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47th Annual CUPE Ontario Convention - Wednesday May 26th – Saturday May 29th, 2010

Convention Capsule 1

May 27th, 2010

47th Annual CUPE Ontario Convention Gets Underway



It's 6:07pm, on Wednesday May 26. It's Windsor and CUPE Ontario Secretary-Treasurer Candace Rennick has just called to order the union's 47th annual convention. The room looks full.

Our convention delegates were welcomed to the City of Roses by Andrea Madden, President of the

Windsor CUPE Council, Dino Chiodo, President of the Windsor Labour Council and CAW Local 444 President Rick Laporte.

In a break with tradition the 47th Annual CUPE Ontario Convention got right down to the business on this first night of convention and began debating and voting on resolutions.

At 7:50pm, Credentials Committee Chair Deb Mink made an interim report. Noting that registration was, in fact, still underway, Sister Mink reported an unofficial, first night, mid-evening count of 885 delegates, 39 alternate delegates, 2 Ontario Officers, 2 National officers, 120 staff and 31 guests for a total of 1074 in attendance.

CUPE Ontario Delegates cheer President of striking Sudbury Steelworkers



CUPE delegates cheered tonight when the leader of the striking Sudbury Miners, president of Steelworkers Local 6500 John Fera was welcomed to the stage. John carefully told delegates the whole history of his members now epic, and still ongoing, near year-long battle against the giant multinational Vale Inco. Immediately upon the conclusion of Brother Fera's speech lines started forming at the mikes.

Delegate after delegate announced contributions from their local. Before the evening was done more than \$35,000 in pledge and donations were recorded from CUPE Ontario Locals. Brother Ryan added a \$5,000 contribution from the OFL and CUPE National President Paul Moist's promised to match the evenings' total brought the final count to more than \$70,000. Brother Fera seemed almost close to tears when he thanked the room and said, he'd be glad to come to a CUPE Convention "anytime!"

Caesars Hotel, Windsor

Tribute to Sid Ryan



Over 18 years as president of CUPE Ontario, Sid Ryan learned that the movement is built on strong relationships. At a tribute in his honour last night, Ryan said his success as a leader depended on special relationships with secretary-treasurers and executive boards, with the national union and with staff.

“I left school at 16 years of age. I learned a trade and came to Canada at 21 years of age,” he said. “I learned a tremendous amount from CUPE, better than any university education, believe me. Nothing beats the school of hard knocks – to mix it up with the boss, mix it up with the politicians.”

Ryan called on delegates to use October’s municipal elections to get rid of anti-union politicians.

He also encouraged everyone to get to Toronto in June for the Peoples Summit that runs at the same time as the G20 meeting.

Anyone who would like to participate in a video tribute to Brother Sid can record a 60-second message in the lobby of the Augustus Tower, opposite the registration desk, Thursday and Friday between 10 and noon.

Our Youth. Our Future.

The importance of social justice will be a key theme in this convention’s Youth Camp.

Participants ranging from 10 to 14 years of age will have an opportunity to take part in a wide variety of activities including a Black Historical Tour in and around Windsor.

The 17 participants’ experience will be captured in a short documentary and will be shown during Saturday’s Youth Camp report. Along with the mini-documentary, delegates will also enjoy other surprises from the Youth Camp. So stay tuned and find out what our future activists will have in store for us on Saturday.

Come to the community BBQ

Don’t forget the CUPE Ontario BBQ today at lunch.

From noon until 2 p.m. today, Thursday, May 27th, at Dieppe Park, corner of Riverside and Ouellette, join CUPE delegates and Windsorites for hot dogs, hamburgers, cupcakes and cold drinks.

Join co-hosts Fred Hahn and Paul Moist to connect with the greater Windsor community and celebrate the beginning of summer.

Hahn and Moist will present a CUPE financial donation to Windsor’s Food Banks.

Don’t miss out on this fun time to share a burger, reconnect with old friends and enjoy a free picnic.

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