID, corporations took wealth and well-being from our communities to increase their profits. No wonder corporations' profits have soared beyond belief.

Worse yet, Conservative politicians like Doug Ford and Justin Trudeau's Liberals, have undermined and partially privatized public services like health care and education, undermining the service and the integrity of the workers who deliver them - and Pierre Poilievre has signalled he'll only expand on that work.

And when it comes to climate change, Poilievre and Ford must not sacrifice environmental protections in order to benefit developers and fossil fuel corporate giants at the expense of our children and grandchildren.

We must stand together to stop this assault on our living standards by taking action, not allowing scapegoating, and speaking out.

## **We Can Build a Better Future Together**

By working together we have won things that really improved our lives like:

- Public health care designed to serve us all;
- A social safety net for the unemployed;
- Social services that supported people in every community; and
- Improved wages, benefits and job security through free collective bargaining

But, these victories have already been undermined. We cannot let it all slip away without a big fight. Union members hold a range of political opinions, but most value the common good that our unions stand for. We can and will fight together.

The future belongs to those of us who believe in fairness, justice and equality for all. Together we can build that future – one that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few. Let's work with elected representatives who champion working people and believe in our future.

## **What a Better Future Looks Like:**

- 1. A life we can afford**  
Slash grocery bills, end price-gouging by corporations, and bring back rent controls.
- 2. Housing for people, not investment**  
Stop speculation, and build permanently affordable non-market housing.
- 3. Health care when we need it**  
Adequately fund public health care; stop and reverse privatization by corporations.
- 4. Improved wages and benefits**  
Build a sustainable economy that provides good jobs and decent wages for all.
- 5. Strong protections for working people**  
Strengthen labour laws and make it easier for people to join unions.

## 6. Environmental protections for our future

Stop subsidies to fossil fuel CEOs: build transit and create green jobs.

## 7. Make the rich pay their fair share

If the wealthy pay their fair share, there will be enough money for strong public services in every community.

### How We Fight for a Better Future

This fight won't be an easy one, and it's not certain that by taking it up that we will win - but we stand to lose everything if we do nothing. That's why we need to look to and be inspired by our victories from the past to guide our footsteps today.

From our labour movement's inception, the strategy that has won victories for us has been one of deep member engagement. From the early 9-hour leagues and printers strike which birthed the labour movement, to the OSBCU wildcat in 2022, our victories have shared member-to-member conversation and engagement as the keystone to their success.

To win today, we need to build a campaign around our vision of the future which is based on member engagement. Like before, to prepare for these difficult conversations, the Labour Council is planning a Stewards' Assembly to prepare and train our members on how to win a better future, and bring our shared vision directly to members on the shop floor.

### Therefore, the Labour Council's affiliates resolve to:

- Register five to ten of their key leaders and activists to the February 22nd Stewards' Assembly
- Support the Fight for a Better Future Campaign by making financial contributions to the campaign
- Take up the campaign in their union and workplaces, with regular reports at general membership, executive, and Labour Council delegates meetings
- Make an effort to speak directly to every single member of their union about the urgency of the political moment now facing working people in Ontario and Canada

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#### Toronto & York Region Labour Council

895 Don Mills Road  
Tower Two, Ste. 730  
Don Mills, ON  
M3C 1W3

 (416) 441-3663

 (416) 445-8405

 labourcouncil.ca

  @labourcouncil