



The History of Carnival

This year, we mark the 51st anniversary of Carnival, which began in Toronto as a gift from the Caribbean community to Canada's centennial celebrations in 1967. The festival originally took place on Simcoe Day, which marks the end of slavery in Canada on August 1, 1834.

Carnival is not only a celebration of Caribbean culture; it also symbolizes the revolt of the Caribbean people against oppression. CUPE Ontario believes that the original spirit of resistance should be preserved through continuing to challenge the oppression of and discrimination against racialized people. CUPE Ontario calls on all levels of government to help fund the festival for the public benefit.

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Police Accountability, Equity, & Anti-Racism

Over-policing remains a major issue facing racialized people. 80% of black men between 25 and 44 say they've been stopped by Canadian police, 25% say police have used force against them, and 60% say the police have harassed them.

While the Ontario government has supposedly banned carding, police are still free to card while investigating crimes or during traffic stops. The daily reality for people hasn't changed much. Moreover, there is no federal ban on racial profiling. Racialized people remain overrepresented in our prison system and underrepresented in economic, social, and political life.

CUPE Ontario joins with Black Lives Matter to stand in solidarity with First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people. Carnival is an opportunity to acknowledge the devastating legacy of colonization while recognizing the importance of reconciliation. We strongly believe the struggles of racialized and indigenous peoples in Canada are intertwined.



**CUPE Ontario
Racial Justice Committee**