

# Who Killed

# Sir William?

A Community-University  
Research Alliance Seeks  
Justice for Injured Workers

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## THE LONG ROAD TO JUSTICE

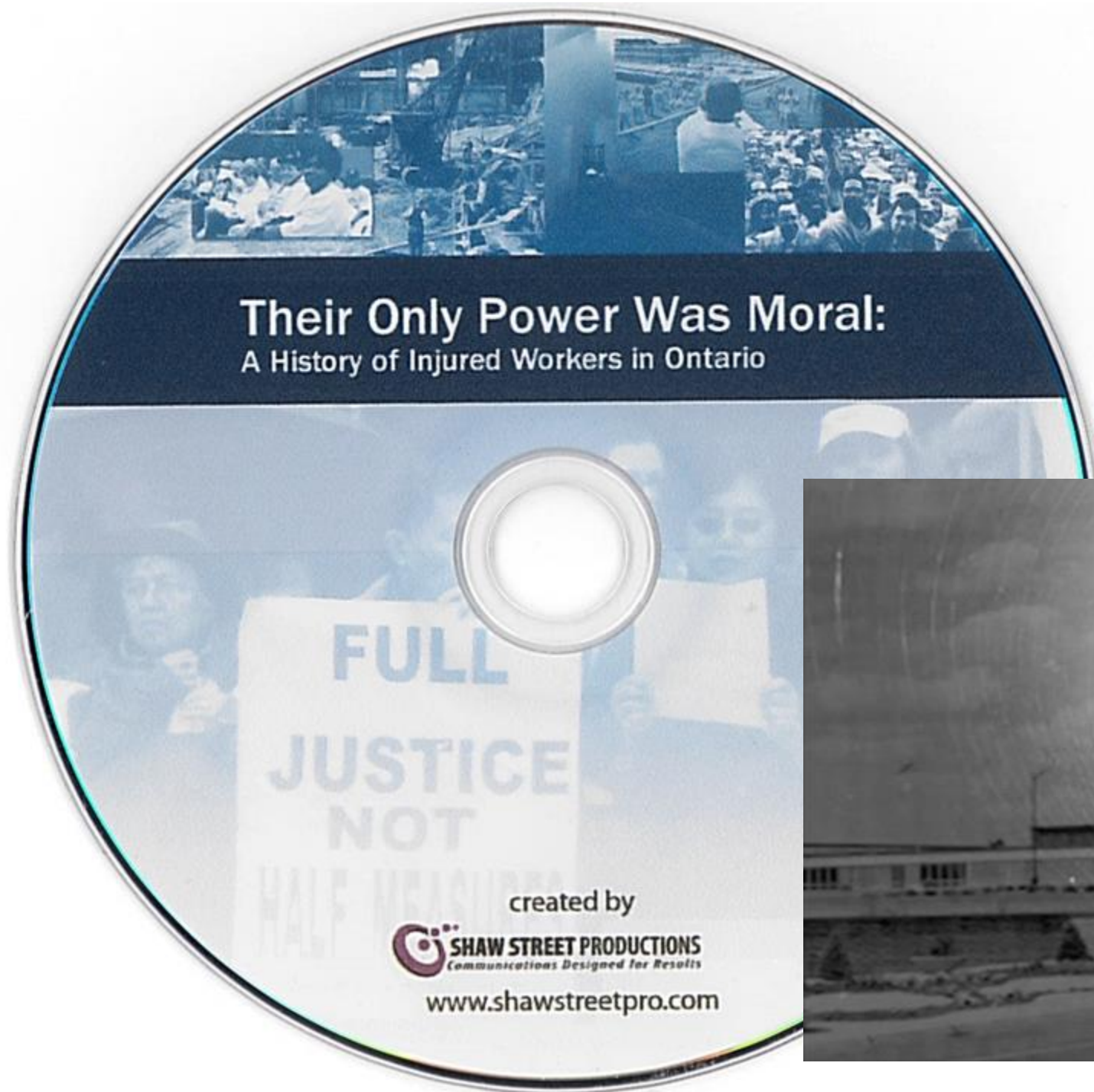
Ontario's Injured Workers  
& Injured Workers' Day

By Kristin Schwartz

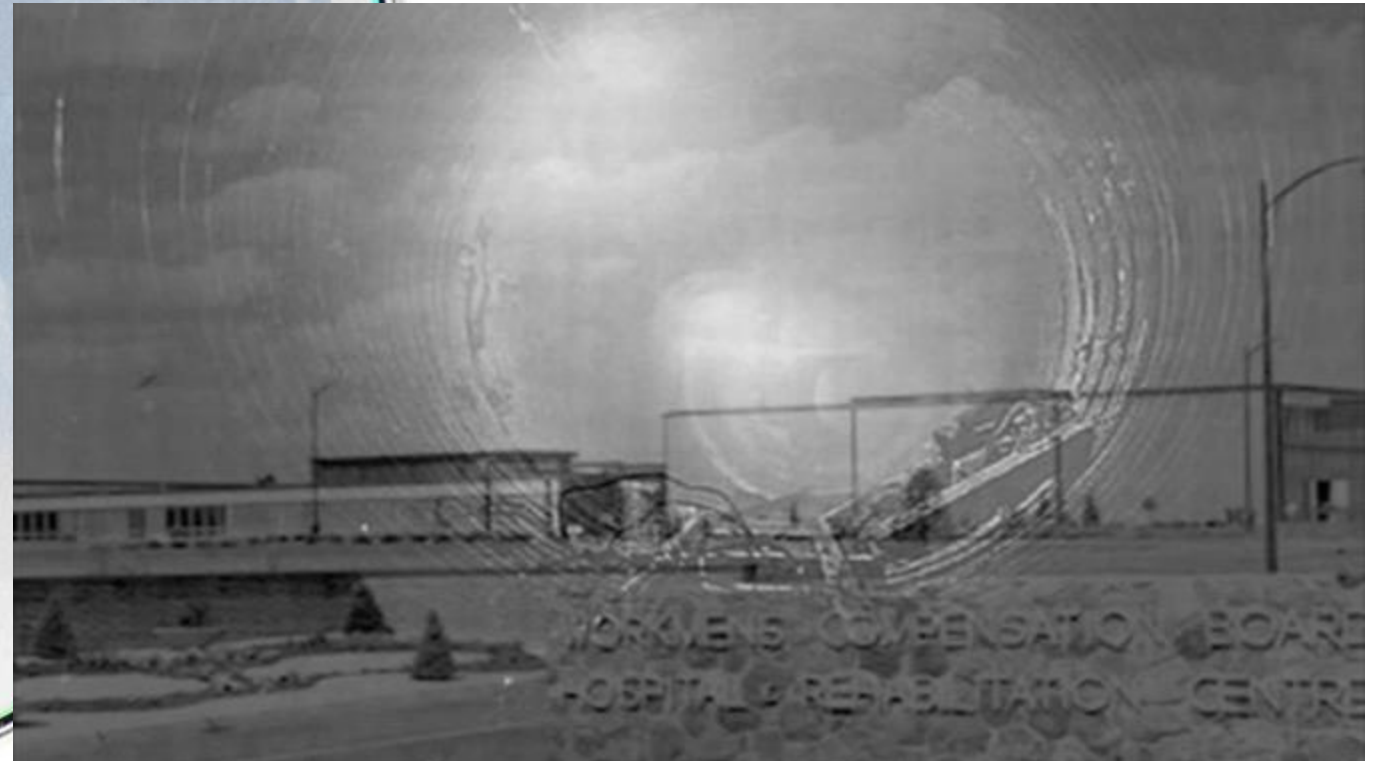


JUNE 1, 1983 WAS A MOMENTOUS DAY for Ontario workers, a high point in years of organizing for fair compensation for those injured on the job. On that day over 3,000 injured workers and supporters turned out for

disabled in the workplace annually, says Mantis. ONIWG is conducting a province-wide survey on poverty and injured workers. Initial findings among permanently disabled injured workers in Thunder Bay suggest that over 70 per cent are living below



## Hogg's Hollow - the birth of the modern-day injured worker movement



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**Huge jam:** Disabled workers jam a Queen's Park hallway today in a protest against planned changes in the Workers' Compensation Act. About 1,200 of them jammed a room with a capacity of

500, forcing a public hearing by a provincial committee outside. The Union of Injured Workers protested the "disgraceful" situation, saying the committee had been warned of a huge turnout.

## 1,000 disabled protest pension law plan

By John Deverell Toronto Star

More than 1,000 disabled workers overwhelmed a government committee at Queen's Park today to protest planned

Barlow told the gathering.

President Phil Biggin of the Union of Injured Workers asked the crowd to go to the front lawn of Queen's Park while Barlow and

callers, some from as far away as California, Arizona, British Columbia and Newfoundland.

The union has been demanding public

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Some of Ontario's injured workers listen to speakers during a protest demonstration at Queen's Park yesterday.

## 3,000 injured workers protest over pensions

By John Devereil Toronto Star

Ontario's injured workers want a cost-of-living raise in their Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) disability pensions by July 1, but Queen's Park says they won't get it that quickly.

Pensions were increased last July 1, a labor ministry spokesman said, and the next amendment will be part of a more complete overhaul of compensation laws.

Yesterday, nearly 3,000 injured workers tried to cram into a room — designed to hold 500 — where a legislative committee was reviewing proposed changes to the compensation law. "We've made history," said chairman Bill Barlow (PC-Cambridge), who solved the problem by holding the first open-air hearing of a government committee on the steps of Queen's Park.

Under threatening skies, the 12 legislators faced a three-hour tirade of criticism from members of the Union of Injured Workers, who were angered by plans to scrap life pensions for disability.

Following the recommendations of labor law professor Paul Weiler, the Ministry of Labor has proposed a dual system: Lump sum awards for the pain and suffering caused by permanent disabilities, and temporary reviewable pensions based on actual wage losses experienced by people disabled by workplace accidents and diseases.

"Injured workers do not trust and have no reason to trust what the government has come up with so far," union president Phil Biggin told his army of walking wounded. They cheered him by waving canes.

"We don't want to keep coming here bugging the government, but

you in government keep forcing us to do it," said Biggin, who has led the union since its formation in 1974.

"Don't take a holiday," he said. "If we don't get results by July 1 we will come into the Legislature and into your constituency offices and make your life hell."

A spokesman for Labor Minister Russell Ramsay said the minister will not commit himself to bring in legislation this fall until he has seen Barlow's report, and there are no plans for interim pension increases.

The committee hearing proceeded in Italian and English as a series of WCB pensioners described how work accidents have ruined their lives financially and emotionally.

□ Lorraine Hruska, 35 and a mother of two, was cut by glass at

Carrington Distillers in 1977 and lost the use of her right hand. She has retrained as a word processor, but has no job.

"Times are bad everywhere, but where does that leave me?" she asked. When injured she was making \$4.83 an hour, and her co-workers now get \$11.01, she said. Her WCB pension is \$124.25 a month.

□ Tony Mauro, a construction carpenter, first injured his back in 1965 while making \$4 an hour and broke it in 1972 while working in an aluminum factory at \$2.40 an hour. The WCB pays him \$412 a month, and he refuses to apply for welfare because "I want work or I want compensation — it is a moral issue."

"We are treated not like workers, but like prisoners who have to be watched," Mauro charged.



Lorraine Hruska: Retrained after an accident on the job, she is still unemployed.

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Legislative  
Assembly  
of Ontario



Assemblée  
législativ  
de l'Ontario

1ST SESSION, 43RD LEGISLATURE, ONTARIO  
1 CHARLES III, 2023

## Bill 118

**An Act to proclaim Injured Workers Day**

**MPP J. West**

**Private Member's Bill**