

Court workers on trial

Across Ontario, about 2,500 OPSEU members are on trial. Their crime? They work in Ontario's court system!

They are court clerks, counter clerks, court reporters, trial coordinators, ushers, messengers, judges' secretaries, and many others.

Over **90 per cent** are women.

Over **50 per cent** are unclassified, with no benefits and no long-term job security. Among court reporters, **88 per cent** are unclassified.

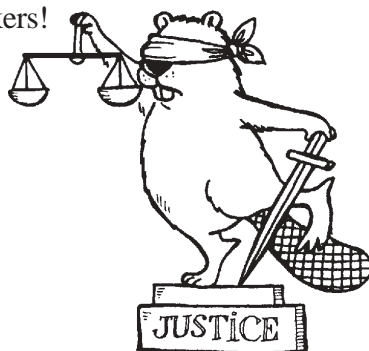
Ironically, the Ontario government says **100 per cent** of court workers are **essential** to the justice system.

Does this seem fair to you?

It doesn't to court workers.

That's why they'll be participating in a Day of Action on Monday, March 25. OPSEU locals across the province are already gearing up to tell their story to the public with information pickets, leafleting, and maybe even a little theatre.

Support your local court workers!



Weather report from
Sioux on the line: Colder
than Mike's heart.

It's not about money

The government is trying to portray this as a strike about money.

That's why their websites all send people to another site that touts its offer and says we would all be wealthy if we'd just accept it.

Here's some translations of what the government is saying:

"Efficiencies in the collective agreement," means agreeing to sell out unclassified staff.

"Pay to reward employee performance," means opening the contract to favouritism.

"Respond to the changing needs of the workforce" means cutting \$10 million from your benefits package.

But it's not about money. It's about control over our pension fund. It's about rights for unclassified staff. It's about rebuilding the public service.

"We have to keep our focus on our issues and why we are fighting so hard to achieve them," said President Leah Casselman.

Check the web: www.opseu.org has the latest on everything.

More supporters

Principled stand

We support and respect the members of the OPSEU who are on strike. Just look around the Kingston area and see the effects of years of the Harris government hacking away at public services and programs.

We need quality public services and resources to deliver them in our community. After years of layoffs and massive budget cuts, it's time to rebuild. We stand in solidarity with the striking OPSEU workers and their brave and principled stand to restore what has been ripped away from cities and towns across Ontario.

– Peter Boyle, President,
Kingston and District Labour
Council

Ontario loses

Prioritizing internal Tory politics over the province's public services is not in the best interest of Ontarians....

The big losers here are Ontarians who have suffered enough as a result of slashed services, inadequate funding and ongoing labour unrest – all of which have become exhaustingly familiar during the Harris years.

– Rick Bartolucci, Liberal
MPP for Sudbury

The news from everywhere

Vote early, vote often

The Queen's Park Cluster is holding its own Tory leadership.

They've done up a ballot to let people make their selection:

CLEMENT, "Two Tier" Tony
EVES, "Take it to the

Cleaners" Ernie

FLAHERTY, "Jailbird" Jim

STOCKWELL, "Big Mouth"
Chris

WITMER, "Hugs and Whips"
Elizabeth

ABOVE, None Of The

Frontlines is betting on Above, in this race.

Don't want to call? Then email

Have you given David Tsubouchi the personal attention he deserves?

It's time for every OPSEU striker to send a clear message to the Chair of Management Board: Wake up! Your employees are on strike! Get back to the bargaining table NOW, and get **serious** about negotiations!

Call from home, call on your cell phone, call from your strike trailer. It doesn't matter what you call Mr. Tsubouchi, just call him!

His number at the office is (416) 327-2333. His fax number, is (416) 327-3790. His e-mail address is dave_tsubouchi@ontla.ola.org.

Cooler heads ...

OPSEU head office staff almost had a dry spell. Cedar Springs water was prepared to cut us off for the duration of the strike because they won't cross picket lines.

When assured that we **were** the union, they agreed to continue deliveries.

In a word: Yum!

It's getting positively gourmet out there!

Conservation Officers from Local 455 organized a venison barbeque for picket lines in Belleville on March 20.

The treat was enjoyed by picketers from several ministries, including Transportation, Education and Training, Community and Social Services, and Natural Resources.

And in Sault Ste. Marie the menu on the line has included Wild Rice Goose Soup.

What to wear?

Two essential service workers from the Chatham Court house were sent home for what management deemed "inappropriate dress."

Local 130 President Gino Franche says this tactic is ineffective. "Essential workers remain strong in their resolve, in the absence of any written dress policy."

If jeans and striker t-shirts aren't appropriate, what about ball gowns.

What to wear? what to wear?

Let's think big

"There are people on on the line I would never have imagined," writes Ruth Galinis from Sault Ste. Marie.

"Some whom I have never seen at our local meeting – but they are out on the line!

"The word solidarity really is starting to ring true as I think people see that we need to stick together. I think from that slowly will build solidarity with other unions and like-minded organizations.

"Wouldn't that be wonderful – one big movement within the province, Canada and maybe even the World?"

A family affair

Kelly O'Connel of Local 527 (Ministry of Labour) took part in a mass picket at the Ontario Human Rights Commission Thursday to recognize the International Day for the Elimination of Racism.

Her parents, Pat and Gord Hunt, were there too. Gord has been a driver for Brinks Security - and a member of Teamsters Local 419 - for 35 years.

When he heard his daughter would be walking the line, he called his Local President, Tom Fraser. "We told Brinks none of our people were going to be driving across OPSEU picket lines. That's management's worry now."

Manager games

Betty Barr reports management trickery from Brampton's Land Registry Office.

All day management tried to enter the building by several methods. One manager crossed her legs and said that she deperately needed the washroom. Then she got on the cell phone to the managers in the parking lot.

Later, managers were escorted in by police officers saying that they were investigating a break-in.

It was a learning experience. We soon learned what games managers can play.

Post signs

Also, don't forget to post your picket sign on your lawn when you get home. Let your neighbours know how they can support you by calling their MPPs to get management back to the bargaining table or helping out on the lines.

Great idea, Betty. Thanks