

<http://network.nationalpost.com/np/blogs/toronto/archive/2009/07/09/toronto-on-strike-city-would-rather-confront-residents-than-unionists.aspx>

## Toronto on strike: City would rather confront residents than unionists

Posted: July 09, 2009, 6:16 PM by Rob Roberts

[Kuitenbrouwer](#), [Toronto on strike](#)



Today, a perfect sunny summer day with a light wind, people in Trinity-Bellwoods Park skipped rope, painted landscapes, rode bikes, jogged, sunbathed, ate lunch, played tennis, walked their dogs and pushed baby strollers. This may not last.

With some of Toronto's 21 temporary waste drop-off sites nearing capacity, this park is among 13 topping the city's list for the next temporary dumps.

Christie Pits (above) now has a hockey rink full of over 100 tons of rotting trash that the city plans to leave for as long as its workers are on strike. Kevin Sack, a city spokesman, told our paper the city will not confront the pickets and remove the

Christie Pits trash.

As the thermometer rises, the city appears to prefer to take on its own citizens. But if it tries to fill Trinity-Bellwoods Park, "in the paved pathways in park, south of Dundas St. W.," with garbage, as its memo suggests, the response is going to make the Christie Pits protests look like a summer picnic.

Sunbathing on the grass at Trinity-Bellwoods Park today was Meagan Swan, 28, who has just passed the bar and has the summer off before starting work at a law firm downtown. She was reading Frommer's Italy 2009, in advance of her August trip to Italy; when I showed her the list of planned dumpsites, she was aghast.

"So they're actually thinking of putting garbage in this park?" she asked. "I don't find Toronto has enough green space as it is. I think that's crazy. That's ridiculous."

If the city wants to weather a long summer strike, they had better quick dream up a much smarter garbage disposal plan.

Another potential dump site is Earl Bales Park, on Bathurst Street north of Highway 401, a verdant, sprawling swath of green, once a golf course, which then-North York mayor Mel Lastman made into a park. Users there shared the shock of Trinity park patrons at the news.

"That's horrible," said Sonia Thon, a university professor. "You know how many families and children

and old people come here to take advantage of the green space and the shade? This is a terrible thing to do. Many of these people live in apartments, this is the only place they can come to run around and take advantage of some freedom.”

This exposes one of the cruel ironies of the park-as-dump: apartment-dwellers have garbage pick-up right now, so they don't need garbage drop-off sites. But, lacking back yards, they need parks.

Putting garbage in parks is a very dumb idea, but when I showed the list to John Schweigel, who was relaxing under a tree at Earl Bales, he shrugged. “What makes you think that the people who drew up that list have the best interest of the citizens of Toronto at heart?” he asked.

Geoff Rathbone, the city's manager of solid waste, said earlier this week that most temporary dumps are 40% to 50% full, but some are 90% full. Today, city spokeswoman Lisa Tjoeng said that, “We are assessing it day by day. We have referred to that list when we've considered possible drop off sites.” The city did not hold a briefing yesterday.

Mr. Sack said the city cannot remove trash from existing parks because, among other reasons, “We would have difficulty getting equipment or trucks in or out of the sites due to picketing.”

Wow. That is quite an admission of impotence. But it begs another question: do the union sisters and brothers really want to show up on the evening news preventing trucks from removing garbage from our parks? Is that how they plan to win the public relations battle?

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27 Comments

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by Straightup  
Jul 09 2009  
6:48 PM

A potential venture almost had me back in TO (original home town) - and despite things not working out so well here I'm thinking I'm glad I'm not there.

I'm waiting for some real scuffles to take place real soon.

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by brally  
Jul 09 2009  
6:55 PM

very simple question: why?

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by Sassylasie  
Jul 09 2009  
7:08 PM

You vote for socialists you get what you deserve.

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by Above Center  
Jul 09 2009  
7:34 PM

The solution is quite simple, I'm not paying my taxes for the length of the strike. If Miller thinks he has a problem with the Unions just wait until he has to face a tax payers revolt! No service, no taxes!

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by Foo2Uall  
Jul 09 2009  
8:01 PM

More crap from your city council. Why don't you people wake up and get rid of those morons?

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by Medoras  
Jul 09 2009  
8:10 PM

Above Center writes, "If Miller thinks he has a problem with the unions...." We all have a problem with the unions. Whether it's CUPE, the TTC, LCBO etc, they continue to blackmail the taxpayers and will

eventually bankrupt the city. It's time for a revolution that ensures the unions - and their Miller-like buddies - are permanently gone.

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by MHartman  
Jul 09 2009  
8:14 PM

Vote for leftards, reap what ye sow.

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by Voice\_of\_Reason  
Jul 09 2009  
8:30 PM

Why don't we dump our garbage at the homes of the vulture union bosses? They are thieving from Torontonians taxpayers.

I suggest we picket the picketers!!! There are several-fold more people who oppose the vulture union than those that support it. With an organized picket, we could draw even more attention to this issues and shut down the lazy, greedy picketers and thier vulture union.

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by geraldson68  
Jul 09 2009  
9:06 PM

No one in Toronto leadership or the civil service has any backbone to actually fix the problem. Isn't Toronto called Hog town for a reason? I guess this is how the Head Hogs want Toronto to be? A Pig's sty?

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by Blue-man  
Jul 09 2009  
9:11 PM

It's become clear that Miller has a death wish. His CNN appearance was a joke: he saying everything was great in TO while on split-screen, a mountain of stinking, fetid, TO garbage, worthy of the early days in the Rio de Janiero dump (no Canadian waifs & orphans picking thru it yet) was being shown.

Well done David. And, on another front, CUPE 419 was staking out a private sector medical-transport agency (old folks going to the doctor or back to their nursing home, cancer patients being taken for their radiation or chemo treatments, kidney patients off to dialysis, etc.) and preventing the drivers & care-givers from doing their jobs at \$12 to \$15/hr, claiming the \$35/hr EMS surrogate strikers were being disadvantaged. This is what the mayor of all the people is allowing to happen, ably aided & abetted by Ontario's panty-waist premier, Dalton McGuinty. Meanwhile, Dalton, David & the EMS strikers, or their surrogate union brothers & sisters blame Mike Harris for some legislation he put thru 10+ years ago. it matters not that Dalton, who went along with Eves in 2002 to end the strike from Queens Park, is sitting in his 2nd majority and still won't stop blaming Harris or call back the legislature to end the strike.

These people care not a whit that they are killing the TO hotel & restaurant industries, already crippled by the recession.

These are the same folks voted into power by the GTA leftards TWICE. Folks: give your heads a shake & consider that which you have wrong-headedly wrought on TO & Ontario.

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by Mav79  
Jul 09 2009  
9:17 PM

Indeed the real scuffles are yet to come... and when it does, CUPE's gonna show its true colours. And this time, we won't be able to ignore it like we do Windsor. Anyone get a chance yet to watch the YouTube

video of one of Windsor's CUPE workers confronting a couple and their granddaughter, spilling garbage in front of the little girl?

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by avartist  
Jul 09 2009  
9:34 PM

One word boys and girls \*privatize\*. Fire the whiners and contract out the services. I don't get friggin sick days i'm lucky I have a job right now. People out of work, people losing their homes and these cry-babies are out on strike because they can't bank their sick days, whaaa.. f'in whaa.. , they need to see how it feels to be hungry for a few days - pathetic

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by Blue-man  
Jul 09 2009  
9:37 PM

It seems the public sector unions & their members are the really bad actors with the greatest sense of entitlement coupled with incomprehensible support from municipal & provincial governments.

And will these governments rebate tax money's to taxpayers deprived of the services they have paid for?? Not a chance and for that non-performance they ought to be out on their a\$\$es in the snow next election.

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by MIKUS11  
Jul 09 2009  
9:54 PM

A vote for "his blondeness" is a vote for more stink coming from Toronto City Hall.

I think all you socialist losers in Toronto are getting exactly what you deserve.

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by Webwalker  
Jul 09 2009  
9:57 PM

This is going to go on for weeks, unless the Windsor strike gets settled first. Windsor, probably the most pro-union town in Canada, has told CUPE to \*\*\*\*-off, and get back to work. Naturally, CUPE takes this as a sign of affection and a sign that the City is fully behind them, assuming the pitchforks and torches are meant for Big Government, not for them.

(CUPE isn't all that bright.)

I'm rooting for the politicians in this, which is amusing, since I'm normally of the opinion that the politicians are the problem in these cases. But I'd rather them win this, and save me a bit of tax money (hopefully) than have them capitulate and give these greedy, GREEDY unions more than they deserve. (At least when it comes to CUPE and the cities of Windsor and Toronto. I supported the LCBO union, since they wanted to keep the jobs they already had, where they were, and weren't asking for much more than to keep full time employees as full time, not knock them back to part time. I've done the part time work, and frankly, it sucks. CUPE, however, can go the full distance of socialism, have all their members on strike lose their homes and have to move in together in a commune before I show any support for them. I'm paying your salaries, you bums, GET BACK TO WORK!)

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by Jacques3  
Jul 10 2009

Miller and the unions will not stop until there is no one who wants to live here except social benefits recipients, CUPE and OPSEU and other union

6:10 AM

members, and 30 or so Toronto Council members.

The rest will give up and take their life, taxes, and freedom outside city limits.

Miller is a one man disaster that has hit Toronto.

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by JeanneB53

Jul 10 2009

9:20 AM

The City employs many highly paid management staff whose primary purpose is to create, maintain and protect a wholesome image for the mayor and the City. They succeeded only to see such image crumble during the strike. This tells us, all these efforts are unnecessary and a waste of precious property taxes Torontonians pay. Also, during this strike when people tossed all sorts of garbage in the bag - recyclable, biodegradable and what-not - in a frenzy to toss them into Christie Pitts, and the spraying of harmful chemicals on them, all the millions of dollars spent educating Toronto residents on garbage sorting, keeping water safe and non-pesticide gardens have gone to waste. Indeed, the strike enables us to see the true colours of politicians and the wasteful job-making strategies of government bureaucracies. We must rethink if we really need to recycle or refrain from using pesticides. David Miller could have been better off now if the right policies, such as garbage incineration, did not have to take a backseat to his political ambitions

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by Rule Me Like You Mean It

Jul 10 2009

9:59 AM

There was a story a few days ago about an idea to cap overtime pay on clean-up duties after this thing is over, to put pressure on the union.

Where'd that go?

Tell you this much: I've got tickets to the TO zoo, a family trip we have planned for later in the summer. But I won't go if the strike is still on.

How many other folks are thinking along the same lines?

What do you expect from a city that thinks the way to clean up after itself is to ship it's garbage to another country.

Friggin disgraceful.

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by Weardown

Jul 10 2009

11:11 AM

I am quite certain that you could cut those union members by 1/2 and this city would run just fine. A good example is what's happening in Windsor right now. They are coping with just 400 non-unionized staff, albeit overworked but are managing to keep things running.

In Toronto having that much dead weight is ridiculous. Just keep these extra 10,000+ people on the payroll because they need good paying jobs. You know what would happen to those 10,000 if they were let go? They would go and find jobs elsewhere. Is that a bad thing? This public union welfare is utter lunacy. It is grossly inefficient and a huge waste of

taxpayer money.

The union has to realize that the golden goose has laid it's last egg. The current structure is unsustainable and has to be reworked if Toronto is to survive and prosper.

Tax payers have no one to blame but themselves who voted for Miller and his socialist "I love unions" ideology...and for all those who didn't vote maybe this will get you off your couch and into the voting booths.

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by BetterByDesign  
Jul 10 2009  
11:57 AM

Garbage people running a garbage city.

correct me if I am wrong, but doesnt old city hall have a LOT of SPACE?

Yes, David Miller - Tourism in Toronto is a "buzzing."

LOL

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by Darren in TO  
Jul 10 2009  
12:10 PM

RESIDENCY BYLAW FOR MUNICIPAL EMPLOYEES!

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by davedave47  
Jul 10 2009  
2:04 PM

Hey Mav79 - I found that video. Holy crap is that thing in the video ever so huge. She/it is absolutely gi-normous!

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by Daystrom  
Jul 10 2009  
7:00 PM

Some people like to collect stamps, others coins. Toronto collects garbage.

Someone explain to me why the garbage isn't, you know, HAULED away???

Is this mayor that scared crapless of his union buddies?

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by guytonyca  
Jul 11 2009  
8:54 AM

The Mayor finally steps up to try to be a hero. I hope the union returns a counter offer that he cannot accept. Council now has a public mandate to not negotiate further. Hire replacement workers, clean up the mess, get injunctions to prohibit picketing on affected public properties. Prepare to call for tenders to outsource the garbage and daycare jobs. If the union decides to accept the current offer amend it to include a drop dead renewal date in mid-winter and insert a clause to prohibit any picketing of properties used for garbage storage or transfer. Toronto is now "world class" in the inept management category. Time for a change.

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by esyho  
Jul 11 2009  
12:31 PM

Only one comment on the Windsor CUPE video: you are what you eat.

And where is the cop? Shouldn't that beast be fine on littering the public

ground?

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by guytonyca  
Jul 12 2009  
12:49 PM

Hopefully the City will reject the unions response to the overly generous offer. Council has a mandate to break these unions. Get injunctions to stop all harrassment, hire replacement workers to clean up our parks and begin a process to call for contracts. The union can bid if it chooses. In the event the union caves ensure any new contract has December drop dead expiry and a clause porohibiting any picketing. Problem is Council and our Mayor do not have the internal fortitude. I hope we get a better than 30% turnout at the next election, you get the Council you vote for! Toronto is currently "World Class" in the inept management category!

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by JohnChow101  
Jul 13 2009  
2:27 AM

Regardless of how many poor decision Miller made, he is right on this one. As a taxpayer, we can't afford anymore.

This strike also exposes how may A\_holes in Toronto. Who in the right mind threw coffee cups on a street corner,over filling public garbage bins in downtown! Would they do it in their house/home?

There has to be a system like Singapore to fine these idiots heavily to change their attitude.

I can live without garbage disposal for months.

Learn to do

1. Compost
2. Compact your garbage
3. Store recycle material in boxes in garage/basement.
4. Use recycle bin as an additional garbage storage.

Carefully separated garbage won't smell. These should be items that are not recyclable like plastic bags etc..

I am not assuming that all can compost, but as many people as possible doing composting we can reduce our reliance on garbage pickup.

I have yet to have the need to take my garbage to transfer station or temporary site. I am sure that I won't at least until October or November.