

THE 4 SHADOW

FEB 15

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

GLEN HODGSON

Drummond Report Due today

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IMPORTANT DATES

- **Feb 16: CBC meeting**
- **April 18: Retirement Workshop**
- **April 18: Leadership-Training**
- **Mar 9-12: AMPA**
- **Mar 23-24: CBC Regional**

Visit the District 4 website at:
www.nearnorth-osstf.org

By the time you read this edition of the 4shadow, a long awaited report by former TD economist, Don Drummond, will have been released to the public. I am sure that the words "Drummond report" have by now become very familiar to all of us but the importance of the details of this report cannot be underestimated for educational workers in Ontario.

Drummond has been tasked with providing recommendations to trim 16 Billion from the provincial budget in the next four years and he has been rumored to be ruthless in his cuts. Already there have been leaks suggesting that full day kindergarten and many health related procedures currently covered by OHIP will be on the chopping block.

The Liberal government has already suggested that they will take the report has recommendations rather than policy and committed to saving full day kindergarten. However, other things like class sizes, pensions and sick leave promise to at least be mentioned at some point in the report. Mr. Drummond is a banker and the benefits that support workers have long been the target of capitalists eager to turn a profit on everything from health care to education.

The frustrating part is that there doesn't seem to be any mention so far of increasing corporate taxes or perhaps even delaying the proposed additional corporate tax cut, a move that would save a large portion of the deficit and do little to alter our more than competitive corporate taxation system.

OSSTF has also pointed out that there is tremendous savings to be found by cancelling the massive and majorly expensive EQAO testing.

Despite the difficult economic times, there are choices that could allow Ontario to remain fiscally responsible while still ensuring a healthy education and health care system.

I just hope that Mr. Drummond will consider ALL the options.

Glen Hodgson

District 4 TBU President.

IN THE NEWS

JARED HUNT

<http://www.commondreams.org/further/2012/02/02-1>

Holly Molly, what the ... you just have to read this one for yourself. I'm glad to work in Ontario, Drummond Report or otherwise.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmsjGys-VqA&feature=youtube_gdata_player

If you're wondering about AUSTERITY, especially as an economic strategy for governments to use, you might enjoy this video by Mark Blythe. He uses some graphics to explain the current economic situation with good clarity.

<http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2012/01/16/left-behind/>

Over the past 30 years, the benefits of economic growth in Canada, the US and much of the rest of the world, have gone increasingly to the top one percent of the population. For the majority of families, however, incomes have stagnated. This rise in inequality coincided with a sea change in government policy that was supposed to benefit all. The rising tide was supposed to lift all boats, but it hasn't. Left Behind is a 3 part podcast that's well worth the listen.

<http://www.parentcentral.ca/parent/education/article/1115602--funding-for-ontario-s-catholic-schools-under-fire-in-court-challenge>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qth2ZnuUC9Y>

Ontario should claw back funding to Catholic elementary schools and eliminate all financial support for Catholic secondary schools, says a court challenge launched by a Toronto woman. Eva Landau is challenging the Education Act and the Provincial Government, claiming that we should fund the Catholic system as literally outlined in the Constitution. She claims that The Charter of Rights only protects the original language, not any changes there after. Interesting! Included above is a link to a YouTube video featuring Ms. Landau and her explanation.

LONDON DAY OF ACTION

JARED HUNT



During the weekend of January 21st, I was attending a regularly scheduled CPAC meeting, when committee chair initiated a significant change to the agenda. Basically, CPAC worked 13 hours on Friday so we could attend the London Day of Action, in support of local CAW members. Dozens of school buses from all directions converged on London, carrying labour activists and supporters from Windsor to Ottawa to Barrie. Local police estimated the rally brought several thousand people to protest the Caterpillar lockout.



Perhaps by now you're all too aware of the labour struggle happening in east London, Ontario, a terribly one-sided dispute between Electro-Motive Diesel (c/o Caterpillar Corporation) and a highly trained CAW unit of 450 employees. OSSTF members and provincial office staff protested in support of CAW members at the OFL sponsored Day of Action, which took place on January 21st. We learned that PM Harper had given Electro-Motive a \$5 million tax break to maintain and improve operations in east London. The PM visited in 2008 and took absolute credit for his economic strategy of job creation vis-a-vis corporate tax decreases. Thousands of labour supporters gathered to hear from local, provincial and national labour leaders, including Sid Ryan (OFL President) and Nicole Turmel (Federal NDP Leader). One of my favourite lines came from a local CAW leader. He captured the moment when he said, "We're not making freezers; we're building locomotives." Capturing the day, however, was London's Mayor Joe Fontana, when he boisterously inspired the chant "GET YOUR ASS DOWN HERE," when he asked "hey Harper, where the hell are YOU!"



To make matters worse, in early February Caterpillar announced it is closing the east London plant for good, stating "the cost structure of the operation was not sustainable and efforts to negotiate a new, competitive collective agreement were not successful." They plan to move operations to Muncie Illinois, to find a cheaper work force. Unfortunately, some 400 families in South Western Ontario are out of work.



NEW SOUTH V.P

Jared Hunt is our new South V.P.! Jared is a Section 23 teacher for Almaguin Highlands. For the past 10 years, he has worked in a variety of classrooms, including self-contained special education, alternative education, and regular settings. Jared has been an active member with OSSTF District 4 since starting with Near North. He presently works on a Provincial Standing Committee called Communications and Political Action, working on topics like member promotion and recognition.

RETIREMENT WORKSHOP



Retirement workshop



April 18th, 2012
5:30—7:00
North Bay Best Western

RSVP to:
Glen Hodgson (OSSTF) - osstf@ogeco.net

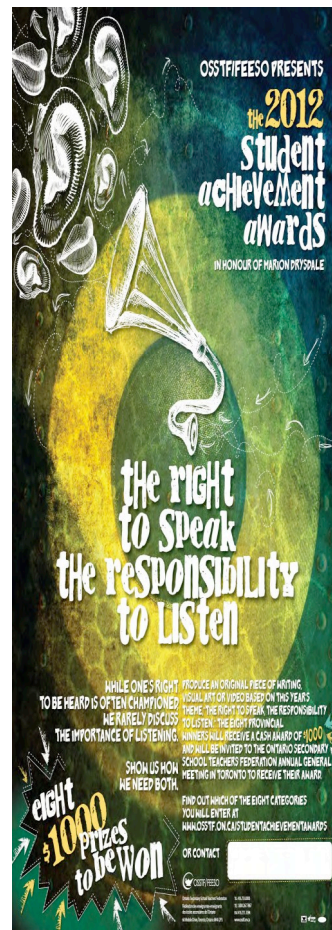
The Federation's OMERS and TPP workshops focus specifically on pension planning and retirement. Whether members are 15 years from retirement or six months away, they'll discover common sense financial strategies and retirement planning ideas.

The workshops are approximately 2 hours long and provide opportunities for members to ask questions during the presentation or to speak privately with the Pensions Officer.

Members find the practical approach of the pension workshops to be useful and enjoyable. Participants say the workshops provide them with all the retirement information they need.

Spouses are welcome but please confirm your attendance in advance. Participants should bring an up to date Pension statement if possible. Light refreshments will be provided.

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



District 4 and our Teacher Bargaining Unit are very pleased to announce that two students from Widdifield Secondary won first place for Region 2! Awesome! The Student Achievement Awards is a writing and creative arts competition which is open to all public secondary school students in Ontario. The competition encourages the intellectual development of our students and an interest in society. The 1984 Provincial Assembly established the awards in honour of Marion Drysdale, a secretary at OSSTF/FEESO Provincial Office for twenty-two years, for her dedicated work over so many years.

Special thanks to Jill Emery, Widdifield Sponsoring Teacher

OSSTF/FEESO URGES HARPER TO SUPPORT CANADIAN WORKERS

The Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation (OSSTF/FEESO) expresses its great disappointment in the federal government for not doing more to represent the interests of hard-working Canadians. This comes as a result of the announcement by the corporate giant Caterpillar to close its Electro-Motive Diesel factory in London, Ontario, throwing 465 skilled employees out of work.

OSSTF/FEESO has continued to support the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW) who had been locked out by Caterpillar on January 1, 2012.

"The Harper Conservatives should support Canadian workers, not Caterpillar," said OSSTF/FEESO President Ken Coran. "They have seemingly missed the opportunity to prove that they have the best interests of Canadian workers in mind. However, the announcement by Caterpillar to suddenly close its London Electro-Motive Diesel plant is a slap in the face to the 465 skilled employees, their families and the community of London."

President Ken Coran is calling on the Federal government to fulfill its responsibility to fight on behalf of all hard-working Canadians when it comes to unreasonable demands made by highly profitable multi-national corporate giants like Caterpillar.

"By not getting involved and preventing this callous move, one can only assume that the Stephen Harper Government is entirely in the pocket of the corporate elite," added Coran. "A government elected by Canadians should do everything it can for Canadians, and I am personally ashamed and disappointed by the failure of the Conservative Government to protect hard-working citizens."



4 SHADOW READERS' CONTEST

Last month's trivia question was: Give one demand that Caterpillar Inc. is seeking from its union that has caused workers to be locked out?

Answer: a 50% pay cut or a 50% cut in benefits, either would do fine for an answer

Unfortunately and embarrassingly, due to some technical issues, we do not have a winner for last month's contest :)

This month's trivia question: **What District 4 member helped the two Region 2**

Achievement Award winners?

This month's prize is an official OSSTF scarf.

Email your answer to nearnorth4shadow@hotmail.com before the end of the month. Good luck!



FROM THE FUNNY FILES



MEMBERS DOING PD

On February 3rd and 4th, Chris Chabot and Stevan McCallum attended a U of T's Faculty of Education hosted conference called Social Media and Teacher Learning Conference. The conference featured presentations from a variety of colleagues, professors, researchers and teacher candidates. The presentations covered a variety of topics and issues around social media in the classroom and education setting.

The keynote speech was delivered by Garfield Gini-Newman, a senior lecturer at OISE. His presentation—Social Media and Teacher Learning—acknowledged the growing emphasis social media and technology have gained in education; however, he offered a parallel shift in pedagogy needs to accompany this emphasis for it to have a meaningful impact. As an example, he pointed to Apple's latest foray into education with textbooks for the iPad. He noted, teachers can now select only the chapters they use, information can be updated as it changes, and costs for the textbooks can be reduced. The medium has changed, but there is not necessarily a resulting change in the delivery of the material which, according to Gini-Newman, isn't as revolutionary as many would have us believe.

WEBSITE OF THE MONTH

<http://www.ipolitics.ca/>

ipolitics is independent, non-partisan and committed to providing timely, relevant, insightful content to those whose professional or personal interests require that they stay on top of political developments in Ottawa and the provinces.

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