

Summer Fling 6

August 10-12, 2007



Policy Package

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1) Human Rights Standards for Foreign Aid

WHEREAS in the 2004-2005 fiscal year Canada distributed \$4.14 billion in assistance to developing countries, demonstrating its commitment to developmental aid as key in reducing global poverty; and

WHEREAS nearly half of Canada's official development assistance budget is distributed through bilateral assistance to developing countries, carried out by non-governmental, private sector and academic organizations as project partners or directly by recipient government organizations; and

WHEREAS certain recipient countries of Canadian official development assistance have been noted for their incredible lack of respect for the basic human rights of their citizens; and

WHEREAS these countries, despite their disregard for basic human rights, remain dependent on foreign aid to support their development.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Government of Canada, and in particular the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), be urged to establish human rights standards on which development assistance is measured when considering or reviewing the eligibility of a recipient of ODA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those governments which have been noted by independent humanitarian organizations for their clear and systematic abuse or negligence of the basic human rights of their citizens be denied development assistance from the Canadian Government.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that those governments which have been denied assistance based on their human rights record, and where there is still a legitimate need for assistance for the development of their citizens, be granted funding not through direct allocations to the government, but through separate bilateral assistance to Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and other independent humanitarian organizations for the implementation of development programs within the recipient country.

Policy put forward by the Nipissing University, Northern Region

2) Northern Ontario Mining

WHEREAS many Northern Ontarians feel that Northern Ontario is a distinct area of the province; and

WHEREAS many issues, such as forestry and mining affect mainly Northern Ontario; and

WHEREAS the Ontario Liberal Party issued "True North", a platform designed specifically for Northern Ontario during the 2003 Provincial Election; and

WHEREAS this platform contributed to the victory of many new seats in Northern Ontario; and

BE IT RESOVLED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Ontario Liberal Party and Liberal Party of Canada to develop and issue Northern Ontario specific platforms for all future elections.

Policy put forward by the Algoma University, Northern Region

3) Enforcing Standards of Practice for Canadian Mining Companies Operating Abroad

WHEREAS some Canadian mining companies operating in the Global South have been implicated in environmental and human rights violations (ranging from destroying environments to inciting violence and disrupting livelihoods); and

WHEREAS the Canadian Government is currently complacent with mere voluntary measures for mining companies to adhere to regarding international environmental and human rights standards; and

WHEREAS the education and advocacy campaigns of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) addressing the issue are strongly resonating with Canadians, demonstrated by the efforts of international development agencies such as Development & Peace, whose efforts to date have accumulated well over 133,857 signatures from Canadians demanding that the Canadian Government “refuse support to mining companies that do not respect international environmental and human rights standards, and develop legal mechanisms that ensure mining companies are held accountable for their actions in the Global South.”

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals promote the March 29, 2007 recommendations of the “Mining in Developing Countries and Corporate Responsibility” report, which followed a series of four National Roundtables on Corporate Social Responsibility that included input from public, governmental and non-governmental experts on the issue.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL lobby the Canadian Government to implement mandatory corporate social responsibility standards to which Canadian mining companies are to adhere while operating in the Global South.

Policy put forward by the Brant Young Liberals, South Central Region

4) Transit Infrastructure

WHEREAS the absence of sustained infrastructure is detrimental to the quality of life, economic growth and the environment; and

WHEREAS the implementation of subsidies and tax incentives are necessary to encourage the use of public transit.

BE IT RESOLVED that governments work to oversee the integration of regional transit systems.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals recognize the need for cooperation of the provincial and local governments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that public/private partnerships should be explored.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the provincial government should pursue the use of carpool lanes through the use of incentives and taxes.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a large initial investment in the Niagara Region will be required to establish an accessible, equitable and sustainable system of transit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a public transit link between the Niagara Region and surrounding large urban centers will be more fully developed.

Policy put forward by the Niagara Falls Young Liberals, South Central Region

5) Skilled Trade Immigration

WHEREAS many immigrants in Canada find themselves unemployed in the industry in which they have a degree; and

WHEREAS six out of ten immigrants are forced to make a career shift into a job other than the one in which they were qualified; and

WHEREAS 78% of immigrants in Ontario are skilled immigrants, i.e., individuals who have immigrated to Canada under the skilled worker category yet they still find themselves unemployed; and

WHEREAS a lack of recognition of qualifications and experience alone cost the country an estimated \$4.1 to \$5.9-billion each year; and

WHEREAS the majority of immigrants who come to Toronto find a job within 6 months, but 55% do not work in their trained occupation; and

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the federal and provincial governments to:

- a) Increase funding for government funded programs that help immigrants find jobs in their trained field;
- b) Partially fund programs that help with English as a second language;
- c) Fund Programs to help immigrants adjust into society; and
- d) Offer training to immigrants that need further training to qualify for their degree.

Policy put forward by the Burlington Young Liberals, South Central Region

6) Canadian Content Regulations for Film Theatres

WHEREAS Canadian content (CANCON) regulations for broadcast radio have played a large role in the creation of a sustainable Canadian music industry; and

WHEREAS television CANCON regulations have ensured that Canadians can view their own content, traditions and histories and not just those of other nations; and

WHEREAS the Canadian film industry is world-renowned but does not have easy access to national distribution, especially in areas with only corporate film theatre complexes; and

WHEREAS currently there are no CANCON regulations for Canadian film theatres.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Liberal Party of Canada to advocate for the establishment of Canadian Content regulations of at least twenty-five (10) percent (%) for film theatre complexes with over five (5) screens.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that an increased funding program for film producers as well as a tax subsidy for all theatres screening Canadian films at least twenty-five (25) percent of the time be created in order to provide a smooth economic transition.

Policy put forward by the Peterborough Federal Liberal Youth Association, Central Region

7) GST Cut for Environmentally Friendly Products

WHEREAS the federal government has proposed rebates of 1 to 2000 dollars on the purchase of certain environmentally friendly vehicles. This neglects to take into account the high numbers of Canadians who either do not own a car or will not be purchasing one in the near future; and

WHEREAS many products such as, but not exclusive to, cleaning materials and personal care products are products that Canadians more regularly purchase and often have a profoundly negative effect on the environment; and

WHEREAS environmentally friendly household products shall be defined as:

- a) Air filters;
- b) Health and organic foods;
- c) Household cleaning products; and
- d) Personal care products.

WHEREAS environmentally friendly household products are often passed over due to either a lack of awareness of their benefits, or a perception that they are more costly than their non-eco friendly counterparts; and

WHEREAS a greater use of environmentally friendly household products will directly aid the health of the planet while making environmental conservation a daily part of Canadians lives.

BE IT RESOLVED that in order to raise awareness about the practicality of environmentally friendly household products the Ontario Young Liberals support the elimination of the six percent GST on environmentally friendly household products

Policy put forward by the Peterborough Federal Liberal Youth

8) HPV Vaccine

WHEREAS the Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) affects up to 30% of Canadian adults; and

WHEREAS many carriers of HPV will experience no symptoms but HPV causes cervical cancer in up to 25% of Canadian women; and

WHEREAS the HPV vaccine successfully prevents HPV and the accompanying risk of cervical cancer and infertility.

BE IT RESOLVED that the cost of the HPV vaccine be covered by the Ontario Health Insurance Policy.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the HPV vaccine be included in the required vaccinations for female children.

Policy put forward by the Timmins-James Bay Young Liberals, Northern Region; Trinity-Spadina Young Liberals, Toronto Region & Queen's University Liberal Association, Eastern Region

9) Postsecondary Tuition

WHEREAS Canadian universities, on average, have increased tuition fees by nearly 400% since 1990/91; and

WHEREAS tuition hikes have meant staggering amounts of debt for students averaging at approximately \$25,000 per graduate; and

WHEREAS performing volunteer work, military service, or practicing medicine in certain areas, is highly contingent on salary and debt load; and

WHEREAS an educated workforce will be the key to Canada's survival in the 21st century society; and

WHEREAS the McGuinty government provided a historic \$6.2 billion cumulative investment to increase access and improve quality and accountability to post-secondary education, most students continue to suffer adversely from debt loads.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals encourage the Ontario Government, in conjunction with the Canadian Government, to create the Ontario Loan Forgiveness Program for those who seek work terms within the public service.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Province will forgive your outstanding OSAP loan debt at a rate of 20 per cent per year for each year as an employee of the Ontario Government.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the rebate threshold will be paid on your OSAP loan principal amount for a total threshold of five years.

Policy put forward by the Pickering-Scarborough East Provincial Young Liberals, Central Region & the London North-Centre Provincial Liberal Association, Southwest Region

10) Opt-Out Organ Donation: Saving Lives and Saving Money

WHEREAS there are currently more than 3700 Canadians waiting for kidney, heart, lung or liver transplants, and thousands more are waiting for tissue replacements such as corneas, heart valves, skin, and bone grafts; and

WHEREAS 147 Canadians died last year while waiting for donor organs; and

WHEREAS Canada has one of the lowest organ donation rates among the industrialized nations, fewer than 14 donors per million Canadians compared to 31 donors per million people in Spain; and

WHEREAS the gap between Canadians waiting for organ transplants and available donor organs is widening;

WHEREAS 98% of all kidney transplants, 90% of liver transplants, and 85% of heart transplants are successful; and

WHEREAS the cost of a kidney transplant averages \$20,000 plus \$6,000 per year thereafter (\$50,000 over five years), while maintaining a kidney patient on dialysis costs \$50,000 per year (\$250,000 over five years).

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Ontario Government to support an opt-out system for organ donation, in which all Canadians are automatically considered organ donors unless they specify otherwise on their Ontario health cards.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urges the Canadian Government to commit healthcare funds towards a new awareness campaign for organ donation that promotes the opt-out system and explains why organ donation is important.

Policy put forward by the Western Liberals, Southwestern Region

11) Towards a United Nations Emergency Peace Service

WHEREAS the ability of the international community, particularly the United Nations, to react in times of emergency and international crisis has been slow; and

WHEREAS the capabilities of the international community through the UN make a rapid reaction possible; and

WHEREAS scholars and academics such as Peter Langille have proposed a United Nations Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS) that will be capable of acting as a rapid reaction force; and

WHEREAS international crises such as genocide, gross violations of human rights are unacceptable; and

WHEREAS the importance of responding as soon as possible is critical to saving lives.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals support the adoption by the international community of a UNEPS

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Liberal Party of Canada and the Canadian Government to take a leading role in the adoption by the International Community of a UNEPS

Policy put forward by the London North-Centre Provincial Liberal Association

12) Canada's role in Afghanistan

WHEREAS a quarter century of warfare ravaged the physical, economic and social structures of Afghanistan, leaving it one of the poorest countries in the world; and

WHEREAS a failed Afghan state poses a potential security risk not only to its own citizens but to Canada and the rest of the world; and

WHEREAS Canada and 36 other countries have accepted the invitation of the Afghan government, under a United Nations mandate, to help provide security while the legitimate economy and governing institutions of Afghanistan are rebuilt; and

WHEREAS the Canadian Government has committed the military to the volatile southern region of Afghanistan until at least February 2009; and

WHEREAS many Canadians and other outside observers are concerned the mission is not being executed as effectively or efficiently as possible; and

WHEREAS many experts argue that Afghanistan's stability is being severely undermined by illicit opium production and its porous border with Pakistan.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Canadian Government to place a greater emphasis and sense of urgency on reconstruction efforts and infrastructure development projects, in accordance with the principles of the Afghanistan Compact, in order to rebuild Afghanistan's economy and thereby undermine popular support for the insurgency; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to do more to address the deteriorating security situation by:

- a) Encouraging our allies to supply more troops and equipment for surveillance of the Afghanistan-Pakistan border;
- b) Encouraging our allies to exert more diplomatic pressure on the Pakistani Government to control its lawless tribal regions, and cease any and all support for Taliban elements; and
- c) Calling on international donors to provide more funding to the Afghan National Army and Afghan National Police so that salaries can be increased, thereby reducing incentives for desertion and corruption.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to do more to address illicit poppy production by:

- a) Supporting the recommendations of the Senlis Council encouraging the Afghani Government and our allies to stop poppy eradication campaigns and, instead, license poppy cultivation for the production of essential medicines like morphine and codeine;
- b) Assisting the Afghani Government in providing farmers with sustainable alternatives to poppy production, including subsidies for the cultivation of legal crops such as wheat, corn and barley at levels comparable to current market prices of poppies; and
- c) Assisting the Afghani Government in creation of a marketing board (similar to the Canadian Wheat Board) to administer these licensing and subsidy programs allowing Afghani farmers to garner a higher price for their crops on world markets as well as creating stronger links between Afghani farmers and the central government.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to set realistic benchmarks for the Canadian mission in Kandahar Province that can be objectively and independently measured, and that these benchmarks be disclosed to both the Canadian and Afghani publics so that the progress can be closely monitored.

Policy put forward by the Carleton University Young Liberals, Eastern Region

13) A Policy to End the Atrocities in Darfur

WHEREAS reports suggest approximately 400,000 people have been killed as a result of the conflict in Darfur; and

WHEREAS approximately 2.5 million people are displaced in Sudan, Chad, and the Central African Republic in refugee and internally displaced persons camps (IDP); and

WHEREAS life in the IDP and refugee camps is decrepit due to a lack of basic life necessities, sporadic attacks from the Janjaweed, and an overall lack of security; and

WHEREAS the World Food Program is severely under funded and is often forced to reduce aid rations; and

WHEREAS violence against women, including acts of sexual assault and rape are commonly used as a tool of war within the camps and in Darfur; and

WHEREAS the severely under equipped African Union (AU) troops have been unable to control the violence, or protect the people of Darfur and international humanitarian workers; and

WHEREAS United Nations Resolution 1706, which calls for a robust UN peacekeeping force to intervene has yet to be implemented.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Canadian Government to maintain or increase financial contributions and resources to humanitarian organizations and NGOs in the region.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to offer military and civilian resources to the proposed UN peacekeeping mission under Resolution 1706 and encourage other nations to follow suit.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to enforce, if possible, a no-fly zone over Darfur to prevent further aerial bombings.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to support for the ICC investigation and to condemn the Government of Sudan and all actors that obstruct and protest the International Criminal Court's (ICC) presence, jurisdiction and investigation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to enforce sanctions, authorized by UN Resolution 1591, which includes an arms embargo, travel ban and asset freezes until the Government of Sudan ceases the attacks on innocent civilians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to exert united, tough diplomacy, working closely with all actors, to find a common ground and to mediate between the Government of Sudan and the rebels to negotiate terms of peace.

Policy put forward by the Etobicoke-Centre Federal Young Liberals, Toronto Region

14) Reduce Transit Fees for PSE

WHEREAS students in the Ontario are facing increased costs to attend post-secondary education (PSE) and some students often decide to live at home with family members or off campus as they cannot afford to live in PSE residences or in the vicinity of their PSE institution; and

WHEREAS public transit costs can be a significant factor in the cost of attending PSE and there is currently no PSE student monthly pass or monthly discount in some jurisdictions of the province where for instance Ryerson University students purchasing a TTC Metropass for eight months pay \$702, with a difference of only 14% between the regular price of a Metropass and the Ryerson Students' Union TTC Volume Incentive Pass; and

WHEREAS the implementation of a universal transit pass or "U-Pass" included in tuition fees of all PSE students at a particular institution can be used to reduce the yearly transportation costs for PSE students, encourage them to reduce their environmental footprint, provide transit agencies with the potential for long-term riders and more predictable fare models, and reduce the stress on universities to accommodate students on residence; and

WHEREAS public transit agencies' financial capacity to provide a U-Pass is the most significant barrier for an affordable U-Pass yearly price and the financial consequences of allowing students to be able to 'opt-out' of a U-Pass if they choose not to use the service; and

WHEREAS reducing transit costs for post-secondary education students is another tool the Ontario Government and the Canadian Government can use to make PSE more affordable, which will directly increase the abilities of low and middle-income students to attend PSE.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals urge the Ontario Government to subsidize a portion of the cost of a U-Pass for any PSE institution that successfully holds a referendum to approve the U-Pass, and any PSE institution where students currently have a U-Pass.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon a successful referendum, the OYL urge Ontario Government would provide an annual and guaranteed financial subsidy to reduce the cost of the U-Pass based on the number of students using the U-Pass compared to the total population of students at the PSE institution.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL urge the Canadian Government to immediately convert where no subsidy exists its "Tax Credit for Public Transit Passes" for PSE students into a financial subsidy for U-Pass users across Canada based on a percentage of the number of students using the U-Pass compared to the total population of students.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the OYL advocates the Ontario Liberal Party and the Liberal Party of Canada to include this policy in their platforms for the next electoral campaigns.

Policy put forward by the Ryerson University Young Liberals and York University Young Liberals, Toronto Region

15) Skilled Labour Training in Secondary School

WHEREAS it has become difficult to fill job posts in the skilled labour sector, especially within the manufacturing heartland of Ontario; and

WHEREAS the economic and academic demands of the 21st Century have led young people to attend College or University rather than pursue a career in manufacturing or the skilled trades; and

WHEREAS secondary school institutions do not encourage the pursuit of skilled trades on the same level as College or University.

WHEREAS training for these careers is often expensive and time consuming without obvious rewards or incentives.

BE IT RESOLVED that the Ontario Young Liberals encourage the teaching of introductory courses in a wide array of the skilled trades.

Be it further resolved that skilled persons, with adequate College-level instruction training in a variety of skilled occupations would be hired to serve as instructors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that these 'classes' serve the same introductory and preparedness role as University, College, and/or Workplace level academic courses currently offered in Grade 11 and 12.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this will create an alternative to University or College education by allowing students with the talent of skilled labour to begin training at an earlier age, thereby establishing themselves as more qualified to complete their skilled labour training afterwards at a reduced financial cost and shorter formal training period.

Policy put forward by the Ottawa-Vanier Young Liberal Association, Eastern Region