

Why did she die?

ANCY HORVATH'S family, co-workers, and HEU are looking for answers to explain why the Ridge Meadows caregiver died suddenly April 9.

Horvath, an LPN working as a care aide at the Maple Ridge facility, was in good health. But she died after waking up with a sore throat. The previous day she'd worked in the extended care unit bathing patients.

The tragedy has taken a serious toll on her family.

"I lost my wife, and I don't why," said her husband John Horvath. "I want to know what the hell went wrong. At 34 you just don't up and die."

Horvath's death came soon after the hospital had switched to a quaternary-based tub cleaner, called Swirl. Another HEU Ridge Meadows member had also experienced severe respiratory problems and has been in-and-out of hospital.

"We need answers," said union secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato, "for both the family and for HEU members across the province whose health and safety could also be at risk."

Some help may come from the autopsy, which was nearing completion at press time. Coroner Ed Hourigan said he had ruled out "any measurable chemical tissue involvement" directly linking Horvath's death to the disinfectant. He also said that

a sensitivity to the quaternary-based product could be a possible cause, but is not clinically measurable.

HEU's health and safety experts have provided Hourigan with a number of studies documenting sensitivities to quaternary-based products.

The product manufacturer says the product is safe "when applied according to directions," although it pulled it from use pending the autopsy.

But it's not clear if the hospital was following proper procedures. The tub room ventilation system was notoriously faulty, and masks were not in use.

At Ridge Meadows, Horvath's co-workers "were very scared and upset," said HEU local chairperson Lorraine Lukacs. They've planted a tree at the facility in Horvath's memory.

John Horvath said the family will call for a formal inquest into the death if the autopsy is inconclusive.

Guardian



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THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

MAY/JUNE 1995

A SPECIAL BOND

Judi Patterson's story is about caring, compassion and change.

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HEU members are starting to prepare the ground for a bargaining prescription for better medicare.

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GREY POWER

Seniors and other groups are joining HEU in the pivotal fight to save our health system.

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COMMENT

We won't be taken for granted

by Carmela Allevato

AFTER READING Bill 48 Commissioner Jim Dorsey's preliminary report on the restructuring of bargaining units and union jurisdiction in health care, I am reminded of the words of HEU's theme song, "The Heart of Health Care." Our work they take for granted, we're the ones that are not seen.

His recommendations fail to recognize the role of HEU members in health care reform and the impact of restructuring on us.

Mr. Dorsey recommends all registered nurses and paramedical professionals become part of individual province-wide bargaining units, each with its own collective agreement. Such structures facilitate the integration of the services these care givers provide right across the spectrum of health care and it guarantees them a place in a reformed health care system with the opportunity to move right across the system where the jobs are. It creates no ghettos and no barriers.

But if you're not a registered nurse or a paramedical professional, the scenario is different. We'll get a province-wide bargaining unit across the breadth and length of health care, with one set of negotiations and one collective agreement. But not until 1999.

It's a move that creates chaos for health care reform, insecurity and workplace ghettos for HEU members, marginalization of the Master Agreement and an attempt to weaken our bargaining strength.

Mr. Dorsey proposes that in the interim that there will be one



province-wide bargaining unit covering acute and extended care for 31,000 HEU members. 3,600 HEU long-term care members will be pulled out of the Master Agreement negotiations and lumped into a separate long-term care bargaining unit with other unions.

Home care workers would be isolated in their own bargaining unit. All other health workers in fields like mental health and adult day care would be placed in one province wide bargaining unit per union with members in the field.

Getting access to the same opportunities and protection that's now available to RNs and paramedical professionals by 1999 will be too late. Restructuring and reform won't stand still.

Mr. Dorsey has stated that his report is preliminary, that there is an opportunity to make changes to the recommendations. Throughout his process, he has genuinely sought to foster consensus.

But the time has come for Mr. Dorsey to decide whether he's going to create structures that facilitate health reform or whether he's going to create structures that respond to pressures from non-health reform agendas.

We have already made

suggestions to Mr. Dorsey to make the recommendations more workable and more consistent with health reform objectives. But he must rid his proposals of the traditional prejudices that are rampant in the system: that if you are not a doctor, a nurse or a paramedical professional, you don't matter.

The 54,000 health care workers – those "who are not seen" – who make the system run and who provide the majority of care to British Columbians must be provided the same opportunities and given the same recognition for their role in health care reform as the doctors, the nurses and paramedical professionals.

'HEU members must be provided the same opportunities'

letters

THE GUARDIAN WELCOMES LETTERS TO THE EDITOR. PLEASE BE BRIEF. WRITE TO 2006 WEST 10TH AVE., VANCOUVER V6J 4P5.

Member appreciates land claims article

As a member of the Aboriginal Rights Coalition (Project North) I was happy and proud of my union's (HEU) stance on B.C. First Nations Land Claims [Guardian March/April].

First I must thank the Elder Joseph Gosnell Sr. and all Elders who are willing to teach us. Many hours away from their homes are spent seeking truth and justice. I thank all the negotiators for their time and energy – we need you as role models.

The Nisga'a have fought long and hard for justice. They are a small step away from a complete agreement while many other claims are just coming to the table. We must continue to support the land claims process. We cannot allow the governments to stall

more and spread hate and lies.

Thank you for publishing this article so people can educate themselves to the issue. I encourage the Guardian to print more social justice issues to we can "debunk the myths."

BARRY UNDERDOWN,
Sidney, B.C.

Swirl maker extends sympathies, offers answers

The 70 dedicated and professional staff members at Arjo share the concern and sincere regret of the management and staff at the Ridge Meadows Hospital following the sudden and tragic death of Nancy Horvath April 9. We extend our sympathies to the family.

It is important that you be aware of our actions following the tragedy, and that you understand certain facts about Swirl Tub Cleanser.

- Swirl is not a new product, and it's been used



Talk to us!

1-800-909-4994

We're making changes here at the Guardian to make it easier for you to get your voice in the paper.

In addition to the traditional letter to the editor you can now phone in your comments on Guardian articles or issues that affect you on the job or in the union. Just phone 1-800-909-4994.

Keep your comments concise, and leave your name and contact number for verification.

Our-renamed Voice/Mail section will debut in the next issue of the Guardian.

by institutions for 13 years without any evidence that user health has been affected. It's an effective disinfectant that makes an important contribution to quality health care and infection control for the safety of patients and staff.

- There is no scientific or medical link established between the product and this incident. We eagerly await the results of the coroner's investigations.
- Even so, out of respect for your feelings, Arjo has voluntarily withdrawn Swirl from the market, pending the outcome of the medical investigation. In the meantime, we're replacing it with other Arjo products, at no cost to the users.
- All Swirl products are produced according to strict specifications. They are safe and effective for use when applied according to directions.
- Products like Swirl are known as quaternary-ammonium disinfectants. They are used in institutions millions of times every day.

If you want more information about Swirl or any of our products,

you are invited to call toll-free 1-800-665-4831. I will respond immediately.

ROSS SCAVUZZO,
President, Arjo Canada Inc.,
Winnipeg, Manitoba

Thanks for the support

On behalf of the executive board and membership of Local 592, Communication Energy and Paperworkers Union in Port Alberni, I would like to thank HEU for your generous donation to aid us in our four month fight with MacMillan Bloedel over their union busting tactics.

While we did not achieve all that we had hoped for, it was due to the support shown by the labour movement such as yourselves that we were able to show the employers that working people are united against such heavy handed tactics and will not tolerate attacks against union principles that they have fought long to attain.

Again, thank you so much for your support and I can assure you

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Guardian

"In humble dedication to all those who toil to live."

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What we're up to

Locals join B.C. union label group

A number of HEU locals have recently joined the B.C. Union Label Trades Council, a group which promotes buying Canadian produced, union made products.

Burnaby local joined the group in March, and was quickly followed by the Royal Arch and Western Human Resources locals. Burnaby local activist Don Allen was elected vice-president of the group.

The Union Label Trades Council also sponsors a "Say No to Drugs" drag racing program as a way to encourage high school students to stay in school and to promote trade unionism at the same time.

New members get video view of HEU

HEU's communications department has produced a 10-minute orientation video about the work of the union for new members.

Entitled "Working for Us," the video introduces new union members to HEU and is designed to be shown during new employee orientation sessions.

If your local doesn't have a copy, you can get one by contacting your servicing representative.



Stickering it to the boss

Two HEU locals have used creative sticker campaigns to press for action on key local issues.

At St. Paul's, the local executive fought an employer bid to reduce the number of local leaders who were allowed to book off on paid time to deal with grievances, arbitrations and labour management meetings.

The "Keep it 6" sticker campaign was successful in raising membership awareness of the



issue which will be resolved in arbitration, said Kelly Knox, local vice-chairperson.

At Vancouver Hospital, local leaders at the Oak St. site wanted to deal with a private coffee bar in the hospital's main foyer, and its impact on HEU food service workers.

They developed a boycott campaign using "Cafe Ami or Me" stickers to draw attention to the problem and gain sup-

port from members. So far it's been a success.

"We know their business has decreased and we're going to keep plugging away at it. It's starting to take effect," said Susan Cox, a food service worker and local executive member.

"The stickers are eye catching. It's made people really aware of contracting out issues."

Remembering Ginger Goodwin: K-Bro local gets a new name

HEU's K-Bro local from the K-Bro laundry facility in Cumberland on Vancouver Island has a new name.

The local requested a change of name to the Goodwin local in memory of B.C. trade union leader Ginger Goodwin, which was approved in May by the Provincial Executive.

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Chilliwack patient focused care plan to be reviewed

Members of the three health unions at Chilliwack General Hospital okayed an agreement with CGH administrators on a process for evaluating patient focused care, which was implemented at the facility in late 1993.

It allows for a broad review of PFC, opportunities

for public input, paid time off for the union reps who are part of the process, and will be completed within a year.

"I think it was a good agreement," says HEU Chilliwack local leader Connie Larabie. "It's a positive model for other PFC facilities to follow."

The evaluation process will be guided by a steering committee made up of six union activists, six from the employer's ranks, and six from the community.

"Caregivers have a opportunities for real input," says Larabie, who is also one of the two HEU reps on the steering committee. An outside evaluation team

will carry out the formal review process and prepare interim and final reports.

A three person team of hospital president Etta Richmond, one union rep and one community rep will report to the CGH board.

The union reps will also have the ability to report to members on the progress of the evaluation.

Larabie credits tri-union solidarity for winning the deal.

"We achieved this because the three unions worked together at a local level. It wouldn't have happened if we weren't all pulling in the same direction."

NDP agrees to wage control review

But unions are still waiting for results

Persistent and determined leafletting of NDP convention delegates by striking HEU members provided the backdrop for a government review of its wage control policy, says HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato.

But the intensive discussions between affected unions and key government leaders have not yet produced the promised results.

HEU, BCNU and HSA joined forces March 30 in Vancouver to urge NDP convention support for resolutions condemning the wage control scheme.

Among the HEU members were striking workers from Quesnel Alcohol and Drug and employees at the Victoria-area Group of Five group homes, all of them victims of NDP "wage guidelines" which effectively denied them increases anywhere close to those already negotiated elsewhere in health care.

Also leafletting were members of the BCGEU who had been on strike for months to win a new contract for homemakers.

But the strongly-worded motion was tabled by convention delegates after party activists in the labour movement emerged from intensive discussions with finance minister Elizabeth Cull.

Cull agreed to ask Judi Korbin, her 1993 report on the public service led to the creation of the Public Sector Employers Council which set up the wage "guidelines," to recommend ways to resolve the outstanding disputes.

But by late May, only the homemakers had achieved a new agreement.

JUSTICE SEEKERS Deb Smith, left, and Cindy Carey review NDP convention strategy with president Fred Muzin.

Employers and HEU locals for the Group of Five and the Quesnel Alcohol and Drug Abuse Association resumed bargaining at the beginning of June.

The Group of Five bargaining will continue with a binding process if no deal is reached in two days of talks in June.

For the Quesnel Alcohol and Drug local, which has been on the picket line for four months, the return to the bargaining table will be the first talks since March.

"They tried to outwait us, but we're still strong," local chair John Simpson said from the picket line. Simpson said the local has received good support from other HEU locals in the area, and from the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, among others.



GEORGE MEGGS PHOTO

Allevato warned that HEU will not wait indefinitely for a resolution. "Justice delayed is justice denied," Allevato said. "We agreed to work with the government to find solutions, but Victoria's commitment appears to have been hollow."

• For more bargaining news, see page 12

The waiting for fairness list

Here are the HEU locals who are also battling wage controls in first contract fights:

Avonlea Care Centre, Kelowna
Belair Resthome, Surrey
Bonnymuir Lodge, Surrey
Brock House, Victoria
Canadian Mental Health Assoc., Prince George
Canadian Mental Health Assoc., Salmon Arm
Carlsbad Private Hospital, Vancouver
Cranbrook Community Living
Garden Manor, Kamloops
German Canadian Home, Vancouver

Headstart, Westbank
Independent Living Society, Victoria
Lillooet Home Support
Notok Ranch, Kamloops
Para-Med Health Services, Prince George
Pender House, Vancouver
Quesnel & District Community Aid Society
Revelstoke Homemakers
Sunshine Coast Home Support Society
Swedish Canadian Home, Burnaby
Trail Mental Health Consumer Support Society
Wilson Place, Port Coquitlam

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

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A miner, Goodwin was a popular and skilled socialist organizer in B.C.'s budding labour movement at the turn of the century. He was also a pacifist who escaped to the hills behind Cumberland to avoid conscription in the First World War.

Considered a subversive by government, Goodwin was targeted by an extensive RCMP manhunt. He was assassinated by an RCMP agent on July 27, 1918.

Trade unionists from across B.C. journey to Cumberland every year to participate in a Miners Memorial Day ceremony to remember Goodwin. This year's festivities are set for the weekend of June 24.



The executive of B.C. Women's Hospital local met recently with their new president Lynda Cranston. They talked about the Health Accord, restructuring of the Oak St. site and building trust in the workplace. Pictured above are local leaders, front row, Doreen Fraser, Ellen Chan and John McKenzie, and Cranston.

Calling all bargaining demands

HEU's 13th provincial wage policy conference is set for Oct. 16 and 17 in Richmond, where more than 400 union activists

will debate and approve bargaining demands to prepare for contract negotiations covering more than 30,000 members in 1996.

Aug. 17 is the deadline for submitting proposed bargaining demands to Provincial Office. All demands must have been adopted by majority vote at a local membership meeting prior to the Aug. 17 deadline.

Muzin to participate in prestigious Governor General's conference

HEU president Fred Muzin and 27 other B.C. residents are participating in this year's Governor General's Canadian Study conference.

This year's theme is redefining the relationship between workers and employers for a better Canada. The conference kicks off with Muzin and other labour, community and busi-

ness leaders from across the country meeting in Saskatoon May 25, and concludes in Quebec City June 12.

Smithers hospital to go under review microscope

When Bulkley Valley Hospital in Smithers threatened to implement \$450 a day user fees for extended care patients, it was a clear sign of a hospital in trouble. But now, thanks to the local campaign efforts of HEU, the health ministry will conduct an outside review of the facility to analyze problems and find solutions.

HEU local activist Donna Schrader said the three health unions will approach the review cautiously. They'll make a joint presentation to the review team that will press for restoration of staff and services just recently cut, and for community services

to be established.

"We cannot afford any displacements," said Schrader of the hospital's staffing situation.

Relations with the hospital board have soured somewhat though, because the board won't push to restore services, Schrader said.

Vanderhoof issues strike support donation challenge

The first contract fight for striking HEU members at Quesnel Drug and Alcohol is an important issue for the union's 35 members who work at St. John Hospital in Vanderhoof.

That's why the local donated \$500 to support the members involved in the Quesnel strike.

The local issued a challenge to others from the North to match or beat that \$500 figure. At press time, that challenge has been taken up by the 20-

by Miriam Edelson

My four-and-a-half-year-old son Jake is beautiful. He coos like a baby, communicates with his eyes and breaks into a smile when light flashes on his face.

But Jake is going to die young, because the brain disorder he was born with is a cruel, incurable and unpreventable condition.

BALANCING



IT ALL

Jake's heart and lungs operate like a mucus factory. Ventolin masks, a bronchodilator, help keep his breathing passages clear. When his medications get out of whack, Jake's body jackknives from seizures. A portable electric pump shoots infant formula directly into his tummy.

Jake cannot hold up his head, sit, stand or walk, but he expresses pleasure and pain quite clearly. To ease his troubled breathing, the caregivers at his group home tap his chest and change his seating position every half-hour.

Jake comes home occasionally. Between visits, we drive two hours each way from Toronto to Belleville on weekends to share a cuddle and a song.

This is our family routine. It can be a tough juggle and, when Jake's in crisis, it's a roller coaster.

But we're fortunate to have found excellent, publicly-funded care, which means he is no burden. In fact, his caregivers' skill and devotion allow me to love him without reserve or regret.

'Jake has the right not to suffer needlessly'

Sadly, not every family is lucky enough to find the service their severely disabled children require. The search alone devours energy.

Endless hospital jaunts and jargon-filled conversations can be wearing and intimidating — even when English is your first language. And in these harsh economic times, spending cutbacks have slashed vital services to the bone.

MY SON JAKE



This week I learned that some Ontario health ministry official had decided Jake didn't need Ventolin any longer — that it "wasn't warranted by his diagnosis." Full stop.

Did that august decision-maker ever hold Jake when he is gasping for breath, his little body racked with coughs? Does fighting the deficit mean Ventolin is now a luxury?

According to the legal agreement we have with Jake's doctors and the powers that be, Ventolin is not a luxury. We have fought for Jake not to endure what doctors call "extraordinary measures" and to let nature take its course.

But Ventolin is the key in the arsenal of therapies we use to keep him comfortable. Jake has the right not to suffer needlessly, and so do all patients and their families trying to chart a sane course through such troubled waters.

Three things are at stake in how we deal with these vulnerable children and their families: hope, choice and values.

All families that have been dealt a life crisis need access to practical and financial supports to care for these children. And this is about providing choices, because there is no single solution.

Some families require service in their homes and others need residential treatment. Many need a combination of the two.

Finally, society must genuinely value the caregivers who perform such a labour of love with our kids. High-tech care means specialized training, as well as a big heart. Caregivers deserve decent pay and benefits.

The death of Tracy Latimer sharpened this country's focus on how we care for children with severe disabilities, and on how some cases fall through the cracks.

So Ralph Klein, Paul Martin and Bob Rae, be forewarned: before you judge Robert Latimer or any of us, come spend a day. Soothe a child who is having a seizure and can't get a breath.

Change a 10-year-old's diaper. Help bathe a 16-year-old who has no muscle tone. Play with a little girl whose brother is dying. And do it soon, before you slash the supports that are so vital to the survival of our kids and our families.

• Miriam Edelson is a trade unionist and an advocate for children with disabilities and their families. She works for the Ontario Public Service Employees Union. BALANCING IT ALL is a regular Guardian column that focuses on the challenges that women activists face.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

member Fort St. James local which recently donated \$501 to the Quesnel strike support fund.

"We made the donation to let them know we're thinking of them and to show strong support from other union members," said Vanderhoof secretary-treasurer Joanne Penner.

We're part of health care tour of post-apartheid South Africa

HEU Provincial Executive member Linda Hargreaves has what she calls the opportunity of a lifetime to view the changes taking place in post-apartheid South Africa.

Hargreaves is part of a tour organized by CUPE and our sister South African union, the 96,000-member National Education, Health and Allied Workers Union, and coordinated by CUSO, a Canadian development organization.

After a stop in Johannesburg for an orientation starting May 21, Hargreaves and the Canadian union delegation will meet with health workers and visit facilities in two provinces. They'll also participate in NEHAWU's national policy conference before returning home June 16.

The regional vice-president for Vancouver Island on the Provincial Executive, Hargreaves has been involved in international solidarity work for a number of years.

Women attend special Summer institute

About 35 HEU women activists will take part in a special summer institute for union women at Simon Fraser University in early June.

Sponsored by the B.C. Federation of Labour and the Canadian Labour Congress, the institute is a unique education

program that offers a variety of programs and courses. This year's institute theme is "solidarity knows no boundaries."

Gains continue in community service organizing

Four new community services locals and workers at three long-term care facilities have joined HEU since the last issue of the *Guardian*.

Welcome to care providers at the Amata Transition House in Quesnel, who joined HEU April 5, making it the union's first transition house local. Staff at the CHIWD Transition House in Williams Lake signed up May 16.

There are two new locals in the mental health field. Employees of the Trail Mental Health Consumer Support Society, certified in late March. Kamloops branch workers with the Canadian Mental Health

Association joined in early May.

Three new long-term care locals have also come into the fold. They are Centennial Park Lodge in Surrey, a government-funded profit facility, Halliday House in Parksville, another for-profit facility, and Eagle Ridge, a Qualicum long-term care facility.

Victoria Community Living beats contracting out threat

HEU members at the Victoria Association of Community Living have scored a small but important victory for quality care. Earlier in the year, their employer threatened to contract out part of their extensive day program because the boss claimed it couldn't afford to start a new small-scale residential program.

HEU delivered a strong, no contracting out message to the

employer. As a result of further discussions, the contracting out threat was dropped and VACL received full government funding for the residential program. The end result? Two jobs saved and three new ones created.

"It's definitely a small victory," said Sylvia Hill, chairperson for the 100-member local.

Fraser Valley office to open around July 1

The long-awaited new office to provide improved services for union members in the Fraser Valley region is set to open July 1.

"It's a great building," says financial secretary Mary Laplante. "Two floors, good location and lots of parking!"

It's located at 2702 Ware St. in Abbotsford, postal code V2S 5E6. The telephone number is 852-6571, the fax number is 852-6591.

Feds' health cuts fought

by Chris Gainor

HEU has joined with community groups, seniors and other unions in a new coalition which has called on Victoria to make the basic principles of medicare the law in B.C.

Members of the B.C. Coalition for Health Care Reform met NDP health minister Paul Ramsey to express their concerns about federal cutbacks to health care and social funding.

Liberal finance minister Paul Martin's February budget made big cuts to health and social transfers to the provinces that will cost B.C. \$471 million next year.

These cuts "seriously threaten the fundamental principles of our medicare system," the coalition said in a position statement.

The coalition wants the provincial government to bring in legislation which enforces the five principles of the Canada Health Act: universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility, portability, and public administration.

"Such legislation must discourage the development or expansion of corporate, for profit services in the public health care sector."

Without a law passed this year, the coalition is concerned that the new community councils and regional boards will privatize health services.



GREY POWER Seniors fought hard to win medicare decades ago. That's why they've joined with HEU in a coalition bid to save our health care system.

In April HEU joined with seniors groups in raising their concerns about medicare at a meeting of provincial health ministers held in Vancouver.

Several hundred protesters marched to the hotel where the meeting took place, and were addressed by Ramsey and Ontario health minister Ruth Grier,

who praised the demonstrators and criticized the federal cuts.

"We remember the bad old days when there was no universal health care as we know it today," said Jack Phillips of the Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations. "We do not want to go back to those days."

Agreement reached to end "mat leave" discrimination

HEU and health employers have reached an agreement that means HEU members who were on maternity leave between April 3, 1993 and May 4, 1995 can apply for retroactive sick leave benefits for the period they were away from work and sick or disabled during their maternity leave.

The agreement came in a consent order from the B.C. Human Rights Council, where HEU had filed a discrimination complaint on maternity leave issues in 1992.

To qualify, members must have been a regular employee on or after April 3, 1993 and still employed May 4 of this

year. As well, the member must have had a sick leave accumulation to draw from on the date of leave, and as of May 4, 1995.

The employee must establish that they could not attend work due to pregnancy, maternity or medical complications.

To receive these retroactive benefits all eligible members must apply for them by July 15, 1995.

For further information, contact your shop steward.

HEU presses for changes in Bill 48 overhaul

HEU's Provincial Executive has advised Bill 48 commissioner Jim Dorsey the union can support his proposed overhaul of union representation in the health sector if two key flaws are rectified.

Dorsey has been appointed by the provincial government to recommend a complete overhaul of health sector bargaining to bring it in line with health reform. He released his interim report May 24. He must submit a final report by June 30.

The Provincial Executive met at length with Dorsey in a special meeting in Victoria May 30.

Dorsey has proposed that all health care workers be grouped into three main bargaining councils: one for paramedical professionals, one for registered nurses and one for support and general workers. But the support and general workers' council would not be formed until 1999, a move which undermines HEU's Master Agreement.

Dorsey's interim report could be supported, the Provincial Executive said, if two key changes are made:

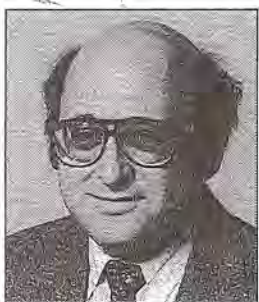
- the three-year delay in integrating 54,000 health care workers into a single support/general bargaining council is eliminated; and
- HEU is included in the council of unions proposed for paramedical professional workers.

Discussions with Dorsey and other unions continue.

The union's acute care members would be isolated from long-term care members in separate two bargaining units until 1999 under Dorsey's scheme, which undermines HEU's Master Agreement.

The union views this as discriminatory because HEU would not achieve a single, province-wide unit for all members until 1999, but nurses and paramedical professionals achieve that unity and security in 1996.

PRESIDENT'S DESK



Conference gives insight of how other workers are faring

by Fred Muzin

BY THE TIME you read this, I will have returned from the Governor General's Canadian Study Conference. The event is held once every four years and is designed to foster greater understanding, knowledge, and communication between Canadians. The theme for 1995 was, "The Employee and Employer: Redefining the Working Relationship for a Better Canada."

The 225 participants who were selected received an orientation in Saskatoon. We were then divided into 15 groups and assigned a geographical region outside our own province. My tour group visited Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick. Over 11 gruelling and long days, we met with unions, management, workers, business, community groups and government officials. We toured work sites from pulp mills, food processing plants and power generating facilities to community colleges, industrial mega projects and aboriginal communities.

One thing is clear: under the guise of re-engineering, restructuring and budget deficit reduction, public sector workers in Atlantic Canada are under attack.

In Prince Edward Island, wages have been rolled back 7.5 per cent (half of this amount in the lower categories). In New Brunswick, collective agreements have been reopened and the government has, by legislation, inserted a year with zero per cent wage increases. Many workers in the private sector are losing jobs as a result of global competition. Many new jobs that are being created are concentrated in the service sector and pay little more than the minimum wage with few benefits.

British Columbia has some distinctive advantages over the maritime provinces. Our economy is relatively strong. Our unemployment rate, although still unacceptably high, is significantly lower. The provincial budget is in a surplus position, and 80,000 people are entering British Columbia each year which stimulates the demand for our services.

'One thing is clear: public sector workers in Atlantic Canada are under attack'

Now is the time for HEU members to concentrate on educating the public about the challenges our health care system faces. People have insufficient understanding about the work that we perform.

Our success in negotiations next year will be linked to our ability to impress on the public that there are positive ways to reform health care – ways that will ensure that quality services remain available. Our work, which is integral for effective health care delivery, must be perceived that way by the public.

Daily, our lives involve contact with many people: at work; in community organizations such as churches, sports groups and multicultural societies; and with our families.

A wave of cutbacks in public services is building across Canada. This will grow as federal transfer payments are reduced in 1996 and beyond. People have clearly indicated that further increases in personal taxation are unacceptable.

While technology can assist in creating a more efficient system, without personal contact and caring, people merely become commodities. We have the opportunity to ride the wave. Our responsibility is to promote a better way.



CARE WITH COMPASSION Judi Patterson plays a big role in the life of Trevor, a Sunny Hill inpatient. His parents want it that way.

A special bond

On a normal May workday Judi Patterson got called to clean a spill in a Sunny Hill Health Centre meeting room. When she opened the door, a party spilled out to celebrate her 30th anniversary on the job.

Patterson's HEU peers wanted to recognize her commitment to quality, compassionate care at the Vancouver facility for children with serious mental and physical disabilities. It was a surprise party that truly surprised!

"I really didn't expect it," she says.

Patterson's 30-year story is about the caring and commitment that HEU members put into their work. It's also about change: different roles for health facilities that sometimes leave dedicated caregivers out in the lurch.

Her career at Sunny Hill began in 1965. Her family moved from New Brunswick to an East Vancouver house not far from the hospital, then a centre for kids with TB. So Patterson applied for work, and three days later she was a full time nurses aide.

Since then Sunny Hill's role has changed four times. While it still has inpatients, it now emphasizes outreach

programs to help kids live in their communities across B.C.

"I find it a challenge to work with these kids," she says. "They're all so special, and have their own unique personalities."

While all are important, she develops special bonds with some. Like the young woman who's been in and out of Sunny Hill for 17 years, or a boy whose parents want her to be involved in their son's life.

Patterson supports the changes that her facility has gone through that pre-date Victoria's New Directions plan. But she's been passed by. Last year, Sunny Hill decided to rely solely

on LPNs and RNs. All nurses aides were displaced. Thompson could no longer deliver the hands on care she loved. She bumped into a housekeeping position.

The hurt she felt at the time has passed. Patterson says she enjoys working with the housekeeping staff, and gets out on the wards every day to talk to her kids. But she still misses them.

She knows in hindsight she should have retrained earlier in her career. "I really regret not upgrading my skills 15 years ago."

ON THE



JOB

NOTEBOOK

We all share in this award

by Stephen Howard

The *Guardian* chalked up another prestigious award at a recent conference of Canadian labour journalists. For the second time in the last three years HEU's flagship publication has won the top honours as best overall provincial labour publication in Canada, a category that includes provincial labour federations and other big unions like BCGEU and the Ontario Public Service Employees' Union.

That's on top of the other Canadian Association of Labour Media awards that the *Guardian* has earned in the past for excellence in news coverage and layout and design.

This year, the *Guardian* submissions of two HEU members were also in the race in other CALM award categories.

Golden local member Lorna Joy's witty editorial cartoons, which were part of most 1994 *Guardian* issues, came up against some tough competition, as did Glengarry local member Vivien Smith's commentary about her life as a lesbian union activist. They both



'It's your stories that put us a cut above other labour publications'

put in a respectable showing.

While *Guardian* staff were there to accept the best overall award, it's a recognition that we all share in earning.

The Provincial Executive deserves credit because it's made a strong commitment to member communications, and provided the *Guardian* with the resources needed to meet that commitment.

The members of the *Guardian* Editorial Committee also gets kudos for taking the pulse of the membership for story ideas, and for careful stewarding to cut down on our errors and omissions.

There are others involved in putting the *Guardian* together whose names don't appear frequently.

Carol Bjarnason is the HEU staffer who desktops every issue to top-notch standards. Communications department secretary Gail Paquette is our eagle-eyed proof reader, and designer Kris Klaasen always gives us a snappy, appealing look.

But most of all it's HEU members who merit this recognition of excellence.

What other labour journalists find most striking about our publication is how the *Guardian* places so much emphasis on the voices and concerns of rank-and-file members.

It's your stories – the struggles, victories, and losses of working life that are the backbone of every issue – that put us a cut above other labour publications. And we've got the awards to prove it.

Labour

NOTEWORTHY NEWS ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING WORKING PEOPLE HERE AND ABROAD

Safety net being ripped to shreds: CUPE

by Linda Drouin
The Canadian Press

OTTAWA — Children snipped holes out of a net held between two poles as a hospital worker, worried mother and disabled man told a government committee Canada's social safety net is coming apart.

The bit of theatre Wednesday, May 10, was part of a plea by the Canadian Union of Public Employees to stop budget measures that will cut funding for health, education and welfare.

Judy Darcy, head of CUPE, called the cuts "changes by stealth" because they were slipped into a government-budget with no public discussion.

'I was born poor and I'm still poor. I owe \$30,000 for my education'

"This is not about tinkering," she told the finance committee members. "This is a fundamental restructuring and the government does not have a mandate to do this."

The budget measures cut funding to the provinces for social programs while giving them more power to spend the money where they please.

The result will be a two-tiered health system such as Alberta Premier Ralph Klein proposes and forced work for people on welfare which is already in place in New Brunswick, Darcy said.

Scott McLaughlin, who works in the supply department of an Ottawa hospital, said past funding cuts have already had an impact and it can only get worse.

"People used to compliment us on how clean the hospital was. Now they comment how their feet stick to the floor and the washrooms are dirty."



NO MANDATE CUPE president Judy Darcy, centre, and other rank and file union members appear before a parliamentary committee on the Liberal's proposed cuts to health, education and social service funding.

"My wife was just in hospital for our third child and she was discharged in 48 hours," McLaughlin said. "And there's pressure to bring it to 24 hours."

Madeleine Stewart-Dimj, a graduate student in history at Carleton University, said further cuts to post-secondary education will make it impossible for the poor to stay in school.

"I was born poor and I'm still poor," she said. "I owe \$30,000 for my education. I had to decide whether to incur the equivalent of a mortgage or stay in low-paying jobs the rest of my life."

She told the committee the cost will likely stop her from pursuing a PhD "because I can't bear more debt."

Karen Perras told committee members she's worried about her young daughter who will soon have to be placed in day care so she can return to work.

"I need to go back to work but it's agonizing for me," she said.

Good day care costs \$1300 a month and she and her husband would not be eligible for a subsidy, she told the committee.

Steve Sanderson spoke for Sean Murphy, who has multiple disabilities and is now confined to his residential home 24 hours a day because there is no room in day programs for him.

"The time is coming when people like Sean are going to end up again in church basements as they did before our social system was in place," Sanderson said.

Darcy asked the committee to recommend to the government that it hold cross-country hearings before implementing the budget changes.



SOCIAL ATTACK New York health workers are battling their right-wing governor's plans to cut health funding and reduce taxes for the rich.

New York health unions combat budget cuts, big job losses

by Ralph Palladino/Labour Notes

New York's health care unions are overcoming years of mistrust to lead a major struggle against their newly elected Republican governor's plan to cut over \$4 billion from Medicaid while also cutting taxes for the wealthy and gutting other social services.

"We are here fighting in the spirit of those who fought for social security, unemployment insurance, and civil rights," Local 1199 president Dennis Rivera told a rally of 30,000 New Yorkers March 1. "We are here to fight for our patients, for people who cannot fight for themselves. We are here to fight for our jobs."

Rivera's union, which represents mostly private hospital, nursing home, and home care workers, has joined other unions in the Coalition to Save New York's Health Care. The coalition includes nearly all health care unions in

New York, other labour groups, and community organizations representing senior citizens, disabled, AIDS activists, students, religious groups, and others.

The fightback fever has begun to spread beyond health care. The Health Care Coalition has endorsed demonstrations by students and faculty who have started fighting against higher tuition and classroom cuts at state and city colleges. They also have begun working with other coalitions like one just formed to fight transit cuts; they are distributing anti-cutback literature at subway stations, bus terminals, hospitals and welfare centers.

Two million copies of the new *Weekly News*, initiated by Local 1199 and the coalition, are being distributed all over the city to educate the public about cutbacks. The newspaper has begun to counter a "news blackout" of the March 1 rally.

the bargaining

prescription

HEU members across the province are getting ready to prepare a bargaining package to help solve key health reform problems and safeguard medicare

by Geoff Meggs

WITH ALMOST all of the union's contracts expiring on March 31, 1996, preparation for the coming round of bargaining is in high gear. In workshops, conferences and local meetings across B.C., HEU members are laying the groundwork for a new collective agreement that protects health services and the people who provide them.

And union members are concluding that their aspirations can be achieved if employers are willing to look for solutions that protect medicare, enhance health reform and ensure that change is not carried out on the backs of the workers.

"We face a challenging timeline," HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevalo told the first of a series of province-wide bargaining conferences. "But we've overcome equally difficult problems in the past."

Last year's HEU convention established four priority areas for the 1996 bargaining round: employment security, action on the workload crisis, more action on pay equity and the achievement of a single contract for all HEU members.

The unprecedented round of bargaining preparation conferences gives local delegates a chance to hear the latest research information on health care funding, how B.C. compares to other provinces and possible strategies to achieve the union's goals.

Each bargaining priority is the subject of special workshops. During the summer, locals will adopt proposed bargaining demands for October, which will finalize the bargaining package and elect a new bargaining committee.

HEU's gains: good progress, more to be done on many fronts

HEU has really been involved in two rounds of bargaining since the last Wage Policy Conference in 1990. A new master agreement was concluded in the wake of the 1992 strike and amended and improved by employment security negotiations in 1993. The resulting wage increases were in line with what other unionized workers received, Allevalo said, and were behind the rate of private sector increases in 1992 and 1993.

Pay equity improvements closed part of the gap remaining between HEU members and workers in predominantly male industries where the work is comparable.

And the Employment Security Agreement — which included a shorter workweek as a key element — allowed the hospital sector to downsize by the equivalent of more than 1,400 jobs without layoffs.

Still Canada's leanest system, Canada's most productive workers

Thanks to the efforts of health workers, Allevalo notes, B.C. continues to have the leanest health care system in Canada, both in the acute and community-based sectors. British Columbians receive quality care at a lower cost than any other province.

"Employers always talk about our high pay," Allevalo said, "but they don't tell you about our productivity."

'We can negotiate a contract to meet the public's need for improved medicare'

Pay equity: we're closing the gap

DOLLARS PER HOUR	MAR 31/91	MAR 31/96	KELLEHER AWARD	PATIENT CARE TECH (X-Ray Asst. II)	DIETARY (Food Service Supervisor III)
CLERICAL (Switchboard Operator)	\$3.44 Still Owed 19.75	\$5.04 Still Owed 22.89	\$2.44 Still Owed 19.75		
	16.31	17.85	17.31		
	12.69	14.12	13.65		
				26.38	19.96
					16.01

SOURCE: CUPE

Administrators are added, caregivers are cut

Changes in union and non-union acute care full-time equivalent Dec. 31, 1992 - July 14, 1994



SOURCE: HEALTHCARE LABOUR ADJUSTMENT AGENCY

The workload crisis: high cost of injury

YEAR	*DAYS LOST	*WCBE	*LTD
1993	280,930	\$31.8 million	\$67.4 million
1994	310,246	\$33.2 million	\$84.1 million

* Worker's Compensation Board claim costs for B.C. hospitals and related facilities, 1993 and 1994

* Long-term disability costs: health care benefit trust participants' contributions, year end Sept. 30, 1993 and 1994

* Highest number of days lost of any industry class. Accounted for 8.6 per cent in 1993, and nine per cent in 1994, of all days lost to injury in B.C.



The comparable question

ON APRIL 1, 1996, HEU members will achieve a goal we have sought for more than 15 years: comparability with other public sector workers doing the same work.

That's when, according to our current collective agreement, "comparability" between HEU and government employee wages must be effective.

What does that mean for the average HEU member? It means another major step toward the goal of pay equity, or equal pay for work of equal value.

We made the first big step with the pay equity settlement of 1993. This will move us another large step forward.

HEU members made part of the gain last year with the industry-wide 3.7 per cent wage adjustment implemented in October.

For many years, HEU wages were ahead of those in the government service. But as a result of two quick, substantial contracts negotiated by the BCGEU during the Barrett NDP government, and the impact of federal wage controls on the HEU, our wages fell behind.

Arbitrators have always agreed our wages should be comparable, but it's taken until now to have the goal in sight.

Still, nothing is assured. Consolidating comparability is a key goal of the next round of bargaining. HEU and health employers must begin talks on the issue this fall. If no agreement is reached, arbitrator Steven Kelleher will rule on what the final settlement must include.

At HEU bargaining conferences, delegates are wrestling with the implications of the comparability issue. How does it relate to our pay equity program?

When should money be paid out? How can we look at a broader approach that protects the gains in the future, as health services and health care jobs change?



BARGAINING: THE FOUR KEYS

1. Employment security
2. Action on workload
3. Pay equity progress
4. One contract

Workload: the crisis that is costing \$100 million a year

Health care is the province's most dangerous sector to work in, according to the Workers' Compensation Board. The cost to the system of WCB and long-term disability has exceeded \$100 million in each of the last two years, and HEU members are paying much more for the workload crisis with pain, injury and permanent disability.

The bargaining conferences are considering a wide range of options to tackle the problem, including implementation of ergonomic regulations, a shorter workweek, guaranteed replacement of workers who are sick or on leave, and so on.

"We have to challenge health employers to commit to achieve firm targets for improved safety. The savings should be used to improve and expand services."

One contract: the issue is fairness for all health workers

With the creation of a single employer agency for all health employers, the time is ripe for a single contract for all health workers.

"We can't tolerate health workers in the community facing discrimination in wages and working conditions," Allevalo says. "We'll have to move to a single contract that meets the needs of the reformed health care system."

Public support for the goals of health care workers

Public opinion polling shows strong support for HEU's goals, Allevalo says. Large majorities agree that health workers are doing their best to keep the system going and believe we have to protect our investment in the skills and training of health workers.

There is also strong support for increased resources for health workers, Allevalo notes, but not for health administrators or doctors.

"Despite the tough financial times," she says, "doctors have enjoyed average pay increases since 1992 that are larger than an HEU member's annual salary. We see administrators hiring more administrators while they eliminate caregivers. We see the cost of injury rising so high that it exceeds budget increases for the entire system."

"The message is clear: if we get our priorities right, we can negotiate a contract to meet the public's need for an improved medicare system."

THE PUBLIC MOOD:

Support for HEU issues — Feb. 1995

Health care workers are doing their best to keep the system going in tough times.

Health care reform should not be carried out at the expense of health care workers.

To protect our health care system, we need to protect our investment in the skills of our health care workers.

AGREE 89%

AGREE 77%

AGREE 95%

* Source: Support for union issues, HEU/McInyre & Mistel poll, Feb. 1995

for better medicare

the bargaining prescription

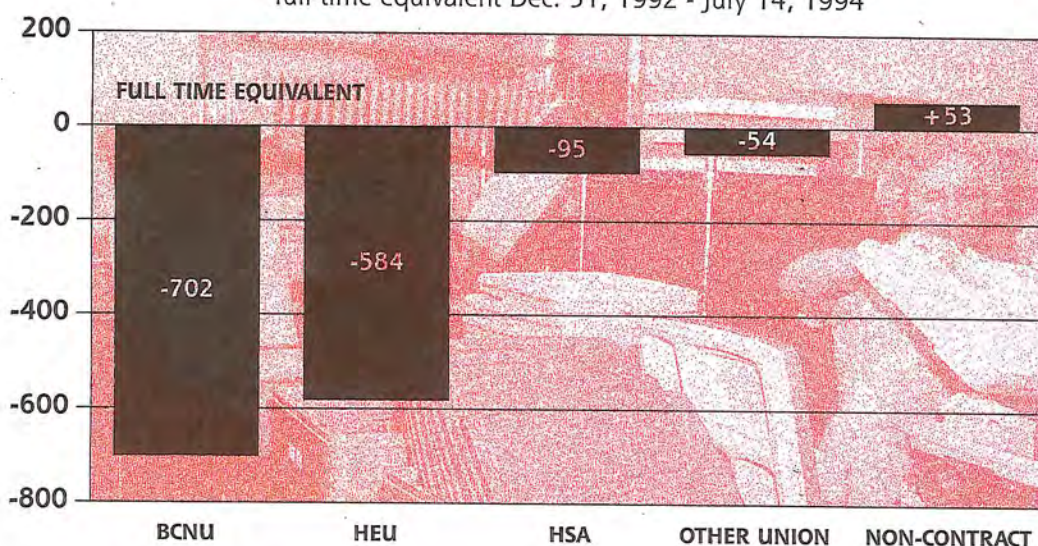
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for be

g option

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Equity: good progress but much more needs to be done

The hard-fought pay equity settlement achieved in 1992 has provided substantial increases to most HEU members.

Still unresolved, though, is the issue of comparability with direct government employees. Under the 1993 agreement, health employers and HEU must establish pay rates for HEU members that are comparable to BCGEU members effective April 1, 1996.

"This is another major step toward pay equity," Allevato says. Negotiations on this element of the new agreement begin in the fall and will be settled by arbitration if no resolution is achieved by the parties.

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"We provide this care with the lowest number of paid hours per day of patient care of any province."

Security for services: the key to quality care

Employment security has been good for health workers, Allevato notes, but it's also been good for the system.

The health ministry estimates that more than \$400 million will be saved by 1996 as a result of the health accord.

But what's needed in the next round, Allevato argues, is an agreement that draws a tighter link between services and health workers. Such an agreement would provide for voluntary transfer, early retirement, retraining and other measures to assist the amalgamation and integration of services in the context of employment security.

The increase in employment security programs in the private sector — including at Vancouver's newspapers, in private hospitals in New York City and at Bell Telephone — prove the validity of the concept.

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tter medicare

New laws will protect abortion users, providers

B.C. health minister Paul Ramsey is poised to introduce new laws that will protect health care workers who provide abortion services from harassment by abortion opponents.

The key elements include a protected "bubble" zone around clinics and hospitals from which anti-abortion protests, picketing, and so-called sidewalk counselling would be banned.

"We need to lower the heat around the provision of this medical service," Ramsey said in a May 22 interview with the *Guardian*.

"Our only goal is to ensure that women who choose to have an abortion can do so in a medically safe environment and one that's free from harassment and intimidation."

The move, says the health minister, is part of the NDP's commitment to improve security at free standing abortion clinics and acute care facilities as a result of last year's shooting of Dr. Garson Romalis. A sniper's bullet almost killed Romalis, who performed abortions at Vancouver Hospital.

The shooting left health care workers, including HEU members, in fear.

"As a society we can say clearly that there's a real diversity of strongly held views around abortion services," Ramsey said. "But expressing those views



RAMSEY

by harassing and intimidating health care providers and patients is just not on."

While specifics of the new laws are still being drafted, Ramsey expects the necessary legislation will be introduced in the legislature before the end of June.

Ramsey says Ontario courts have given clear direction of what sorts of activities shouldn't be allowed under a similar law already enacted by the Ontario government after a Toronto clinic was fire-bombed.



STAN HAMBLEY PHOTO

He's giving in turn

HEU helped Bill Smart win a big WCB appeal last year, and now the retired former Queen Alexandra local member from Victoria wants to give something back.

Smart has donated \$5,000 from his settlement to the HEU bursary fund to provide an annual bursary of \$500 for a union member or spouse or child to pursue higher education.

It will be called the Bill and Nora Smart bursary.

"If it hadn't been for the union I wouldn't have gotten a penny," said Smart. "That's the reason I'm giving something back, because they fought for me. I think the union delivered on

its promise that it will look after the worker."

Driving home from a construction job in the Interior nearly 30 years ago, Smart careened off the highway to

BURSARY HELP Retired HEU member Bill Smart, with wife Nora Smart, says a big donation to the union's bursary fund is the least he can do.

avoid smashing into a deer. "The next thing I knew I was at the bottom of a cliff," he says.

Smart fractured vertebrae and broke his sternum. He was in a body cast for some time. While it seemed as though he'd healed up quickly, 19 years later his back went on him when he was working with the naval fire service.

Later while working at Queen Alexandra — a hospital for handicapped kids — Smart developed further back problems and went on a WCB claim.

But in the mid-1980s, the WCB claimed Smart had reached a plateau and cut him off benefits.

So Smart took action and went to his union local for support. "The union kept fighting it and fighting it," he says.

And eventually he won!

Smart says the \$5,000 bursary contribution is the least he can do. "If I can help some young people get an education I'm all for that," he says. "When that runs out I'll donate another \$5,000."

HEU committed to learning

High post-secondary education costs can be a real burden for union members trying to expand their knowledge or learn new skills.

That's why HEU and various union locals are offering 22 different bursaries for post secondary studies totalling more than \$10,000 for the 1995/96 school year.

HEU members, their spouses and

children are eligible to apply for a bursary, which is awarded on the basis of financial need and satisfactory academic standing.

Application forms and further information can be obtained by contacting Provincial Office. Application forms, which should be marked "Bursaries," must be received at Provincial Office no later than Aug. 18.

Plan to run city hospitals ignores integration

A major report on hospital services in Vancouver released in April is silent on how hospital and community health services will be integrated, says HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato.

"While this report concentrates on the governance of hospitals, it does not deal with the crucial issue of how acute care and community services will be integrated in the future in Vancouver," she said.

The report, prepared by a working group headed by former assistant deputy health minister Chris Lovelace, calls for Vancouver hospitals to be governed and managed in three or four hospital cluster boards.

"Hospitals must extend their services to the community. But first we need a vision and a plan so that reform leads to better services delivered closer to home, not to reduced services," she added.

"There is no vision in this report of how quality health services will be maintained in the future, and the report is silent on the crucial issue of employment security for health care workers in a reformed health care system."

The report recommends three cluster boards to run hospitals.

The first would administer denominational acute, extended and rehabilitation hospitals including Mount St. Joseph's and St. Vincent's hospitals, Youville, Holy Family and St. Paul's Hospital.

The second cluster consists of non-denominational acute, extended care and rehabilitation facilities including the Arthritis Society (Treatment Services), B.C. Cancer Agency, B.C. Rehabilitation Society and Vancouver Hospital.

The third cluster would consist of non-denominational specialty hospitals including Children's Hospital, B.C. Women's Hospital and Health Centre and Sunny Hill Health Centre.

Also proposed is a Shared Services Corporation, which would provide food services, biomedical engineering, material management services, laboratory services, and other services.

"This proposal would have serious consequences for patient services and for the people who deliver those services," Allevato said. "Yet this is approached only from the question of administrative efficiency."

HEALTH & SAFETY NEWS

Study session protests violence in workplace

Health workers at G.F. Strong in Vancouver took direct action to force their employer to deal with problems of violence in the workplace, and other violations of the contract and WCB regulations.

"We were fed up with not seeing anything put in place to stop violent incidents and workers being injured," said Sheila Rowswell, HEU's local secretary treasurer.

And their approach has paid off because the WCB stepped in and wrote-up the employer with nine orders on every section of the violence regulations.

When an HEU member was assaulted May 17 by a patient with a violent history, more than 100 members of the three health unions came off the job for

a study session to review their rights. That's when the WCB got involved.

It's the second assault of a caregiver by the same patient, and Rowswell charges that the employer had taken no concrete action to deal with any of the incidents.

"They should inform us when violent incidents occur or when a patient or family member is known to have a violent history," said Sheila Rowswell.

G.F. Strong tri-union local leaders and health and safety activists will keep up the pressure on the boss and the WCB to win a safe workplace.

Nanaimo hospital fined for putting workers at risk

Nanaimo Regional Hospital administrators got a sharp slap on the wrist last month from the WCB and a \$4,000 fine for failing to comply with nine orders

to correct serious health and safety hazards.

Last fall, a WCB inspection found that HEU members were being exposed to 20 times the allowable concentration of glutaraldehyde from a cold liquid sterilizing solution.

The hospital was cited for failing to protect workers and ordered to correct the violations.

In January the WCB came to check up on the employer. While the inspector found the employer had acted on some of the orders, the sterilizing fumes still exceeded allowable limits, a sure sign that the hospital hadn't fixed the ventilation problems.

In addition, the inspector wrote, "I believe that workers have been placed at risk by the failure of the employer to provide fit-testing and ensure that the respirators are in fact providing the required protection."

by Stephen Howard

UNION members are starting to grapple with some tough questions. Like how to make the union even more responsive to the diverse needs of members? What are the ways that we can get different faces, different voices, different outlooks involved in HEU's decision making process? Do we need to change our structure to accomplish this?

These questions shaped the agenda of a special HEU conference attended by more than 120 union activists in April. Bringing together members from diverse backgrounds, the conference is one step HEU is taking to act on a convention mandate to deal with equity measures — ways of reflecting diversity.

Conference participants were grouped into four different caucuses: people of colour, First Nations, members with physical and mental challenges, and lesbians and gays.

Outside facilitators were brought in to work with each caucus to help develop action plans to reach out to members leading up to HEU's 1996 convention, where delegates will again debate equity issues.

"The conference was quite wonderful," says HEU's director of education Karen Dean. "Groups of people came together who didn't know each other, and they had two days to get some phenomenal tasks done."

Each caucus will have a \$15,000 budget, while the union has hired Betty Baxter, a widely respected popular educator to serve as a resource for caucus initiatives starting July 1.

Lots of stories emerged from the conference about the roadblocks HEU members faced in their daily lives. Like racism and other barriers to equality.

Take Alex Gatchalian for example. Gatchalian, who works at Western Human Resources in Victoria, suffered a head injury in a car accident and is hemiplegic. But up until now he's hidden his injury from his employer for fear of losing his job.

Mildred Thomas is a union member from G.F.



OUTREACH Is the goal of the people with disabilities caucus. Seated from left, Alex Gatchalian, Mildred Thomas, Anne Shack. Back row from left, Crystal Williamson, Gail Hogarth, Laura Muzin.



TRADITIONS Trudy Erickson, standing at left, and First Nations caucus members.

Education is a top priority for the First Nations caucus, says spokesperson Trudy Erickson, an LPN at the Greater Victoria Hospital Society. They're developing ideas for two-way programs.

Examples could include courses geared to increasing awareness of First Nations people about trade unionism, and in-service training for health workers about traditional aboriginal healing practices and different ways of dealing with death and dying in their culture.

Erickson said her caucus opened in a traditional circle, which is a part of all First Nations' culture. It signifies a safe place and equality for all participants.

"Until you've developed a disability, no one thinks it will happen to them — like me," says Gail Hogarth from West Fairfield health centre in Victoria. Hogarth developed permanent shoulder and spine injuries from a workplace accident.

They will be reaching out to people working with a disability, and most important to the "lost ones" — the people who've been put off the job by an injury who've fallen through the cracks.

The lesbian and gay caucus also set education as the top priority, and will continue to provide support services for gay and lesbian members across B.C.

The equity conference was "a chance to involve more members," says Dave Lay from St. Paul's.

"We're all re-energized," says Darlene Bown.

St. Paul's local member Roger Kishi is the spokesperson for the caucus for ethnic diversity. This group's goals include creating an ongoing awareness of the ethnic diversity of HEU members and working for change within the union to reflect that diversity.

Kishi says the equity process is something the whole union can be proud of because HEU is in the forefront on the issue. "We're talking the talk and we're walking it as well. It's good to see."

• If you're interested in the activities of HEU's equity caucuses contact Betty Baxter at Provincial Office.

Diversity: A challenge to change

Strong, a Vancouver rehabilitation centre for people with disabilities, who navigates nimbly in a wheelchair. Her "disability" was the subject of employer queries at a recent interview for a full-time position. The employer expressed concern about her potential use of sick time. She called them on it and, with the help of her steward, got the job.

Victoria General member Darlene Bown knows that some union members are critical of the equity initiatives HEU is pursuing.

"They say we're all equal, so what's the problem. But if I can't talk about my life while I'm at work, then we're not equal." Bown — a lesbian — says she feels a backlash from members of her local.

The four caucuses emerged from the conference with concrete plans to lay the groundwork for change. Each designated spokespersons and created a steering committee, which will meet regularly.

ENERGIZED Lesbian and gay steering committee members Dave Lay, left, Darlene Bown, and Kevin O'Neil.

Here's what you told us

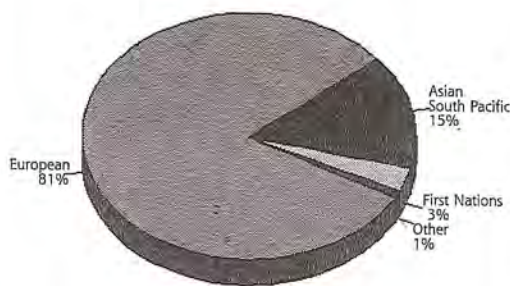
HEU has completed a ground-breaking membership poll to get an up-to-date picture of who HEU members are to backstop the equity initiatives.

We asked a lot of questions about ethnic backgrounds, the languages you speak, the physical and mental challenges you face, and issues dealing with sexual orientation. Some questions caused discomfort, but now we've got the answers we need to meet the challenge to change.

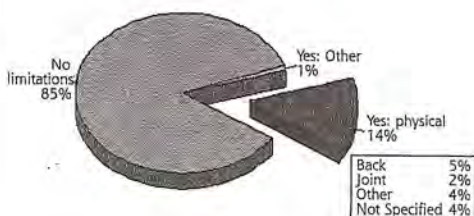
Here are some of the equity survey highlights.

• Graph sources: HEU/McIntyre & Mustel equity profile survey, April 1995

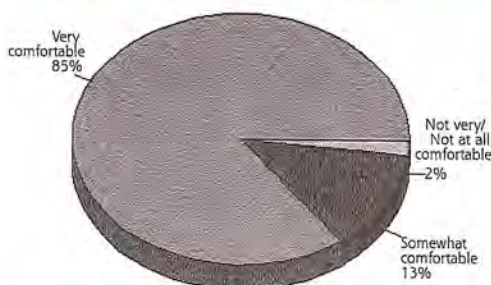
Our Roots



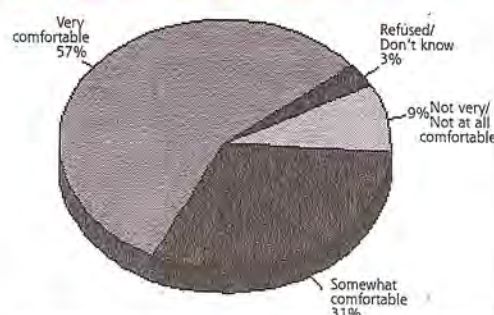
We face challenges



Comfort with diversity: ethnic backgrounds



Comfort with diversity: gays and lesbians



Royal City deal closer, Crofton fights Love Boat

With an arbitrator's decision in hand, Royal City Manor local members have moved closer to a first contract settlement in a lengthy battle with their corporate employer.

Meanwhile, HEU's Crofton Manor local members will be seeking arbitration to settle their own drawn out contract battle with their employer, a giant multinational company that also owns the Love Boat cruise line.

Arbitrator Mark Thompson handed down a binding decision May 23 settling non-monetary language issues for Royal City that along with another arbitrated decision on economic items will form

CORPORATE GREED Crofton Manor members rally outside their facility, owned by a British multinational, for a fair contract.

the basis of a first collective agreement. "This is a hardline employer," says union secretary business manager Carmela Allevato, "and it's doing whatever it can to block a settlement. It's possible that it will delay justice further by launching nuisance appeals in the courts."

At Vancouver's Crofton Manor, 130 union members are fighting to maintain parity with standard conditions prevail-



DARLINA YCARO PHOTO

ing for more than 10,000 HEU members who work in long-term care. Their contract expired March 31, 1994.

The log jam stems from employer efforts to bust a 15-year bargaining

trend with settlements based on the industry standard. Now, the local subsidiary of the giant British company P&O is balking at the 36-hour week, pay equity, and a pension plan. P&O made 1993 profits of \$130 million.

The corporate owners claim they can't afford the settlement, and issued a closure threat after the workers solidly backed strike action.

"This is a classic case of a wealthy employer trying to boost profits at the expense of women health workers," Allevato said.

Based on HEU's analysis of Crofton operations, she estimated Crofton makes a profit of around 30 per cent of revenue.

"They can afford to pay the industry standard and still make a profit without having to increase resident's rent."

"This isn't about ability to pay, it's about sheer corporate greed."

DAVE JAFFE,
Vancouver

letters

continued from page 2

that Local 592 will be there if help is required by yourselves in the future.

DAN MACGOWAN,
CEP Local 592,
Port Alberni

Sure, defend turbot stocks, but what about social programs?

In the last few weeks I've heard some people praise the Liberal government of Jean Chretien after a Spanish fishing vessel was towed into St. John's, Newfound-

land. "Oh there's a government that's standing up for Canada," they'll say.

But this just isn't true. While it's good that a federal government is at long last defending our water from overfishing by other countries' fishing boats, the Chretien government has mounted a major assault on all our social programs.

The Chretien Liberals are drastically shrinking the payments that Ottawa sends to all provinces under the headings of 'health,' 'education' and 'welfare.'

It is also promising a major overhaul of the old age pension scheme and that

means after the year 2000 you should get ready for some major cuts in the old age pension payments.

So don't call the Liberal government in Ottawa 'patriots' until you see what they've got planned for us in the years ahead.

They may be defending our fishing stock but they're steadily dismantling social programs. Real patriots would preserve and protect them and not tear them apart.

DAVE JAFFE,
Vancouver

Crossword contest

Try your hand at the Guardian's new challenge crossword and you could win a prize. We'll award either an HEU 50th anniversary pin or a union baseball cap to the first five correct responses drawn. To enter, send your completed crossword to Stephen Howard at Provincial Office, 2006 West 10th Ave., Vancouver V6J 4P5, by July 15. We'll print the crossword solution and the winners' names in the next issue.

Job Protection

Created by Gary Spence
Edited by Gordon Bailey

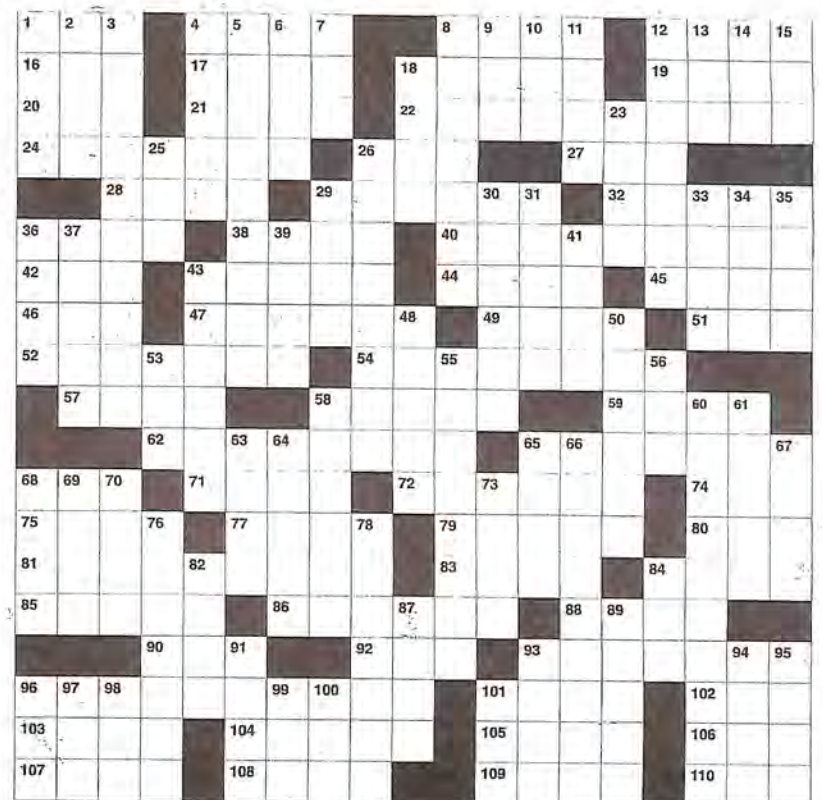
ACROSS

- 1 Certain month
- 4 Loquat tree
- 8 Kon Tiki (eg.)
- 12 Spoken
- 16 Hirobumi __, Japanese Prime Minister
- 17 Unique (slang)
- 18 Photo tint
- 19 Prefix for due
- 20 Total
- 21 About organ of hearing
- 22 How Victoria wants health care
- 24 Low fitting pant
- 26 River in Scotland
- 27 A way to sink
- 28 Acid radical
- 29 Mini-__ (TV show)
- 32 Hawaiian cloth (pl)
- 36 Indian gown
- 38 Sugar __ Mountain
- 40 The position matched (by 58 acr & 96 dn)
- 42 Macaws
- 43 Annual income from capital investment
- 44 Scarlett's home
- 45 Romanian city
- 46 Crane arm (var.)
- 47 ESA
- 49 Pressure unit
- 51 Title of respect
- 52 Sulphuric acid salt
- 54 Crannies
- 57 Oceans
- 58 Paths
- 59 Many qts.
- 62 How the liberals want the ESA
- 65 That's only your __
- 68 Largest equal divisor (math)
- 71 Balkan
- 72 Eating house
- 74 Degree for bosses
- 75 Halo

- 77 Buffalo
- 79 Language
- 80 Makes computers
- 81 Primate (church official)
- 83 Big cat
- 84 Entirely dependable
- 85 Pick a voluntary option
- 86 Relating to one's group
- 88 Carriages
- 90 Herring __
- 92 Elevated electric railways
- 93 Retakes
- 96 Agency with 58 down
- 101 Greek letter
- 102 Take hold of
- 103 Foot wear
- 104 Nostrils
- 105 Biblical country
- 106 __-centre
- 107 Centres
- 108 Breezed through
- 109 Sound
- 110 A baglike structure in a plant or animal

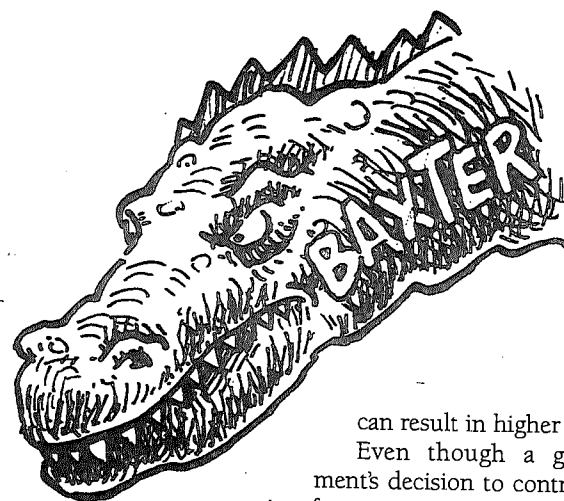
DOWN

- 1 Satellite __
- 2 Small bag
- 3 A job that pays within 10 per cent
- 4 Stolen property
- 5 What those opposed to the ESA lack
- 6 Fish trap
- 7 Electric spark
- 8 Proof of payment
- 9 Military mailbox (US)
- 10 Fishy rudder
- 11 New Mexico town
- 12 Paper birds and flowers
- 13 __ room
- 14 Aspirin
- 15 __ Abner
- 18 Fortune Teller
- 23 Check __
- 25 __ fi (slang)
- 26 Suspension of activity
- 29 Eisaku __, Japanese Prime Minister
- 30 In a way, excites
- 31 Gulf of, in the Aegean



- 33 Pod contents
- 34 Body that defines computing protocols
- 35 Created quite a __
- 36 Droops
- 37 Catfish genus
- 39 At some prior time
- 41 Vehicles
- 43 Rears
- 48 Cygnus star
- 50 Within 50 kms (75 for some)
- 53 The __ Side (Larson)
- 55 Diacritical marks
- 56 __ Diego
- 58 Agency, with 96 across
- 60 Stretched cars
- 61 Fit to drive
- 63 Expression of praise
- 64 Max __, Dadaist painter
- 65 __ Von Bismarck, Iron Chancellor
- 66 A university in New Jersey
- 67 Cite

- 68 Be wide open
- 69 Loop
- 70 Splitting tool
- 73 Cruise
- 76 Accumulates
- 78 Estranged (var.)
- 82 Native American people (var.)
- 84 Helps little firms (US Gov't agency)
- 87 Sandwiches (abb.)
- 89 It's just __
- 91 Mount __
- 93 Repeat
- 94 Wine region
- 95 Invests in little enterprises (US agency)
- 96 Residue
- 97 Dagger (obscure)
- 98 What the ESA guarantees
- 99 A waterproof raincoat
- 100 Before (poetic)
- 101 Wager



by Carmela Allevato

CANADA'S provincial trade ministers are into the last weeks of a round of negotiations that could open B.C.'s medicare system to penetration and takeover by multinational health service corporations.

The talks are centered on unresolved issues from last year's Internal Trade Agreement, a deal that was hailed as the tool to promote efficiency and save taxpayers' dollars.

But the Internal Trade Agreement is about far more than trade. It promotes further deregulation, forces harmonization and increases corporate control over the policy-making process.

And if its provisions are extended to health, municipal, educational and social services, as some provinces hope, British Columbians stand to lose any meaningful control over billions of dollars worth of public services.

Once the private sector firms are locked in, they will be virtually impossible to dislodge and community-based boards will be at their mercy.

So far, Premier Mike Harcourt has stood firm against calls to extend the deal, but corporations which hope to profit from guaranteed, wide-open access to tax-funded services are exerting enormous pressure.

If they are successful, B.C.'s health boards, school boards and municipal councils will be forced to accept the lowest bid for contracted services from any supplier in the country — or, thanks to NAFTA, on the continent.

Local control and the right of communities to set particular conditions to meet their own social or economic development needs will be prohibited by the new rules.

In the words of the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, the deal "weakens the ability of democratically elected governments to regulate their economies."

The agreement grew out of concerns that interprovincial trade barriers are a

'So far Harcourt has stood firm against the deal, but corporations are exerting enormous pressure'

major burden on the Canadian economy. For example, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association estimated that interprovincial trade barriers cost the Canadian economy \$6.5 billion annually.

But a study done by University of B.C. economics professor Brian Copeland for the B.C. Ministry of Employment and Investment concluded that a more accurate estimate of the

cost of interprovincial trade barriers is between \$650 million and \$755 million a year — and much of that came from barriers against the free flow of beer and wine. In spite of the agreement, the provincial and federal governments have not

made any progress in reducing interprovincial trade barriers affecting beer and wine.

Copeland's study also questioned the assumption that local procurement policies traditionally followed by provincial governments are costly to taxpayers.

The Internal Trade Agreement was concluded nearly a year ago and is due to take effect July 1.

Negotiations are ongoing between the provinces to extend the agreement to what is commonly referred to as the MUSH sector, or municipalities, municipal organizations, school boards

and publicly-funded academic, health and social service bodies.

As well, both the federal and many provincial governments — especially Alberta — would like to narrow or eliminate a section of the agreement which exempts health and social services from the existing rules governing procurement of goods and services.

If these talks end with health care being included in the agreement, then the rules laid down in the agreement's procurement chapter will apply, involving significant changes in the way provincial and local governments purchase goods and services.

These procurement rules will prohibit provincial governments from favouring local or provincial companies when awarding contracts for goods valued at \$25,000 or greater, and for services or construction worth more than \$100,000.

A governmental decision to buy goods locally benefits local businesses through higher profits. It creates or saves jobs in local communities, and

can result in higher wages.

Even though a government's decision to contract for services from a non-profit provider may cost the government more, it ensures quality delivery of services and nurtures a community-based organization. Some of the increased costs related to preferential procurement can be recouped through increased corporate and personal tax revenue.

IF HEALTH and social services are included in the Internal Trade Agreement, we can expect that pressure will grow to include both areas under the North American Free Trade Agreement, which opens the door to foreign multinationals.

The current concentration of health care in the public sector ensures economies of scale, and, consequently, cost savings and increased efficiencies.

If the rules are changed, we can expect that the private sector will compete for tenders for services which are easy to run or turn a quick profit, leaving the public sector to deliver costly and "inefficient" services.

Fragmenting the delivery and administration of services will increase costs, create further inefficiencies, reduce responsiveness and create unequal access to services.

All of this will diminish the quality of care, and reduce the accountability of publicly elected officials who manage the health system.

We have a lot to lose and nothing to gain from this agreement. Those advocating removal of these so-called trade barriers are simply paving the way for integration of medicare into the costly, profit-driven corporate model which has served Americans so poorly.

We're at a crossroads. After more than a decade of federal cuts to health care and social funding, Finance Minister Paul Martin has imposed even more reductions through a single lump-sum payment scheme for health, post-secondary education and social services.

This is not the time to move to inflexible rules on low-bid tendering for goods or services.

The overriding goal of health care must be to meet the interests of its clients, not to make profits or to be convenient for suppliers.

B.C. Employment and Investment Minister Glen Clark has strongly opposed extension of the agreement because it will tie the hands of governments without providing real economic benefits.

We support the stand Mr. Clark has taken, and we believe that more British Columbians should be aware of the consequences if economic ideology — as expressed through this agreement — wins over the needs of British Columbians.

ATTACK OF THE PROFIT DRAGONS

A trade deal between provinces could open up medicare to corporate profiteers

DIRK VAN STRALEN GRAPHIC

June 10/11

North American health workers coalition steering committee meeting, hosted by HEU, Vancouver.

June 11-14

CLC women's conference, Ottawa.

June 12/13

HEU Bargaining strategy conference, Kootenay region, Cranbrook.

June 14-17

CUPE B.C. convention, Prince George.

June 21/22

HEU Provincial Executive meeting, Vancouver.

August 7

Join HEU's Lesbian and Gay Caucus at Vancouver's Gay Pride parade, noon, Denman Street.

August 17

Deadline to submit proposed bargaining demands for the HEU wage policy conference to Provincial Office.

August 18

Deadline to apply for an HEU bursary for post-secondary education studies. Contact the Provincial Office for further information.

September 4

Labour day.

October 16/17

HEU's 13th wage policy convention, Richmond.

Comic opera puts workers on stage

by Dan Keeton

Why don't working folks visit the opera? There's as much passion, suspense, intrigue, betrayal and violence as in any soap or TV miniseries. Maybe it's because everyone sings in a foreign language. People might have trouble identifying with guys in tights and big women in Viking helmets dying dramatically.

If so, *City Workers in Love* might answer these objections. The creation of composer and conductor Neil Weisensel, and librettist and director Michael Cavanagh, it elevates today's workplace to the operatic stage. A hit at the 1992, Winnipeg Fringe Festival, it played recently at Vancouver's Waterfront Theatre, where it was slightly rewritten to fit the locale.

City Workers is a "mock opera" that

has fun at the expense of civic work crews, supervisors, modern psychotherapy and the lofty theme of love.

Romeo is a love-smitten hole-digger with a passion for Mavis the Mower, whom he glimpses daily plying lawnmower and weed-trimmer to the boulevard's public greenery. Even though she's disguised with protective goggles and breathing mask, Romeo knows she's the one for him. How passionate is his love? Romeo rhapsodizes about blades of grass growing rapidly, anticipating the delights of being trimmed by Mavis' blade.

Of course, there's trouble on the horizon. Mavis is an emotional captive of the overbearing and controlling Pete, a sanitation engineer. And the work crew as a whole is about to be

AT THE



OPERA



banished from their sweet urban work site to weed-trimming duty on the wilds of Highway 401 by Mrs. Demers, the cold-hearted supervisor.

"No coffee for miles," she sings cruelly, towering over the cowering crew who had just finished singing the praises of coffee breaks. It's up to kindly Al the foreman to save the day.

There's something spellbinding about opera, with characters singing rather than speaking virtually all the lines, accompanied by live music. *City Workers in Love* inspires awe and laughter.

A kid's-eye view of solidarity

by Connie Kilfoil

STRIKE! is the story of a little girl, Molly, and her role in a strike at the fish cannery where her mother works.

One day Molly joins mom on the picket line, only to discover that one of the gates to the plant is unguarded. When Mum refuses Molly's offer to picket that gate herself, Molly gets an idea.

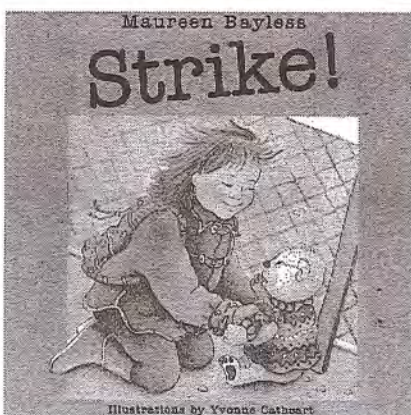
She places her teddy bear at the gate with a picket sign propped in its hand. When two delivery trucks arrive at the gate they see the sign Molly has made and decide to respect the picket line. The local paper picks up the story and, as a result, the boss calls the union to start talking. Molly and her teddy bear have saved the strike.

STRIKE! is a charming and heart-warming story written in a straightforward style. My six-year-old daughter Kerry loved it.

When I asked her what the story was about, she replied, "It's about a little girl who misses nanny, and her mum's boss lower her pay, so they make picket signs and go on strike. Molly's teddy's picket sign stopped the drivers from driving through and that helped end the strike."

She told me that a strike was "when people don't go to work because their bosses aren't treating them right." *STRIKE!* humanizes these ideas without romance and without rhetoric.

• Kilfoil is a CUPE researcher based in B.C. Her review first appeared in the CUPE B.C. Quarterly.



STRIKE!
by Maureen Bayless,
with illustrations by Yvonne Cathcart
RAGWEED PRESS, CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI, 1994
ISBN 0-921556-41-1
\$6.95

Coffee break



All stories guaranteed factual.
Sources this issue: CALM,
Medical Post, SEIU Local

Buffalo 'Jills' cheer union

Cheerleaders for the Buffalo Bills football team are now card-carrying union members. The Buffalo Jills (yes they really are called that) recently voted overwhelmingly in favour of joining a union.

Union president Nancy Bates, a seven-year veteran of the Jills, said the cheerleaders are seeking better pay and working conditions, plus more control over where and when they do promotional appearances.

Lightning fast fingers!

Toronto court reporter Marg Anne Locke recently came third in a North American speed dictation championship.

She blazed through a five-minute typing test at a blinding speed of 350 words per minute. And not only that — her typed copy was 97.7 per cent accurate.

Mud in your eye and coal in your ear

Kudos to the British general practitioner who miraculously cured a retired miner who had been deaf for more than 20 years. Dr. Mohammed Arif Shaikh syringed Fred Jones' left ear, and out popped a piece of coal. Jones, 83 had spent the last two decades almost stone deaf.

Bagpiper blows life into war vet

A bagpipe player saved the life of a 72-year old war veteran last Remembrance Day just as the last post was being played.

A Legion flag-bearer was struck by a heart attack at the Nov. 11 ceremonies at the Port Moody cenotaph. The bagpipe player David Hilder, an off-duty ambulance paramedic, dropped his pipes and rushed to help.

He and Tamara MacLeod, a nurse who was also playing in

the band, revived the vet using emergency CPR. Within three minutes an ambulance arrived on the scene and the man survived.

Please hold because I can't

When the Kaiser Hospital in Fresno Cal. set up its new switchboard management forgot one critical thing — to provide relief for the evening and night shift workers who work alone.

So guess what the company did when the operators complained they couldn't even get a break to use the restroom? Instead of providing a relief worker, Kaiser went to great expense to install a



Here's an example of a bizarre employer solution to providing relief for switchboard operators' rest breaks.

phone in the restroom.

This move didn't sit well with staff, so now Kaiser will provide "real relief" in the form of a relief worker to cover operators' rest periods.

HEU people

Early retirement benefits Children's

Vincenza Busto, a housekeeper at Children's Hospital, is another HEU member who's benefitted from the early retirement provisions of the Employment Security Agreement.

The Health Labour Adjustment Agency early retirement program has made Busto's whole family "very happy," said her daughter Lucy Luongo, who works at St. Vincent's Hospital, in an interview in the HLAA paper, *The Accord*.

"My mother has worked hard to help support the family. Now, she's ready to go on with other things in life and spend time with my father."

Says retiree Busto, "it gives a job to a younger person. I couldn't afford to retire had it not been for the program."

Special Holy Family tea held for retiring McConnell

Long-time Holy Family local activist **Jeanne McConnell** (Morisseau) retired in April. McConnell worked at the



Early retiree Vincenza Busto, husband Sabino and granddaughter Gabriella.

Vancouver facility for 19 years. She was an active HEU member, serving as chairperson for the last six years.

A special tea was held for McConnell, who plans to travel and spend time with her family.

Morrison will be riding her bike

Rosemary Morrison, a housekeeper at Rosewood Manor in Richmond put in her last day at the facility in

May, retiring after more than 12 years of service.

Morrison plans to spend more time with her grandchildren, ride her new bicycle, join the local community centre and wait for her husband to retire so they can travel the world together.

Active in her union local, Morrison held the positions of trustee, conductor and warden.

Simon Fraser Lodge loses long-time activist

Care aide **Marie Sevigney**, a 13-year veteran of Simon Fraser Lodge, passed away in Prince George in April.

Sevigney was instrumental in unionizing the workers at the lodge into CUPE in the mid-1970s. She was also a key player when the workers joined HEU in 1981.

Sevigney was local chairperson for 10 years before going off on long-term disability in 1985. She was the mother of current chairperson, Cyndie Stephens.

HEU accountant Michel Bonnier dies

Michel Bonnier, the accountant in HEU's finance department died April 24. He came to the Provincial Office in the fall of 1993, after a 10-year stint in finance at Shaughnessy Hospital. He began his fight with cancer about the same time.

Bonnier was active in the Shaughnessy local. He was renowned for organizing dances and special events for members and their families.

His friends say that Bonnier will be remembered as a happy man who knew everybody, and as someone who was always dancing — he was on the dance floor from the first dance to the last.

Bonnier's memorial service was attended by HEU president Fred Muzin, union office staff and many members of the old Shaughnessy local.



HEU's Nelson Jubilee Manor local is providing a helping hand in their community. Secretary-treasurer Gail Neufeld, at right, presents \$200 to representatives of the local food bank.

Staff on the move

Katherine Moffatt is the successful applicant for a new rep/trainee position in the union's Kelowna office. From the Sechelt local, Moffatt was working in a similar position in the Prince George office.

Mary Pat Wiley from the Prince George local has been hired to fill a rep trainee position in the Prince George office.

Peggy Christianson from the Williams Lake local takes over from Wiley as Northern regional vice-president on the Provincial Executive.

Formerly filling a temporary staff rep II position,

Gordon Bailey has been hired for a permanent rep II position. He'll continue to service locals in the Lower Mainland.

Noel Gulbransen, from the VGH local, was the successful applicant for a permanent rep trainee position in the Provincial Office.

Betty Baxter has been hired for a 16-month period to the new position of equity coordinator. Baxter, who joins HEU with a wealth of experience as a popular educator and activist, will serve as a resource person to the equity caucuses established by last October's union convention.

Atkinson moves to Labour Relations Board

Mark Atkinson, director of HEU's Kootenay regional office in Nelson, has accepted a position as a mediator with the Labour Relations Board starting Sept. 11.

"It's been a terrific 20 years," says Atkinson. "I have a lot of respect for all HEU members, from the person who's just organized right up to the people who've been long-time activists."

Atkinson's long history in HEU goes back to the successful 1976 union organizing drive at the Overlander Extended Care Hospital in Kamloops where he was working in maintenance. Within a year he was a shop

steward and local executive member.

In 1980 he was elected to serve on the Provincial Executive.



ATKINSON

Shortly after he became a staff rep, first in the Prince George office where he serviced northern locals for two years, followed by a year's stint in the Provincial Office. For the

last 10 years he's been director of the Nelson office, and our resident expert on essential service issues.

Union secretary-business manager **Carmela Allevato** saluted Atkinson's contributions and dedication to the union, and wished him all the best in his new career.

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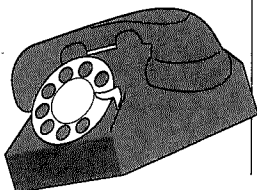
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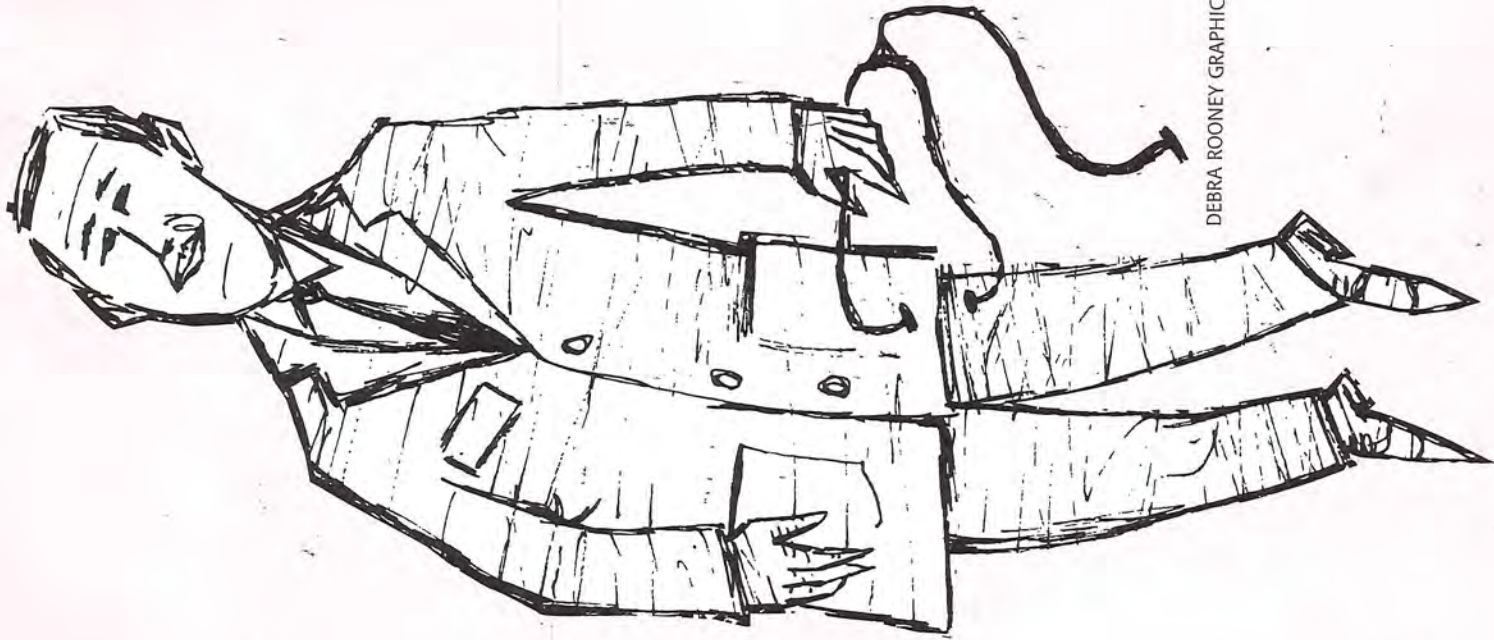
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DOCTOR SALARY HIKES OF \$33,043 ARE LARGER THAN SALARIES!			

SOURCE: PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT BUDGET DOCUMENTS



Why did she die?

Nancy Horvath's family and HEU are searching for answers to explain the tragic death of the Maple Ridge caregiver.



PAGE 1

'No' to the bad old days

Seniors, community groups and unions are coming together to battle federal funding cuts in a fight to save medicare.



PAGE 5

Our bargaining prescription

Union activists across B.C. are starting to prepare the ground for a bargaining package that will be our prescription for better medicare.



PAGE 8

Opening the door

A trade deal between provinces could open up medicare to corporate profiteers like Marriott, VERSA and Baxter Corp.



PAGE 13



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