

## **Rob Halpin - Chairing the meeting.**

### **01:11:00 Vicky Smallman – Director of Human Rights, Canadian Labour Conference, Lead on the CLC’s Emergency Task Force on Anti-2SLGBTQIA+ Hate**

Responsible for policy, campaigning, coalition building on the spectrum of human rights. Actioning the emergency CLC resolution that was passed at convention based on the 2SLTBG... workers caucus.

They create “flying squads”: a small mobile unit that specializes in mobilizing quickly in an emergency.

01:16:00 “There are many anti-LGBT groups under one banner...” they don’t exactly know who’s organizing the protests “A lot of that intelligence, a lot of that work, really needs to happen at the grassroots local level”.

00:16:25 “We’re encouraging our affiliate, labour council to connect with local activists that may already be doing the work to see how we they can help create their own infrastructure”.

00:17:20 “The parental rights rhetoric has come to the fore and the disturbing thing about all this all of it is being validated by provincial govt”.

00:19:00 “trying to flip the script on the rhetoric is really really important. We cannot let them set the agenda. We need to let folx know that LGBT rights are important”

### **Yolanda B’Dacey OFL Director Human Rights**

00:21:40 “This is not a fight for [the LGBT] community. This is definitely a fight for Allies”. “As allies we need to be co-conspirators. We need to be in the effort in such a way that when the rocks are hitting these communities, that they’re hitting us.”

Lots of talk about protests. This is heavily Anti-Fa inspired.

00:22:40 “As labour, this is what we do. We organize.”

#### **SLIDES**

00:24:20 “The insidious ways they say that they’re protecting children.”

00:24:32 “We’re not going to tolerate the hate, the intolerance” - Marcuse, Regressive Tolerance.

“We all need to be co-conspirators in the community.”

00:25:10 “We’re used to seeing this rhetoric from the USA. What’s unique is that its under the guise of being led by parents. By religious faith.”

“We need to make sure that our response is based on the hate and not on the people.”

“Its a very easy way to divide diverse communities by pitting us against each other.”

“We know about intersectionality and that hate can come in many forms.”

“We’re not going to fall prey to their usual forms of bigotry.”

00:26:35 “Very important that we arrive 30 minutes before at least, their planned protests so that we are occupying the space. It becomes our message. And that we are then establishing ourselves. We are not going into their protests. We are already there.”

00:28:58 “We’re going to respect all laws.” - except later they explicitly tell you they’re breaking the law.

00:29:32 “We’re all getting together and being disrupting and causing some good trouble.” She’s referring to BEAUTIFUL TROUBLE!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

## **Martin Reily**

00:31:30 Discussing Billboard Chris. Says 100 protesters showed up and 200 counter-protesters. Says there was violence in Ottawa.

00:33:05 “I highly recommend we organize in the Toronto area and also see if Toronto York Region Labour Council can organize CUPE 4400 and various teachers locals to go out to those schools and get the shut down by the workers.”

Its not the job of unions to shut down anyone’s freedom of expression. If they’re concerned about violence and attacks, they should involve the police. They are suggesting vigilante action.

## **Emily Quayle VP CUPE 4600, Carleton University, Community Solidarity Ottawa**

00:33:56 Led the organizing efforts in Ottawa on June 9th.

00:34:35 “The fascists were indeed violent”

00:34:43 “I will be sharing an article the CAHN published that details our stories.”

00:35:23 She goes into detail about how they infiltrate groups they oppose. Also tangentially admits being affiliated with the CAHN.

00:35:37 “They’ve actually got quite a lot better at organizing themselves. One of the reasons why we’re having difficulty finding lots of accurate information on march routes, on who’s exactly organizing is not because they’re disorganized, its because they’ve gotten better at OPSEC. They’re doing a lot more things that’s tighter and harder to infiltrate and harder to track”.

00:36:01 “Keep that in context. They’re able to at this moment, rise above their internal discord to build a very very big movement.”

00:36:40 “The fascists are organizing in the streets. I’m a researcher at Carleton and my focus is fascism in Canada. The signs that I’ve seen is that this is far more than just far-right transphobic protests. They’re fundamentally racist, they’re fundamentally anti-union, they’re fundamentally transphobic, and it’s just a matter of time that they come for us. And the only way the fascist have been stopped in the last 100 years has been that we unite in massive numbers in the streets. So this requires us to pivot and start to think about how we can use our inherent strength in a way that we’re not used to using.”

00:38:00 “In that time of demobilization [the pandemic], they got better. The fascists got way better at organizing. So what we need to do is really encourage everyone to reach out to their local orgs with not just solidarity but actual material things of people coming out, administrative help, help ppl build internal structure so we can build a movement. That’s what they’re doing so we need to start catching up a little bit. And we know we’re better than they are.”

“We also don’t need to worry about putting our members and our comrades in unsafe situations because when we get numbers we’re really good at keeping each other safe. Plus we’re really good at listening.”

00:39:40 “Think about how we can get to it specifically, how we can **do the work**... Now we’ve got to just hit the ground running. Start flooding resources. Can we loan staff in kind time to existing orgs? Can we loan office resources? Can we do printing? All this stuff is going to be huge.

CUPE 41 Just passed a CLC motion with a \$2,000 yearly budget [for] it and I strongly encourage everyone consider doing something like that because that encourages that things actually just get spent, money gets out the door, and we have a stronger promise of support beyond the statement.”

00:40:15 “Solidarity everyone”

## **Peter Yotsch (retiree), Peterborough District Labour Council**

00:41:34 “Thank you sisters and brothers and comrades”

00:41:50 Peter is part of **Peterborough and Kawarthas United Against Hate**. They are an anti-hate (anti-fa group) network that has carried out 8 “defenses” of Drag Queen Story Time.

00:42:46 “Labour councils are crucial...Labour councils in Peterborough and Lindsay have taken the lead in this. And that goes back to the convoy. When we started in Lindsay, counter-picketing the convoy in 2022, we brought out brother [name James Malhurna?]. Big shout out to Lindsay Labour council and also [name Dave Warna?], we brought people out and we started that tradition. That tradition of resistance.”

“We said to ourselves, Drag Queen Story Time taking place at our public library, staffed by our CUPE members is not gonna get shut down. It will not and has not. In fact, they’ve increased the bookings. That’s been their goal to shut it down. We’ve said no way is that gonna happen.”

“I wanna make one big ask here. Emily hinted at it and so had Rob. We need a network. We need first a province-wide network and a national network. I think we can start and the OFL [Ontario F Labour union] can initiate this but a lot of us are already ready. We’re organizing on the ground. We’re organizing labour and the LGBTQ+ communities. We’re organizing. I’m going to a climate protest. I’ll be making an announcement. I’ll be talking about public health care because if you look at the program the Ontario party and the new Blue party. They want credit card health card. They want chartered schools or what they call choice in education. We all know what that means, right? We can see the other attacks. It’s all of us under attack and I live in a rural area so I get this stuff and I can see it so let work on more frequent coming together like this and forming a network and exchanging the information. I have a lot to learn from Emily.”

00:44: 55 “This is not gonna stop. And we need to build an anti-fascist movement in this province and in this country....In Peterborough we say, ‘There will be resistance’! And on Wednesday, there will be.”

**Carolyn Egan , President of Steelworks Toronto Council. Founding member of Steel Pride and Community Solidarity Toronto.**

00:45:40 “The Toronto and York Region Labour Council, we established a rapid response network quite a few years ago after the murders at the mosque in Quebec. At that time, the far-right was organizing at Nathan Philips Square which is city hall square here in and they wanted to take over the public space which is one of their tactics and give a sense that someone they’re views are representative of the majority which is not the case. We organized that and not only ourselves unions like OPSU and Steel and IBW, CUPE and others came out regularly but with **community allies**. From the east end of Toronto, a group called [team?] which included the Muslims community there, black community, 2SLGBT community, all different groupings and we were able after a period of time to **demoralize** them because we continued to grow, grow, grow. They continued to get smaller. They lost their confidence. They stopped.”

00:46:35 “Now this was pre-covid. But that network, that rapid response network was incredibly, incredibly important. And Labour council along with Urban Alliance on Race Relations and a whole range of other community and labour groups founded Community Solidarity Toronto and obviously we took the name from Ottawa that at convoy time has a number of actions here in the city. And I think being on the ready, not be taken by surprise, having organized beforehand, know who your allies are, know who you’re connecting with, and be able to pull people out and to show that they’re the minority. And honestly, we have shown, I think here in what we had done a few years ago. **They can easily be demoralized. Their confidence can be just ripped out from under them**. And that’s what we have to do by building large mass united fronts in all our cities and towns with as broad a grouping of people as possible.”

“The rapid response network, the last action we did was at the High Park Library on [street] in Toronto a few months ago in the summer. And previously there was something at Fort York. The numbers from the steelworkers went up and joined Peterborough. Peter talked about what they were doing. Honestly he did so much just to bring that all together. We went out because they were just beginning. We weren’t sure how many they would get out. And they got hundreds out. The fact that labour was out there. But, community as well. Students from Trent etc. Really really important so we as I said are calling for a rally at Queens Park on the 20th. Its hugely important that as many people...it’s a work day for many of us in the unions but we know at least if we can have representation from all the unions possible and community organizations. **519** I know I’ve worked certainly with 519 and other in the past on such questions. Its cirital. So

um lets go, lets do it, and Yolanda giving us all concrete steps, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 whatever. They're there for us."

00:48:55 **ROB HALPIN** "We really do need to center trans and non-binary voices with perspective to planning on the day. Let's encourage the entire community to get access and we will make the space available for that to occur."

### **Anthony Marco, OLC, Hamilton**

00:49:35 "As soon as we heard the protest happening in here in Hamilton, we got together with a group of people we didnt really necessarily have a rapid response network. We just had a bunch of groups who were certainly interested in working with each other. Over the past decade or so in Hamilton what we've been most focussing on is community outreach and building relationships with communities so bringing the people together happened relatively quickly. We started up a facebook chat group which quickly escalated to over 24 - 48 hours to 150 local activists and leaders. Many of whom were coming off of representing entire organizations. And so we got that built really quickly. We got a pride facebook group to try and get people on there. It was the easiest way to reach out to people and uh we started to bring people in from external to facebook as well. We organized a planning meeting for the counter-protest on Monday evening at the labour council office so that we can get everybody's ideas in there. We do want to make sure that the key is that we are reducing risk as much as possible, that we are consolidating our message as much as possible, and that we are making sure that we are occupying the space not only where they are but where they intend to be."

"We have basically been told that they are meeting in a parking lot of a local mall. I don't know if they're going to be doing a tailgate for an hour or whatever the heck they're doing but then there going to be marching over to the school board. So our plan is to be at the school board first. And we are going to occupy in front of the school board as much as we can. But we are also being very clear that we are not there defending the school board. The school board has its own issues with regards to systemic issues regarding trans students and trans families to be honest with you."

"I know I've got three kids myself that are in the K-12 system who identify as trans. I know as an employee of the school board that there are a lot of gaps there. So we're making sure we're saying we're going to occupy their space. There's no possible way we could stop them from walking around us to get to the school board building but that's not our responsibility. Our responsibility is basically to diffuse and to take control of the messaging. Make sure that if there's going to be the press there that day it is going to be about positive messaging about people who are allies. And making sure that theres an understanding that its not just all negative."

00:51:30 "Our hope is that we are going to - we're actually going to steal a couple of their tactics in that when they are gathering for their uh, uh, their uh tailgate party in the mall parking lot, we've got a couple seasoned activists who've already said that they're willing to go over and - you know - take some pictures of license plates an these are people that are willing to do this [chuckle] um they're people who are seasoned. And uh, make sure that they know that they're being watched. That they're not doing this in secret. That people are noticing what they're up to."

00:52:22 “We’re going to have a sign making event also on Monday evening. We’re inviting people from the labour council. **And we have said from step 1 when this group was created, the labour council does not need nor necessarily does not want to be the voice of this.** If that’s what people want, we will be there no matter what. So if there are other groups that want to take on being the primary voice of this. And no one has stepped up yet to tell us NO. Most of the groups who’ve come on. Even groups that are like, we have groups like **“No Hate in the Hammer”** involved. We have a lot of anti-hate groups and anti-oppression groups that have come on. They’ve are - I think because of the possibility of the inherent risk that could be here - they’re quite happy that the uh labour council is kind of taking the lead on this. We did take the lead a few years ago when Hamilton has some incidents at Pride. And you know, a lot of our members are the face of what essentially became a Pride defense team when some people were marching on the park at that time. So we are trying to be as inclusive as possible, trying to bring in as many voices together as possible. **We are not sharing all of the details until the day before because our biggest fear now is we share the details of the counter-protest, that they’re going to try and pivot a little bit somewhere else. We want to make sure that we have everyone lined up to where they can be there.**

00:53:46 “I will say, we got like 150 in this one little group chat. We got about 75 of them migrated over to this private page and many of them represent major groups. We know that on a workday that it’s going to be tough to get many people to show up. There’s a lot of people that are supportive but trying to get people to show up...I’m hoping and from what I’ve seen from some of these organizations in the past even though they’ve got these cross-Canada events going on, that really dilutes their numbers in many cases. **Often times when they have an event, they’ll draw in from 4 or 5 different cities just to get 100 people in some places. So we’re hoping that we’re going to overwhelm their numbers. And we are hoping that even if they march 25 people to the front door of the school board, that the school board may handle that themselves. Ultimately, if the cameras are going to be there, we want them to be spending their time on the positive messaging [meaning they dont want parents to get any coverage]. We want them to be spending their time on - basically this isnt a counter-protest, this will be OUR rally. We want it to be OUR rally, not THEIR RALLY. We want it to be OUR event, not THEIR event. And if we have enough people there, that’s what we’re going to make it.”**

00:54:40 “There’s many groups in Hamilton. We’ve been doing this for a very long time now. **Thankfully our allies are making it - our allies for labour and the labour councils - are making it really easy on us. These are the same people that show up to strike lines even though they’re not in unions. These are the same people that show up whenever we call them out to help with anything. They show up because we show up for them. I always say that the currency of activism is showing up [chuckle] and thats what we do. Thats what we do for them and that’s what they’re planning to do for us. And that’s what we’re all planning on doing to stop hate in our city and to stop hate across the country.”**

00:55:20 “If its possible that the CLC could have a list of some legal support numbers from across Ontario. If somebody for some reason gets picked up [by the police], it would be good if they could have a 1-800 number that they could write on their arm or something like that so that they know that they’ve always got a lawyer that they can call. That would be useful. I’m not saying it will happen, we’ll try and stop it from happening, **but we have some seasoned activists who have been used to that in the past** [chuckle] and they wanted to make sure that we had that option.”

## Rob Halpin

00:56:16 “

## Muno Sajad, OSSTF, FEESO, STA...

00:57:13 “The only suggestion that I would probably have as an update. If there’s anything that can be added is maybe reminding in giving tips about the potential effects of what could happen if it’s doxxing. We’ve seen that with a lot of fascist, white-supremacist organization groups that have been doxxing a lot of progressive folx that have been organizing in the regions in combating hate in many ways. If there’s a way the information you have could be updated, how to deal with doxxing, how to protect yourself from being doxxed, especially what could happen as ramifications long term. Cause we know it’s not just what’s going to happen on the 20th going into the 22nd and various others. It’s going to be continuous.”

00:57:50 “Another thing, one thing from OSSTF, we are not just taking attention to where its happening everywhere. We’ve seen significant, you know, actions being organized at city halls and at school boards. But what we’re taking active attention to is how do we have safety plans ready for those protests that are occurring directly at schools.”

00:58:17 “We know that **Maxime Bernier** is going to be showing up to the Victoria Park Collegiate out in Scarborough North York area. And something that we’re taking a lot of attention to and thank you for sharing resources on that.”

“If you could reach out to us to let us know if you do see locations and protests being planned at schools. That’ll be helpful for us and we can coordinate with our **education comrades** and of course our local communities too.”

## Rob Halpin

## Don Fry Westminster

00:59:02 “I’m actually representing a group called Affirming Worship Durham, and this protest got my attention more than ordinary because its advertised as religion. Its a religious thing, the way that they preface the whole concept of this protest. And we’re going to try to have religious opposition to the far-right. And doing it as best we can but we’re having to do it with love and inclusion and positivity and whathaveyou. Its nice to have the organizational structure that you folx are providing because, you know, to have allies that know what they’re doing and how to handle themselves in these cases.”

“We’ve had cases in the past where we’ve had to almost back away from a protest because there were people that were more interested in having confrontation and engaging in name-calling and things of that nature. I’m very much interested in seeing how things are coming together here. Definitely, like to have that support structure. Not sure all of our decisions dont happen from the top. I’m not the president. I just happen to be somebody that’s usually the communicator as far as this is concerned. All these decisions take place at the individual place of worships throughout the area. Its not something I can direct so I’m going to be trying to give them as much information as possible and ensure that we can have some sort of an impact.”

## **Susan Gapcle (?), transwoman, CUPE Ontario, Human Rights chair [HR]**

01:01:25 “Hi. I’m bewildered but I’m actually Susan [Gapcle?], I’m with CUPE Ontario. I’m the Human Rights chair and I’ve been directed by our President of CUPE Ontario to throw off my Sunshine Susie cape and put on my Super Susan cape. But I use she/her pronouns, and I use a-la-francais and I’ve got a heck of a lot of emotions around this. I’m an out transwoman. I’m a trans elder. And, you know, 20 - 30 years ago we could get 5 people to protest at Queens Park to get our healthcare restored and now I’ve got to say, I dont want to go too long.

“A lot of memories of the fights we’ve had where we struggled. There was just a handful of us. Meeting in a room, going out, trying to get allies and supporters. And then about a week ago, we built this Canada where trans and non-binary and gender diverse people were included and that took a good 13-15 years and here we are. There coming back.”

“We have a backlash. Do you know, folx, we’ve been to this rodeo before. **We have struggled. We’ve survived. We struggled.** And some of us have actually overcome. And that makes us really really strong.”

“So about 10 days ago, it feels like a lifetime ago in our world, when Stephen lying Lecce said that, put out the trial about parental consent in the schools, my life seems to have changed. And then after Conservative Convention, and these are REALLY minor, that many of us know how politics work, see the inner wheel of big P Politics and they’re simply resolutions. But the fuel behind these resolutions that the Conservative Party adopted.”

01:03:33 “And so I was feeling a little lost after that. Feeling, wondered what’s going to happen. And now you bring me so much joy. So much comfort to know that there’s more than 5 of us looking at each other in a small room. **That we are here. United in the struggle, in solidarity together.** “

“I just want to touch on Carolyn’s comments. **My comrade over there** smiling in the corner box. I’m in agreement most people I’m talking to in my little bubble here which is ever expanding as we speak.”

01:04: 22 “People that I talk to want to stop this dead in its tracks. That’s the wrong word to use. That’s a figure of speech but I’m gonna....We want to show them strength. And what we have in labour is numbers. And if we can put up a good show on the 20th but not make this a one-time event. We need to be doing counter-protests, educational forums. Trans day of remembrance is coming up and we need to add that political message. We want our political people, the people who have been....the word im thinking...I’m thinking of misinformation. That there’s this myth and misinformation about what’s happening in our schools. What Drag Queens are doing. We need to be giving them the key message. We need to have opportunities to, um, there’s so many of them its hard to counter all the hate messages but we have time to do that.”

01:05:39 “If we stand up to the bully, the bully will decide what to do. They will flight, fight, or fright. And so let’s give them some FRIGHT on September 20th so that on September 21st till whenever, that they’re working on THE FLIGHT tactic.”

**Rob Halpin**

