

Understanding the Foundation for Teachers’ Strikes in Ontario

While much has been made about the ‘resolution’ of the teachers’ job action in Ontario, most of the discussion has missed two fundamental aspects of the debate: school choice and unionization in the public sector. No long-term, lasting solution can be achieved if these two factors are ignored.

Firstly, the ruling by the Ontario Labour Relations Board is a short-term fix that should salvage the school year for 70,000 secondary students. But the issues remain. Elementary school teachers are escalating their job actions, which include partial withdrawal of administrative services, and plans are in place for the secondary school teachers in the three striking boards to return to full withdrawal of services within two weeks.

Such labour strife, which affects parents and students across the province – roughly 70,000 secondary and 800,000 elementary students have been affected – is built into the system both because of a lack of school choice outside of the public education system and the degree of unionization within the public education system.

Most Ontarians are not aware of the [comparatively unique way](#) the province delivers education. For instance, Ontario is one of only three provinces in Canada that provide religious, largely Roman Catholic, education within the public system. The remaining seven provinces provide religious education using alternative methods such as independent schools. Moreover, Ontario is also one of only two provinces that provide French Roman Catholic education in the public system. And unlike Quebec and all four western provinces, Ontario provides no support to parents who wish to have their children educated in independent schools.

The reliance on choices within the public education system means that almost 95 per cent of Ontario students (K-12) are enrolled in public schools. This stands in contrast to both British Columbia and Quebec where more than one-in-eight students attends an independent school. Such systems facilitate more competition between schools, particularly non-government schools, and greater education choices for parents, both of which contribute positively to a well-functioning, high-performing education system.

The comparatively higher unionization rates in the public education system are especially problematic giv-

en that almost all students in Ontario attend a public school. Specifically, 84.3 per cent of teachers and professors in Ontario are unionized. (Unfortunately, Statistics Canada doesn’t have a readily available narrow measure of teachers. However, teachers, both elementary and secondary, constitute the overwhelming share of professionals in this category.) By comparison, only 15.8 per cent of teachers (and professors) in independent schools are unionized. The lack of choice outside of the public system coupled with the high unionization in the public system means that parents in Ontario have a much higher risk of disruption in their child’s education than parents in provinces like British Columbia.

A [watershed book](#) by then-UBC economics profes-

sor Sandra Christensen in 1980 shed light on the tension between unions and the public sector. According to Christensen, an inherent conflict is created when governments assume the monopoly (or near monopoly) provision of a public good, education for instance, at the same time that the government allows itself to be unionized. This combination of monopoly provision of services and unionization in areas like education means that if (perhaps when) strikes occur, parents have no alternatives. In other words, the unions enjoy the best of both worlds: the ability to strike and no real competition. This enormous benefit bestowed to unions comes at a cost—a lack of choice for parents and the real possibility of the disruption of educational services.

The [long-term fix](#) for Ontario’s education system is not better collective agreements or [simply more money](#) but rather a fundamental reform of how K-12 education is delivered, with more emphasis on choice for parents and more competition in the education sector.

Deani Van Pelt, Jason Clemens, Fraser Institute





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By-Election Wrap Up by Coreen Corcoran

By-elections are generally an unwanted but necessary disruption for all political parties. We scramble to find candidates and try to convince voters that this is just as important as a general election. Running one in February, however, comes with a different set of challenges, with snow and cold weather at the top of that list. Having to put up signs in melting then falling snow ramps that up even more.

We have the ambitions of two former Liberal MPPs to thank for this by-election. They resigned less than two years after the provincial general election. Oddly enough, both by-elections were held in adjacent Ottawa ridings. Ottawa-Vanier and Orleans are Liberal strongholds that unsurprisingly kept that streak alive on February 27th. Nonetheless, we had two strong and seasoned candidates on the ballot in both ridings, and we are pleased with the results. We had hoped to reach 2% in each riding but that’s difficult to achieve when the winning candidate pulls in over 50% of the vote. Everyone else just hopes for whatever scraps are left.

Results

Riding	Candidate	Number of Votes	% of Votes
Ottawa-Vanier	Ken Lewis	129	0.65%
Orleans	Jean-Serge Brisson	177	0.68%

Ken was our first candidate nominated within days of the election call. Ken was invited to a few debates, and with Keith’s help, pushed to have another one adhere to the provincial ruling that all candidates must be invited to an all-candidates meeting. Yes, you read that

(Continued on page 2)

Libertarian Pub Nights and Events

- Ottawa Pub Meeting – April 5, 2-4 PM (usually 1st Sunday of each month)** **New Location:** Gracie’s, 1151 Ogilvie Road, Ottawa. Everyone welcome. For more information contact Mark Snow marksnow@rogers.com. Next meeting is May 3, 2020.
- Toronto Pub Night - April 8, 7:00 PM (2nd Wednesday of each month)** - Granite Brewery and Restaurant, 245 Eglinton Ave. E. William Edwards, our guest speaker, will address the question, "Is innovation a threat to the powerful?" Everyone welcome - bring a friend. Free Parking under the restaurant. For more information email Jim McIntosh (jim@mcintosh.on.ca). The next Pub Night is May 12, 2020.
- Kitchener-Waterloo Pub Night - March 19, 7:00 PM (3rd Thursday each month)** - Angel’s Family Restaurant, 190 Weber St. N. (Corner of Weber and Lodge). Come out to enjoy friendly libertarian conversation. Invite your friends - all are welcome. Please RSVP to Paul Herriot (call 519-208-8379 or email paulforfreedom@outlook.com) so he can reserve a large-enough table. Next meeting is April 16, 2020.
- Bradford Pub Night—March 26, 7:00 PM (usually on the last Thursday of each month)** - Village Inn, 2 Holland St., E. Come out, grab a pint and some wings and discuss politics with some local Libertarians. Everyone is welcome, so bring a friend. For info contact Keith, Leader@libertarian.on.ca Next Meeting April 30.
- Mississauga-GTA West Pub Night—March 26 (last Thursday)** Chuck’s Roadhouse - 1151 Dundas Street E, Mississauga (Dixie and Dundas) Join us for discussion on the direction of the party and for libertarian ideas pertaining to current affairs in general. This great pub atmosphere offers extraordinary eats and favourite drinks. We look forward to meeting with you. Contact Jay Ward at 416.799.2699 or by email jayward0111@gmail.com
- If you would like to organize a Libertarian Pub Night in your area, please contact Keith Komar by email (cfo@libertarian.on.ca) or phone 1-855-ONT-LIBerty or 416-283-7589 in the GTA.*
- For the latest , visit http://www.libertarian.on.ca/pub_nights

Unity in our roots—By Brad Greulich

While I was watching the leadership race unfold at the Convention, I was reminded of how libertarians as a group can share the same core values, but differ so much about their application. We tend to argue a great deal over small details, (this is not a bad thing, as it forces us to consider our opinions carefully) while sometimes forgetting that we share major points of agreement.

It is easy to forget that in growing the liberty movement, different scenarios require different approaches. There is a time for taking our ideas to their ‘extreme’ intellectual conclusion and a time for a gentle, moderate approach.

Libertarianism as a philosophical study requires taking our ideas to the extreme; this allows us to fully flesh out our ideas and beliefs. Our deep convictions are the result of our keen understanding of libertarianism. This is something lacking in many other belief systems.

Advocacy groups are hugely important for educating people and helping to create new libertarians. I feel the mandate here is different than that of a political party. Their paths may cross, but the fundamental goal is different. The goal of an advocacy group is to educate the general public about the libertarian philosophy and bring people into its fold. They serve to teach people why property tax is fundamentally wrong or how government action is always backed by violence.

A political party seeks to grow in influence in order to reduce the effects of government. It relies on a support base that does not need to be 100% philosophically

(Continued from page 1)

right. Once again we were fighting to present our message, but this time we were successful.

Jean-Serge’s nomination came a bit later, but surprisingly we didn’t hear about any community debates. We got the sense that maybe the Liberal candidate, a city councilor, was being protected because of his participation on the city’s planning committee for the disastrous light rail project. Undeterred, Jean-Serge distributed door hangers and put up signs across the riding.

One of the benefits of a by-election is that it allows us to test our election readiness. We have some lessons from this one for sure, but overall we did many things well. Ken tapped Alex Robak, a Carleton University student and representative for their Student’s For Liberty group, to be his campaign manager. This gave Alex a

invested in the party. For a political party to meet its mandate, it only needs people to agree with a basic platform of smaller government. For example, supporters don’t need to fully understand why a sin tax on alcohol or tobacco is fundamentally wrong; they just have to be against these taxes. Members who are intellectually involved are critical for keeping that party true to its philosophy, but support is also needed from a more moderate crowd. However, each one of us must decide where to draw our ‘line in the sand’. As a party becomes more moderate to attract more voters, it becomes less and less libertarian. As believers in the free market of ideas, it’s up to us, and our support to keep any party honest. This is not at all unique to the Ontario Libertarian Party.

Conversely, is there a place for moderate advocacy groups and extreme political parties? Of course there is, but once again it is up to each one of us, as individuals, to decide when it’s better to band together over our common goals, or fracture off over our differences.

Advocacy groups, talking about extreme positions should be supporting moderate libertarian political parties, and parties should be supporting advocacy groups. Murray Rothbard wrote that we as libertarians should support any cause that reduces government, no matter how small. Any reduction in government is better than no reduction. As libertarians, we are all likely to disagree on one point or another, that doesn’t mean that we’re not all pulling towards the same goal. Our approach may differ, but in the roots of our belief we are unified.

front row seat to the behind the scenes workings of a campaign. He attended meetings with the Returning Officer, showed up at debates, and handled some requests. We also pulled on the members in the Ottawa area to come together and put out signs and door hangers for Jean-Serge. Our biggest boost came the weekend before the election when Keith drove from Barrie to spend the weekend helping on the campaigns. Keith’s optimism and drive helped motivate us into action. His strong leadership and dedication to the party and candidates will help us in future by-elections and in the general election in 2022.

On election night, a group of us gathered at O’Brien’s, our regular meet up spot. We were joined by Above Znoneofthe from the, you guessed it, None of the Above Party. We were all glued to our screens (phones, not television of course) as the results trickled

(Continued on page 3)

The End of the Beginning, Part 2 —By Jean-Serge Brisson

This is a continuation of Jean-Serge Brisson’s article published in the Winter 2019 issue of Bulletin.

When the news of my victory died down after the GST trial, I didn’t know what I would do to force a resolution to the situation I was in. I mean, I didn’t do all of this just for kicks. As per my comments to the investigator back in 1994, my intent was to end this practice of slavery by small business for the government.

That is why I mentioned to David Lindsay during the latest trial that should I come out of this with a victory, it can’t stop here. He agreed. This last court action by the government towards me was just “*The End of the Beginning.*”

As of this day, the intent is to start a Constitutional Challenge to how governments force small business to be their money collectors for no compensation. It is one of the last bastions of slavery in our society and the time has come to end this fraudulent practice. But this is not just a small venture. This is a big one, if not the biggest challenge to government powers ever initiated. But it has to be done.

Especially with what has recently happened.

As per what happened when Howard Galganov and I challenged the Bilingual Sign Bylaw when it was introduced in my municipality of Russell Ontario, I intend to do the same on the challenge to business slavery for governments.

I will never be charged for not collecting money for the government. As a result, if they won’t take me on, then the government will have to be taken on.

This will mean bringing in expert witnesses on various issues such as slavery, labour laws, Constitutional experts, and more, to prove that the government does not have the power to ever have established such a collection system on its people, specifically targeting a segment of society, which is its entrepreneurs.

(Continued from page 2)

in after 9:00. It was a lot of fun. I think what stood out for me most this election was the camaraderie of this core group of OLP members in the Ottawa area. In the past we would meet up and mostly sit around convincing each other that we have all the answers. This time, we had a purpose that resulted in action. That felt good. If there is one takeaway from this by-election, start building your teams and connections now. When the election is called, all you have to do is act.



What will this do or cause to happen? When the day comes that businesses do not have to collect money for the government, then it will be up to each and every individual to send in their own taxes. As for contributions by employers to government programs such as EI, a formula can be figured out. I am not going to argue the specific math at this time, but let’s just say an amount such as 30% of a salary would be given to an employee to cover the employer’s share to pay for those “*programs.*” From there, the employee would send in that part and also their own personal contributions to those programs. So, if someone makes \$20.00 per hour, and the top up is 30%, \$6.00 per hour more would be sent to the Federal Government.

The employee would send in that \$6.00 themselves, plus their own \$6.00 an hour, leaving the employee with \$14.00 dollars an hour of their salary. Now, THEY would start to feel the pain of having to send in that money every month. Same as many small businesses have to do now. Because as it stands now, when they receive their paycheck, the employees don’t feel the pain of having to pay the government, the employer does that for them.

Having to send in their contributions personally every month will change the attitude of many. Thus, having a third of the country’s voters not bothering to go to the polls would definitely change. To what percentage I am not sure, but many more would go and many more who do vote would not do so as cheering for a hockey team. There would definitely be more care behind who they will stand to run the country and in the same exchange, manage their future.

And naturally, this venture will cost a lot more than what I just spent in this last court case.

There are already plans being made to proceed with this venture. Stay tuned for more to come.

Thomas Jefferson said in 1802:

“I believe that banking institutions are more dangerous to our liberties than standing armies.

“If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around the banks will deprive the people of all property - until their children wake-up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.”