



NDP Wins Big in Parkdale-High Park

The NDP's "radical reverend", Cheri DiNovo, delivered a stunning loss to Dalton McGuinty's Liberals in the Parkdale-High Park by-election on September 14. DiNovo, an outspoken United Church minister, took 41% of the vote, compared to Liberal candidate Sylvia Watson's 33%.

NDP Leader Howard Hampton said "I think what the voters said is that it's not good enough to be a little better than the former Conservative government. They've rejected the broken promises and half-measures of the McGuinty government."

Liberal attacks and a nasty smear campaign against the NDP candidate backfired as voters chose DiNovo in the bitterly contested campaign. The riding was considered a safe Liberal seat for the decade it was held by former Education Minister Gerard Kennedy.

DiNovo, a former business woman and award-winning author, has been the minister at Emmanuel-Howard Park United Church for more than eight years. Since then, she has gained

international attention for her success in growing her congregation. Canadian Living magazine has called her one of Canada's incredible women.

McGuinty himself refused to disassociate himself from the smearing of DiNovo, despite repeated attempts by the media to get him to do so.

The by-election loss is the fourth in a row for Dalton McGuinty's Liberals, and comes just 13 months ahead of the next provincial election.

Many are saying that the NDP win in Parkdale-High Park, preceded by the Party retaining their seat in Toronto Danforth in the Spring and snatching Hamilton East from the Liberals before that, reflects a resurgence in the urban NDP vote. Parkdale-High Park was also a breakthrough riding for the NDP in the last federal election, with the win by Peggy Nash.

Two more by-elections are expected in the near future, with the recent resignation of Liberal Joe Cordiano in York South-Weston and an anticipated announcement by Conservative Cam Jackson that he will run for mayor in Burlington.

Ontario Manufacturing Recession Deepening

On June 8, the OFL, CEP, IAM, and USW joined NDP Leader Howard Hampton at a Queen's Park press conference to call for a job protection strategy.

"We are in a jobs crisis here in Ontario," said OFL president Wayne Samuelson. Thousands of manufacturing jobs have been lost in this province and the McGuinty government has done nothing to help the workers who have lost their livelihoods and the communities that are struggling to survive. We welcome the NDP's initiative to create a Jobs Commissioner to stop plants closing, to save jobs, and to mitigate the effects of job losses."

Since the press conference the manufacturing sector recession in Ontario has deepened even more, says a recently released Statistics Canada Labour Force Survey showing almost 5,000 manufacturing jobs lost last month.

"The job loss in the manufacturing sector is gathering momentum and the Liberals have stood on the sidelines and shown no leadership in protecting Ontario workers," said NDP Leader Howard Hampton.

"Dalton McGuinty's Liberals take a hands-off approach to plant closures and layoffs. As a result, since June 2004, Ontario has now lost 118,000 manufacturing jobs – more than 10 percent of all manufacturing jobs in the province. Thousands of working people in Ontario are losing their jobs. They deserve a Premier who stands up for them and their jobs, not a Premier who abandons them," Hampton said.

Hampton called on the McGuinty Liberals to support NDP efforts to develop a comprehensive strategy to revitalize Ontario's manufacturing sector and protect working families.



No Cuts Without Action on Funding Formula

On August 13 NDP Education Critic Rosario Marchese was joined by Toronto trustees and parents to call on Dalton McGuinty to postpone the provincial deadline for school boards to

balance their budgets until his government keeps its promise to permanently fix the education funding formula.

“Dalton McGuinty promised to fix education funding, but we’re still using the same Conservative formula,” said Marchese. “Students are losing programs, losing educational assistants and in some cases, their schools. Until Dalton McGuinty keeps his promises, the McGuinty Liberals should not be forcing any school boards to make these cuts.”

During the 2003 election campaign, Dalton McGuinty promised to overhaul education funding, but three years later, the Conservative funding formula is still in place. At least eleven Ontario school boards saw their funding cut this year, and many others have exhausted the financial reserves that they’ve been dipping into year after year.

“We were elected to represent our communities, their needs and their aspirations. However our hands are tied by an antiquated funding model which inhibits us from doing exactly that,” said Irene Atkinson, Toronto District School Board trustee for Parkdale-High Park.

KORMOS’ KORNER

“This summer Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty was named world “Personality of the Year” by a business publication based in London, England.



NDP Labour Critic
Peter Kormos

Foreign Direct Investment magazine, part of the Financial Times group of London, says it chose McGuinty because of his efforts to promote research and innovation.

As I said back in August – the true measure of McGuinty’s performance would come on September 14 when all the parties squared off in the by-election called to replace Gerard Kennedy. The real test would be what the people of Parkdale-High Park think of him, not some British fish and chips magazine wrapper . . . Looks like the people of Parkdale-High Park made it pretty clear what they think.”

– Peter Kormos



More Job Loss in Northern Ontario

NDP Leader Howard Hampton says Norampac’s recent decision to indefinitely idle its Red Rock Mill is the latest example of how the McGuinty government’s wrong headed policies are killing jobs in Northern Ontario.

“This is a sad day, and my thoughts go out to the working families facing layoff and the entire community that relies on the income this mill generates,” said Hampton. “Now, more than ever, we need the McGuinty government to recognize that its misguided policies are killing jobs in the forest sector across Northern Ontario.”

“The forest industry and workers have been warning the McGuinty Liberals repeatedly that their policy of skyrocketing hydro electricity rates would kill jobs and shut paper mills, but the McGuinty government doesn’t respond,” Hampton said.

Northern Ontario has already experienced a wave of mill closures and job losses as a result of the McGuinty government’s policy of driving hydro rates through the roof. It’s time for the McGuinty Liberals to finally show the workers and people of Red Rock that it

has a real commitment to Ontario’s forest industry and the communities that depend on it,” said Hampton.

The OFL, along with CEP and USW, has just launched a “Campaign to Save Northern Ontario.” The unions will present a resolution to municipal councils calling on the McGuinty government to mandate an all-party committee to travel the north to provide an opportunity for all stakeholders to have input into the crisis in the pulp and paper industry.

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