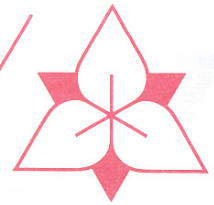


PATRICK (SID) RYAN
President

NANCY HUTCHISON
Secretary-Treasurer

IRWIN NANDA
Executive Vice-President

OFL/FTO



April, 2012

“WE ARE ONTARIO”

Our collective fightback against the Liberal budget was inspiring. Beginning with an Executive Board resolution in early February that called for a full-out campaign against McGuinty’s austerity budget, and culminating with the huge April 21 mass demonstration at Queen’s Park, we were the catalysts for all of the positive elements in the final budget deal that was eventually brokered.

The OFL Executive Board’s resolution calling for alternative sources of revenue such as corporate tax increases, restoration of a capital tax on banks and increasing tax on incomes over \$250,000 as a way to avoid cuts set the stage.

We rolled out the results of our public polling next and it confirmed overwhelming support for fair taxation. It also began to frame the public discussion in media across the province. The Broadbent Institute’s poll followed with confirmation of public sentiment. Asking us all to shoulder even more of the burden while giving corporations and the wealthiest individuals a free ride was a non-starter.

We rotated radio ads through every major market in Ontario demanding fairness that helped to build even more opposition to the Liberal’s budget. And as all of this was happening, the emergence of wall-to-wall media coverage of our message tipped the balance, maximizing pressure for change.

The issue came alive on the floor of the NDP convention as it became clear the grassroots of the party were in support of going after the corporations and wealthiest Ontarians to pay their fair share.

Tons of media hits were hour-by-hour confirming that our message was not only resonating with the public, but also growing in popularity. And when the NDP came out with the Tax-the-Rich proposal, the party immediately went up 5% in the polls.

On April 20, the day before our Queen’s Park demonstration, we held a jam-packed media conference and officially launched the “We Are Ontario” campaign. We followed with a mass community assembly that afternoon – the Common Front. Anti-poverty, environmental, childcare, women, faith and social activists created formidable plans for the next waves of opposition to cuts.

All of this groundwork produced the next day’s 15,000+ demonstration. More than 100 busloads arrived from Timmins, Ottawa, Niagara, and all points. Bolstered by thousands of teachers and community organizations, our collective message was once again heard in every city and town across Ontario.

What we won is, in many ways, incalculable. New alliances were forged and others strengthened; new activists and spokespeople have emerged; a vibrant new coalition and campaign was born: "We Are Ontario," brings together 90 community and labour organizations and is poised to fill the void left by the Occupy Movement.

Recovering the billions of dollars owed to the public treasury by corporations is our next goal. We want that money, for ourselves, our public services and our futures.

But before we turn our attention to that next phase, let's take a moment to breathe. We've accomplished a lot in such a very short period of time that was available to us. We set the agenda. We forced the issue and as a result, managed to achieve improvements for all Ontarians. The government's tacit acknowledgment that more than 30,000 wealthy Ontarians have been allowed to evade their economic and social responsibility was part of our collective achievement.

We've forged a new and resilient coalition for the long-term and, most importantly, we have achieved gains for the people of Ontario.

Let's remember this effort and the superb work that we have accomplished together.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sid Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

SID RYAN

President

Ontario Federation of Labour

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