

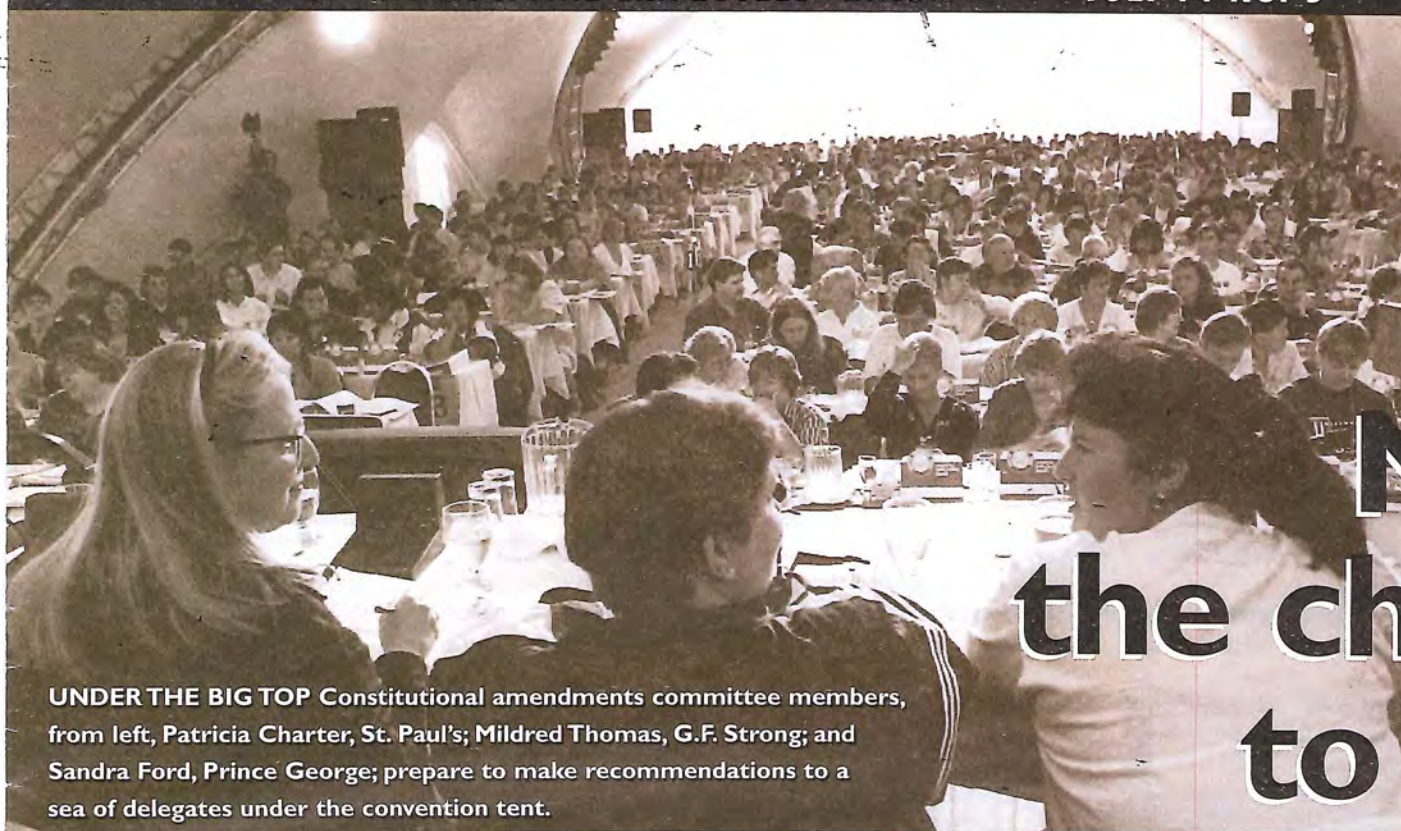
Guardian



THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

VOL. 14 NO. 3

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1996

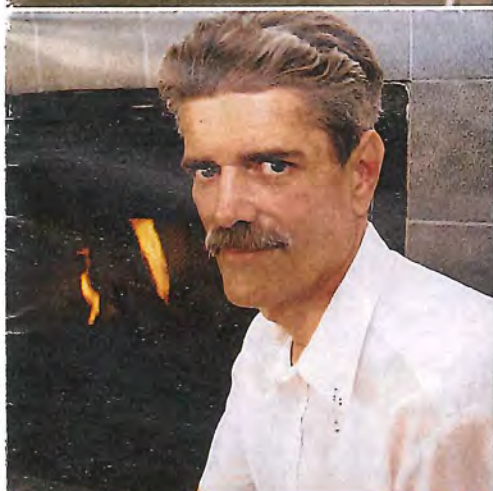


More than 560 HEU activists gathered for the union's 20th biennial convention Sept. 16 to 19, charting a course for the next two years.

Meeting the challenge to change

UNDER THE BIG TOP Constitutional amendments committee members, from left, Patricia Charter, St. Paul's; Mildred Thomas, G.F. Strong; and Sandra Ford, Prince George; prepare to make recommendations to a sea of delegates under the convention tent.

At right, Bella Coola delegate Faye Edgar applauds the historic equity decision adopted overwhelmingly by convention.



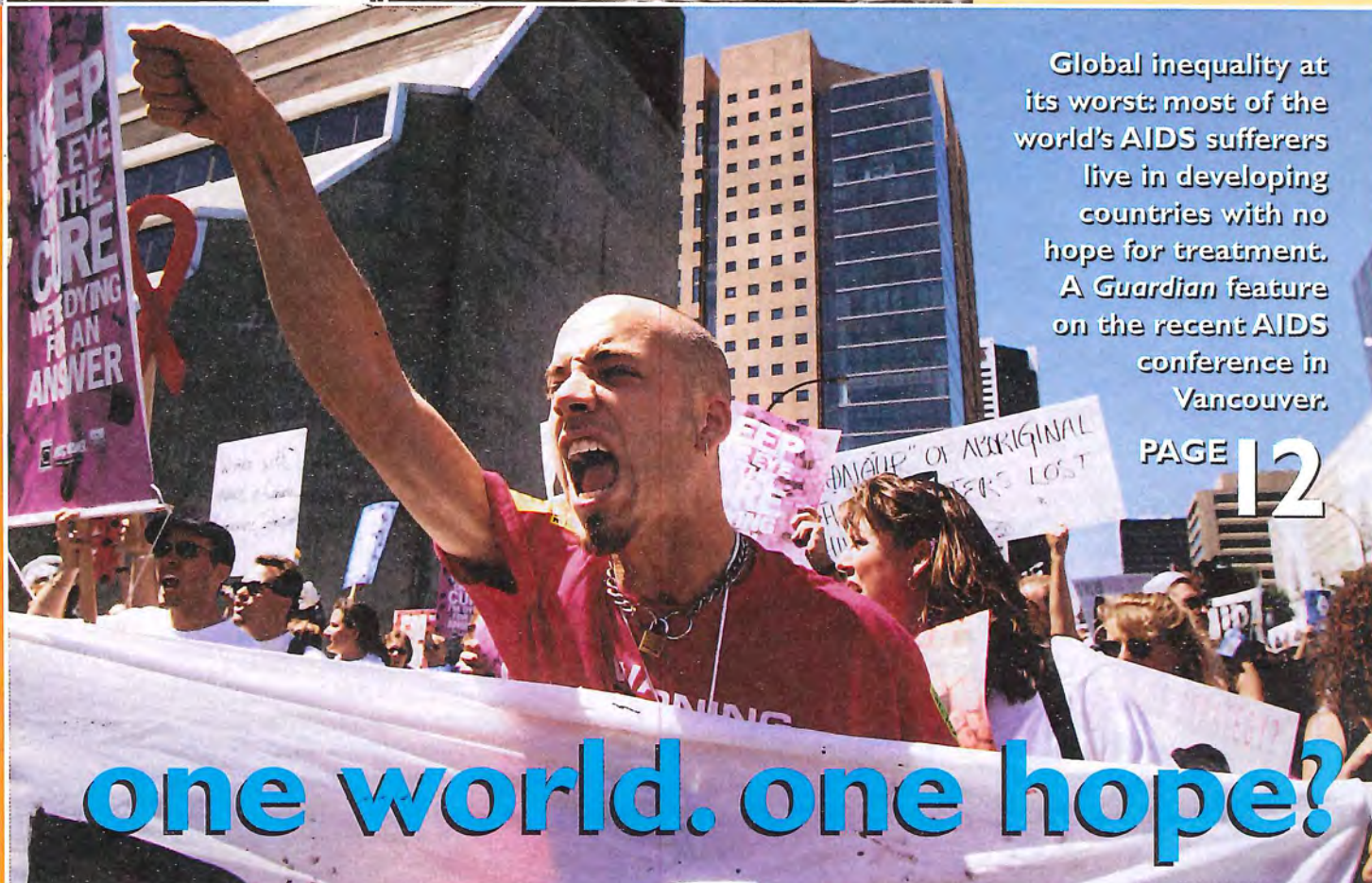
In a powerful debate, delegates approved a constitutional amendment to give formal standing to the four equity caucuses and convention credentials. **PAGE SEVEN**

Delegates also approved an action plan to press for a contract settlement for community sector members. Premier Clark pledged that health workers should be paid the same wherever they work. **PAGE EIGHT**

Hospice hearth

Dying of AIDS, HEU member James Pratt is still contributing to his community. He's raising funds to build a fireplace at a new Vancouver hospice.

page **SIX**



Global inequality at its worst: most of the world's AIDS sufferers live in developing countries with no hope for treatment. A *Guardian* feature on the recent AIDS conference in Vancouver.

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COMMENT

Change can be a two-edged sword

by Chris Allnutt

FOR HEU MEMBERS change has been a constant factor in our working lives. Our jobs and workplaces have been incredibly transformed in the last five years. Rather than standing on the sidelines, our union has been immersed in the dynamic, and we've traded old for new to respond to immediate pressures to defend our members and protect medicare.

The push to make things better can be a powerful force to improve our lives and the work of the union. It can also create a climate of stress, anxiety and insecurity.

This two-edged sword of change was at play at HEU's recent 20th biennial convention, where delegates displayed a hearty appetite to refashion and improve our approach on many fronts.

For example, there was the convention decision on our equity initiatives.

It made history and sent a clear message: the union needed to do things differently to be more inclusive, and responsive to the diverse needs of our members.

Another convention debate – on a motion to have province-wide regionalization workshops – serves as key measure of just how much the union's culture has shifted.

In years past, faced with immense pressures of change in the workplace, delegates would have demanded to know what



actions the Provincial Executive was taking on their behalf.

But the message at this convention was different. Activists said they needed the workshops to sharpen their skills to confront the boss' restructuring plans in the workplace.

The pressure for change was also reflected in the outcome of elections for the union's Provincial Executive.

There are 11 new faces on the HEU's top decision-making body, and I look forward to working closely with president Fred Muzin, financial secretary Mary LaPlante and the new executive in carrying out the ambitious agenda set by convention.

Most of you will know that a decision to direct staff assigned to work at convention back to their normal jobs has caused some friction.

Here too the tensions of change had an influence. It was a decision that hurt people who are actively committed to the union.

We've emerged from a short job action by staff with an agreement to get back on

"Yes we have to heal. But in the long run, we'll emerge from convention even stronger."

track and work together to learn from the events.

To be sure, different perceptions of the convention's outcome will emerge. But what can't be overshadowed is the solid record of decisions adopted by delegates, and the quality and intensity of debate, which was the best I've ever been a part of within HEU.

Yes we have to overcome hurdles. Yes we have to heal. But in the long run, we'll emerge from convention even stronger and better equipped to meet the challenges of progressive reform within the health care system and our union.

voice/mail

THE GUARDIAN WELCOMES YOUR FEEDBACK. SEND LETTERS TO 2006 WEST 10TH AVE., VANCOUVER V6J 4P5 OR PHONE 1-800-909-4994. PLEASE BE BRIEF.

Surrey ratification vote process outlined

I am writing in response to the brother's letter published in the last *Guardian*. I am sorry if he feels Surrey local executive is dictatorial, but he is entitled to his opinion.

As the local chairperson and an activist for the last 14 years I do take offense on behalf of the members who attended the meeting of which the brother spoke.

Firstly, at our May 16th local union meeting, he did make a motion that didn't get seconded. As the chairperson, I pointed out that we couldn't discuss the brother's concerns if there wasn't a seconder to the motion.

As this point we did get a member to second the motion. We then had discussion and the brother brought forward his concerns on not having a meeting prior to the vote to bring forward questions

that could sway how other members voted. Executive members did point out that questions could be asked prior to voting, and we couldn't be sure that if we called a special meeting that we could get someone from Provincial Office to attend to answer questions on such short notice.

Our vote was to be held on May 22nd, but not only that, how could we be sure to get a quorum for a special meeting so close to the vote?

I don't think it's fair to those members who attended this meeting to say the table officers swayed them to defeat the brother's motion.

If the brother wasn't able to put forward a good enough argument for his motion to pass it was not because the table officers swayed the membership, it was because after debate they decided a special meeting wasn't necessary.

KATHY DARVILL,
Chairperson,
Surrey Local

One view of the meaning of equality

I go to the local meetings and everyone has their chance to speak as we're all equal. We elect people to send to conventions where they represent us as equals among the delegates deciding the future direction of the union.

From the delegates present at convention people are nominated and voted to the Provincial Executive. Any of the delegates can be elected as we are all equal.

I do not belong to any of the four caucus groups seeking special status in our union, am I still equal?

I suggest you delegates think long and hard before giving favour to any group, for any reason.

RAY ROUTLEY,
Shuswap Local

Union's equity caucuses a powerful catalyst for change

We both felt we had to respond to a recent letter in the *Guardian* from HEU brothers and sisters of Cowichan Lodge regarding their thoughts on the four equity caucuses. We are taking a wild guess here, but it is our suspicion that none of the Cowichan Lodge signees would be eligible to be included in any of those above mentioned caucuses.

For us, this is not a matter of special attention, or special funding. It is long overdue, and all HEU members should respect and support the efforts and work of the four equity caucuses. All of us need to examine our racist, homophobic, and bigoted/biased opinions and if it makes us feel uncom-

fortable or hard done by, well, folks, isn't that what it's all about? ... being uncomfortable enough so we understand that we have to change those opinions ... uncomfortable enough to want to change those opinions!

There are enough people in society ready and more than willing to be biased and bigoted. Let's not let it be an issue in HEU. This is not really an issue of special interest groups but a necessary chain of events to bring TRUE equality to all union members, actually, it would be much nicer to be able to say all peoples. Let's all support our brothers and sisters who make up these four caucuses, and stop funding them when the members of these groups feel there is no longer a need.

DIANN BEARDON &
LYNNE ANDERSON,

Mount St. Francis Local, Nelson

LPN's point taken

I am writing in regard to the article in the most recent *Guardian* "Laid off nurses: don't blame Prince George LPNs."

The article was excellent, but the title bothered me. I have been an LPN for 29 years, and I have always considered myself a "nurse," although, sometimes it seems to be a losing battle. So I would have appreciated if the title read, "Laid off RNs: don't blame Prince George LPN's."

We should not be "put down" by our own union magazine. We are nurses too!

S.M. SMITH, LPN,
Peace Arch Hospital

continued on page 11

Guardian

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

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Broadway Printers

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2



What we're up to

St. Paul's wants details of Mulchey adios handshake

To keep the boss accountable, HEU's St. Paul's local is using the Freedom of Information Act to uncover the details of the "golden handshake" being paid to hospital president Ron Mulchey, who announced his retirement in June.

What piqued the interest of local activist Roger Kishi was a reference to bridge financing to ease Mulchey's transition to early retirement contained in a

hospital document. Kishi expects to have a response from the hospital soon.

Mulchey, one of the highest paid administrators in B.C., was also chair of the old Health Labour Relations Association when HLRA's president Gordon Austin was caught in a perks scandal in 1994.

HEU proposes meeting to ease RN/LPN tensions

Union secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt has proposed a meeting with BCNU president Ivory Warner in an effort to build unity around enhanced roles for LPNs and RNs in a changing health care system.

HEU has been supportive of BCNU's efforts, says Allnutt, to expand the role of RNs within their scope of practise in areas traditionally controlled by physicians. He hopes that the meeting will help moderate

BCNU's opposition to expanding the role of LPNs and nursing team members to their full scope of practise.

The two unions are expected to sit down together in late September, after the union's convention.

Meanwhile, planning is in the works for a special conference of HEU's LPN and nursing team activists in November.

Amata transition house wins first contract

Union members at the Amata House transition house and women's shelter in Quesnel have ratified a first contract that gives them significant wage increases and other protections.

The 12 members, who counsel women and children who are victims of violence, joined HEU in April 1995. They ratified the deal in a unanimous vote Aug. 12.

"We've been proactive," says

local chairperson Linda Manky, "and I'm excited, because I believe we are the first transition house in HEU to get an agreement. I hope other transition houses will see the light, so to speak."

Other highlights of the new deal include the 36-hour week, casual addendum, basic industry benefits, package benefits like medical, dental, sick leave time, and a job posting process.

Breast cancer month highlights HEU actions to battle serious killer

October has been declared breast cancer month by the Canadian Cancer Society, and it's a good opportunity to highlight the impassioned debate on the issue at HEU's recent convention.

Delegates unanimously approved a broad resolution to press for action on a disease

that is one of the major killers of women. It included a call for a public campaign involving HEU and other labour organizations to lobby the ministry of health for increased public education and improved access to mammogram testing, particularly for women in rural areas. (Early detection through regular self-examination and mammogram testing is still the best prevention.)

It also directs HEU to lobby federal and provincial government so that breast reconstruction surgery for medical reasons be covered by medicare, and calls on all governments to increase research funding a cure.

This year about 2,800 women in B.C. will be diagnosed with breast cancer, says Cancer Society spokesperson Barbara Kaminsky. About 1,000 women will die.

continued on page 4

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION! HEU activists from across the province gathered in Vancouver in late August to tell their stories for an HEU video production about discrimination in the workplace. The video should be released late this year.



Allevato makes mayoralty bid

Former HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato is running for mayor in Vancouver, at the head of a progressive slate of candidates vying to unseat incumbent Philip Owen and his pro-business group that controls the city's municipal government.



ALLEVATO

Allevato, who now works as a lawyer for CUPE, stepped down as one of HEU's top officers at the end of 1995. Part of the Coalition of Progressive Electors ticket, Allevato slammed Owen for the recent council decision to implement a flat charge for garbage collection, which will bring big tax savings for owners of expensive homes but tax boosts for the average city homeowner.

HEU is offering strong backing to Allevato, said union president Fred Muzin. The COPE campaign office is at 2425 Main St., 708-9561.

Pay equity agreement boosts pay in dozens of HEU job classifications

HEU REACHED agreement Aug. 29 with the Health Employers' Association of B.C. on pay equity adjustments for 1996 and 1997. The agreement arises out of the Job Value Comparison Plan in Article 69 of the Master Collective Agreement.

In the report of industrial inquiry commissioner Vince Ready which formed the basis of a new collective

month for eligible classifications, and the pay equity adjustment for April 1, 1997, has been set at \$34 a month for eligible classifications.

The groups scheduled to receive the \$29 and \$34-a-month increases fall into two categories.

The first category is those members with a gender-based wage gap greater than 10 per cent, as defined by the target wage rates set in the Job Value Comparison Plan.

The second category is patient care technical classifications where wage discrimination is both gender based and bargaining unit based.

Members in the Cook II classification will receive an adjustment of \$125 a month on April 1, 1996, and Charge Transportation Attendant T7 classification will receive an adjustment of \$68 a month on April 1, 1996, to deal with classification anomalies.

"We are pleased that we reached agreement on the pay equity increases, so that members will receive their entitlements shortly," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"The monthly increases are very modest, however, because the gender-based wage gap is so wide in health care that one per cent of payroll gets spread very thin."

The new pay rates, which show which classifications are receiving the adjustments, have been sent out to all locals.

More information on pay equity is contained in the pamphlet, *Pay Equity, Recognizing the Value of Our Work*, which was sent out to all locals in January, 1994.

The Job Value Comparison plan which underlies the current pay equity increases in the collective agreement was first negotiated in the 1992 round of bargaining.

'We're pleased that members will receive their entitlements shortly'

agreement for the two years ending March 31, 1996, Ready set aside one per cent of payroll in each year for pay equity adjustments.

The pay equity adjustment retroactive to April 1, 1996, has been set at \$29 a

Ready's first interpretation a security win

The process of interpreting the new Master Collective Agreement has begun with a win for HEU and other unions.

In his first clarification of his industrial inquiry report that formed the basis of the current facilities sector deal, Vince Ready upheld HEU's position that there should be an uninterrupted transition from the old Employment Security Agreement (ESA) to the new collective agreement.

It means the 275 employees who were laid off after March 30, 1996, when the ESA expired, are entitled to return to work on March 30, 1996, with up to 12 months of employment security.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

continued from page 3

Incidents of violence in long term care to be studied by the WCB

Faced with a sharp rise in workplace injuries resulting from incidents of violence in long-term care facilities, the WCB will be conducting a study over the next year to get at the roots of the problem.

Six long-term care facilities across B.C. have been chosen by noted SFU criminology professor Neil Boyd, who has been hired by the WCB to carry out the review.

Boyd is set to begin the study, which guarantees anonymity for the facilities and caregivers participating. He'll review incident reports, and conduct interviews with administrators and front line caregivers, whose experiences are "really crucial in understanding this problem," he said.

Boyd said lost time injuries from incidents of violence have cost the WCB millions, "so obviously trying to make sense of that is part of my job."

In 1993 Boyd completed a ground breaking study for the ministry of women's equality on violence in the workplace. It was during this first study that Boyd uncovered the mounting problem of violence in long-term care facilities.

All HEU staff at the six study facilities are encouraged to participate.

Employer walks on Merritt food service transfer deal

Merritt food services workers suffered a late summer setback, when their employer cancelled the purchase of cook chill equipment and walked away from a transfer of service agreement that met the needs of both parties.

In an example of bad faith consultation, the Merritt employer – which operates the Nicola Valley Hospital and Coquihalla/Gillis long-term care facility – cancelled the planned purchase of cook chill technology to consolidate food services

at an upgraded Coquihalla/Gillis kitchen.

The transfer deal that the employer ripped – which the union spent six months negotiating – protected dietary workers at both facilities, utilizing voluntary options and retrain-

ing programs. Now the hospital is creating havoc by displacing dietary workers at Nicola Valley, a move that the union is fighting.

Employers, unions ink deal on BMET transfer

HEU, HSA and HEABC signed a memorandum of agreement in August covering the transfer of Biomedical Engineering Technologists (BMETs) from HSA to HEU.

Under the agreement, BMETs transferring to HEU from HSA will continue to be covered by the terms and conditions of the HSA Master Agreement until it expires on March 31, 1998. This includes dues levels, wages and benefits, and BMETs transferring to HEU will remain on the HSA long-term disability plan.

The transfer of BMETs from HSA to HEU takes effect the beginning of the first pay



HEU activists took part in the August 4 Gay Pride parade under rainy skies in Vancouver. More than 10,000 attended.



SOLIDARITY HEU's Mary LaPlante, centre, and HEU staff union president Julie Eckert, right, met this summer with Nicaraguan activist Josefina Ulloa to discuss the women's health prevention project in Ulloa's country funded by the unions.

Employers share blame in Austin severance travesty

Former health labour relations boss Gordon Austin will walk away with a \$525,000 severance payout in a controversial payoff condemned by Premier Clark and called a "travesty" by HEU.

"We're just as angry as Premier Clark that a disgraced high-spending health employer – who always argued at the bargaining table that there was never any money for low paid health care workers – will walk away with half a million dollars," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

Austin was fired from his job in 1994 as president of the old Health Labour Relations Association. (The Health Employers Association of B.C. replaced HLRA in 1995.)

While the results of an RCMP investigation showed no grounds for criminal charges to be laid, the HEABC board – at the advice of the RCMP – was con-

templating civil action against Austin to recover more than \$10,000. At the same time government troubleshooter Jo Surich acted on his own to begin the severance negotiations. Clark fired Surich for his actions.

Allnutt says the high-paid administrators at B.C. hospitals should shoulder most of the blame for what he called "nothing short of a travesty."

"They were the ones who failed to monitor Austin's spending habits, and they sat on internal reports for six months which identified problems."

"And they were the ones who negotiated the lavish severance package in Austin's employment contract that served as the goalpost for subsequent negotiations initiated by Surich."

Allnutt says the government now has some real ammunition to force health employers to be more accountable.

HEU spells out changes for New Directions in NDP's regionalization review

THE NEW Directions regionalization process has fallen short in many ways, such as a lack of input on decisions from workers and their unions, and unsafe working conditions, HEU says in a submission presented to the group of MLAs reviewing regionalization.

HEU also called for a number of changes, including better integration of acute and community services, longer term funding, and protection of the nursing team, in the submission, which was presented August 21 by HEU president Fred Muzin and financial secretary Mary LaPlante to the regionalization assessment team.

The team, which is due to report to health minister Joy MacPhail in early October, is made up of New Democrat MLAs Mike Farnworth (Port Coquitlam), Bill Goodacre (Bulkley Valley-Stikine), Erda Walsh (Kootenay), and Graeme Bowbrick (New Westminster).

"Instead of supporting a fundamental

and progressive restructuring of health care, regionalization appeared to be simply adding another layer of management onto what was already a top heavy bureaucracy," HEU's brief says.

So far in three years of New Directions, regionalization has focused almost exclusively on questions of governance rather than service provision, the continuum of care from acute care to the community has not been put in place, the ranks of management have not been reduced, working conditions are still unsafe, and workers and unions have little input in decisions on restructuring, the brief says.

As well, HEU says the private sector rather than the public sector has been driving the move to shared services.

HEU's recommendations include demonstration projects for restructuring, elimination of the bargaining barrier between the community sector and the facilities sector in health care, and more utilization of LPNs and other HEU caregivers.

Four union activists join race in upcoming municipal elections

Four HEU activists have tossed their hats in the the municipal election ring, and they need your support to win in the important Nov. 16 B.C.-wide municipal elections.

Long-time union activist Jean Birch is running for a council seat in Quesnel. A payroll clerk, Birch is secretary treasurer of the Quesnel local.

In the City of North Vancouver, Kiwanis Lyn activist Chris Dorais is in the school board race, while HEU staffer and Lions Gate member Kristina Vandervoort is bidding for a school board position in the North Vancouver District.

And HEU Provincial Office secretary Gail Paquette is running for a council

position in Richmond. Paquette is a member of the Princeton local.

Getting active in municipal elections was an important theme at HEU's recent convention, where union members were reminded of the connection between union partisanship and progressive local government.

"Municipal governments can affect your livelihood. They've got a big say in health care and the regional board system," John Fitzpatrick, secretary-treasurer of the Vancouver & District Labour Council, told convention.

Support the progressive candidates running in your local, and don't forget to vote Nov. 16.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

period after facilities have been notified of the memorandum of agreement.

Prince Rupert protest wins action on health and safety concerns

Prince Rupert Hospital's pharmacy has been shut down temporarily to deal with health and safety concerns first raised by HEU members who staged an August sit-in to protest unsafe conditions.

The problems emerged when the hospital's regular pharmacist took a leave, and was replaced by a temporary appointment who wasn't trained. "It bears out our concerns that working conditions in the pharmacy weren't safe for workers or for patients," says Prince Rupert local chair Nancy Zacota.

One of the near fatal mistakes made while the regular pharmacist was absent included an

improperly mixed chemo treatment that would have been a lethal cocktail if administered.

The pharmacy will open only after a review and independent audit of the situation is conducted. Members at the Prince Rupert local took the Aug. 21 action using Section 8.24 of the WCB regulations which covers the right to refuse unsafe work. Dozens of health workers participated.

250 code will change long distance calls

Remember that area code changes that will soon be implemented in B.C. will change the way union members contact HEU offices.

The Lower Mainland, Sunshine Coast, Hope and D'Arcy retain the 604 area code. All other regions of the province have a new area code, 250.

Don't forget that you can

Union president Fred Muzin, left, took part in the summer convention of health care workers in Pennsylvania, where members of SEIU local 1199P are waging a bitter battle with the long-term care giant Beverly Corp. that's using scabs to replace striking workers even after the strikes are over.

phone any of HEU's offices toll free. The numbers are listed on page 15 of the *Guardian*.

Election donations list an interesting read

In the recent provincial election HEU contributed \$69,700 — about \$1.66 per member — to Glen Clark's central campaign. The financial support is detailed in the *Elections B.C.* report on who gave what to whom in the May election.

While most of the \$3.8 million raised by the NDP came from individuals, the bulk of Gordon Campbell's campaign



cash came from corporations, which included a number of private sector health promoters.

The giant lab testing company MDS and its Metro McNair subsidiary gave the Liberals more than \$10,000, hedging their bets on election day by donating \$1,000 to the

NDP at the last moment.

Private clinic operator Brian Day's company International Medical Centres Inc. donated \$3,200 to Campbell, while another two-tier care proponent, the B.C. Medical Association, handed over \$18,000 to the Liberals.

Reflecting on NAC

Recent march against poverty is proudest accomplishment of former status of women leader Sunera Thobani

by Chris Gainor

WHEN Sunera Thobani looks back on her three years as president of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, she lists this spring's Women's March Against Poverty as her biggest accomplishment.

The march began May 15 in Vancouver at the Canadian Labour Congress meeting and ended a month later at the NAC annual meeting where Thobani stepped down and was replaced by Joan Grant-Cummings of Toronto. About 100,000 people took part in rallies across Canada connected with the march.

'The partnership we've built between the women's movement and labour is an important one'

"The thing I'm most proud of was the Women's March Against Poverty," Thobani told the *Guardian*. "The partnership we've built between the women's movement and labour is an important one. The women's march is a major step forward for the labour movement."

Women working in unions have been able to make them more sensitive to women's needs. At the same time, unions have been more hierarchical than the women's movement, and the march has been a good learning experience for the union movement, she said.

Thobani has returned to Vancouver where she will be teaching Women's

Studies at Simon Fraser University while she completes her PhD thesis.

While at NAC, she gained headlines and controversy over her efforts to combat racism and make women of colour an integral part of the women's movement at all levels.

The charge that she concentrated on this issue to the exclusion of others is "ridiculous," she said, because during her first year in office, the main issue was the 1993 federal election, when NAC took an active role and prepared a voter's guide. Then NAC was involved in the battle to preserve social programs against federal Liberal cuts to health care and social programs. And in the final year of her leadership, NAC was organizing and carrying out the women's march.

"It was a challenging position and I learned a lot from it," she said. "The level of racism that was directed at me when I became president of NAC was incredible. NAC is dealing head on with the issue of racism. There's more work unions have to do to deal with that. How can you fight for employment equity on the outside and not practice it on the inside?"

Thobani is a single mother of a daughter now aged 11, and during her three years as president, Thobani found there was little respite from the demands of office.

"I couldn't take a break because it seemed like the whole country was waiting for me to fall flat on my face," she said. "It put a lot of pressure on my



BREAD & ROSES joining Thobani, inset and above centre, at the Vancouver women's march kickoff are Angela Schira of the B.C. Federation of Labour, CLC vice-president Nancy Riche and CUPE national president Judy Darcy.



daughter. She was overjoyed when I helped young women of colour get involved in politics.

She said NAC will be active in the coming federal election, and will produce another voter's guide.

NAC will also have a lot of work to do defending social programs. One of the key demands of the women's march was a Canada Social Security Act which would set national standards for social programs much like the Canada Health Act does for health care.

"This will be a much tougher time than the last election. No one could guess the Liberals would become more right wing than the Conservatives were."

Thobani will continue to sit on NAC's board for the coming year, and hopes to

BALANCING



IT ALL

PRESIDENT'S DESK



Vigilance, not revenge, required to heal wounds

by Fred Muzin

This year's 20th HEU biennial convention should have been a time to celebrate — a joyous, historic occasion when equity, justice and fairness became entrenched in our Constitution. Our last Convention established caucuses to make HEU more inclusive, to reach out to our Sisters and Brothers from the First Nations, People with disAbilities, People of Ethnic Diversity and Lesbians and Gay Men groups, to learn and to share.

This year's delegates were prepared to significantly advance these causes.

Unfortunately, as a result of a few individuals choosing not to respect HEU traditions, convention '96 will be remembered with tremendous bitterness and hostility as a time when HEU members lost the safe environment where they could be honest and fully represent the views of the members who had selected them to attend.

Members should not be deceived into believing that the problems we now face have anything to do with equity or the caucuses.

There is a mood for revenge. We must overcome this for the healing and rebuilding to begin.

What has occurred is an attempt to change the culture and democratic traditions of HEU without a mandate to do so. Many of us who have attended conventions of other organizations are accustomed to floor management whereby people are lined up at all of the microphones, given written speeches to read and end debate by procedural motions after a powerful orator has spoken, thereby circumventing balanced debate.

For over half a century, HEU members have consciously adopted a different culture and policies.

Our members speak from the heart rather than read prepared text. We don't utilize pro and con microphones to ensure balanced debate — we prefer spontaneity. We don't lobby our committees about the priority of amendments and resolutions.

The distinct advantage that our culture provides is excellent attendance during all debates, and a safe environment in which delegates know they are present to work, rather than to spend time resisting political pressure and manipulation.

Evidence of this is the large number of issues traditionally debated and voted on at our conventions. The alternative that was clearly demonstrated this year was the number of amendments that were never debated and must wait for 1998 to be addressed.

HEU's time honoured culture has been severely violated without the democratic debate we deserve. The wounds are extremely deep.

There is a mood right now for revenge. We must overcome this natural tendency in order for the healing and rebuilding to begin. It will be a long and painful process.

How do we prevent future attempts to undermine our brand of democracy? Certainly we need much more education and preparation in advance of convention, especially for first time delegates.

If each of us is trained to understand politics, recognize attempts at manipulation, and take personal responsibility to remain vigilant and outspoken, we can avoid feeling abused and ensure that together we all determine the ground rules.

Remember that the lyrics to our songs are more than just words — "you've got to watch over liberty, each and every day..."



DONOR James Pratt's fireplace fund got a boost from AIDS activist Elizabeth Taylor, who visited Pratt, at right, at the May Gutteridge Hospice in August.

Fireplace is Pratt's legacy

by Stephen Howard

James Pratt knows he's going to die soon. "I'll get pneumonia one of these days and not wake up in the morning," the former HEU shop steward says matter of factly.

But before that day comes, Pratt wants to complete his goal of raising \$15,000 to build a fireplace at a new hospice being planned by St. James Social Services Society, which operates the May Gutteridge Hospice in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside where Pratt's lived since March.

A St. Paul's hospital cook who's been on LTD since 1991, Pratt was diagnosed with AIDS in 1988. He describes himself as an "emotional basket case" and close to suicide before he found the calming influence of the unique six-bedroom facility where fellow HEU members provide care in a homelike setting.

His new safe haven has given him dignity and allowed him to grow and contribute to his community. "I'm feeling worthwhile. I have no family in Vancouver so this became my home."

The fireplace at Gutteridge is the centre of life for the six residents who share common surroundings and a common thread: they're all there to die. "When I

came here and saw the love and homelike environment I wanted my name not on a tombstone but in a new hospice."

So Pratt got the go ahead to fundraise for the fireplace project, and his name will be on the hearth when St. James' new Cottage Hospice is built.

He's almost halfway to his target with donations coming from the St. Paul's local and individual donations from members of HEU's caucus of people with disabilities.

Actress and AIDS activist Elizabeth Taylor anted in a significant contribution when she visited the Gutteridge facility during August's international AIDS conference in Vancouver.

Hospice care, says Pratt, runs on a different philosophy than hospital palliative or respite care units. And Gutteridge — the only free standing hospice in B.C. — also operates at significantly less cost per patient day than hospital care. But so far, the facility and hospice model has received only lukewarm financial support from Victoria.

"I have a lot of pain," he says. "When I have stress and anxiety it manifests itself in pain. Living here eliminates those anxieties."

• May Gutteridge Hospice and James Pratt are profiled on the CBC program

AFTER



THE SHIFT

NOTEBOOK

Chretien's claimed defense of Medicare rings hollow

by Chris Gainor

As the next federal election approaches, the federal Liberals are busy setting themselves up as the defenders of Medicare.

Immediately after the provincial premiers called for a diminished federal role in enforcing Medicare and social programs, Prime Minister Jean Chretien shot back with rhetoric we're sure to hear a great deal more of as the election approaches.

"If you abandon enforcement, you abandon Medicare," Chretien said. "It's why we have a national government that makes sure we have services that are at a certain level across the land."

What Chretien didn't say was that if you abandon funding, you just as surely abandon Medicare. And that's exactly what Chretien and the Liberals are doing — abandoning funding of health care.

Prodded by New Democrats, the Liberals brought in national Medicare in the late 1960s. A decade later, Pierre Trudeau's government began cutting back, and Brian Mulroney's Tories deepened the cuts to Medicare and social programs.

While Chretien and other Liberals joined in the chorus of opposition to the Mulroney cuts, once in office they stepped up the rate of funding reductions. Finance Minister Paul Martin's infernal in-



'The right wing antics of Klein and Harris are allowing Chretien to mislead Canadians'

vention, the Canada Health and Social Transfer, kicked in this spring with the biggest ever cut to Medicare since its inception.

The results are predictable. The provinces complain with some justification that a federal government that is no longer paying the piper should no longer call the tune. The right-wing antics of Ralph Klein in Alberta and Mike Harris in Ontario are allowing Chretien to mislead Canadians with his claim that he is protecting Medicare.

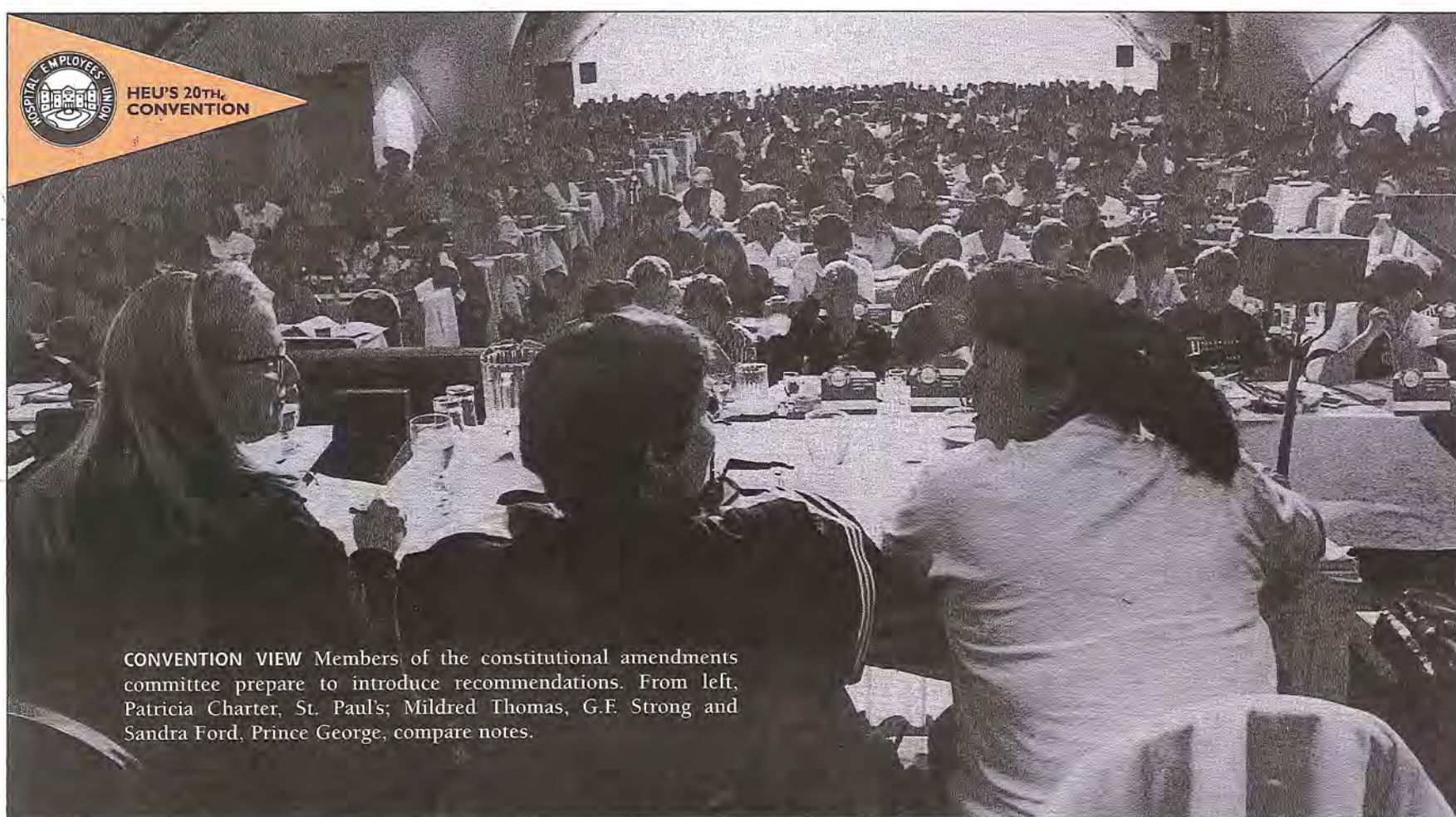
At the same time, Canadian doctors are promoting privatization and two-tier health care as a means of protecting their own incomes against the effects of federal cutbacks.

As the federal cuts continue, the calls for provincialization and privatization of Medicare will grow louder. And the Liberal claim to be the defender of Medicare will become hollow.

Canadians should examine the Liberal record, not in the light of their affection for Chretien but in the harsh light of reality. We should ask if we can afford to maintain the Liberal and Tory tax breaks for wealthy Canadians and corporations while funding for Medicare continues to be reduced.

We should also ask if Medicare can be defended if the only opposition in the House of Commons is a Reform Party which wants to cut deeper into health spending than the Liberals are already doing.

We must also ask if we can continue to deny a voice to federal New Democrats, who prior to the 1993 federal election provided the only real opposition to the Liberal and Tory attacks on Medicare and social programs.



CONVENTION VIEW Members of the constitutional amendments committee prepare to introduce recommendations. From left, Patricia Charter, St. Paul's; Mildred Thomas, G.F. Strong and Sandra Ford, Prince George, compare notes.

KATE WILLIAMS PHOTO

NEW DELEGATES SAY:



Sophia Dricos
HOUSEKEEPER
MT. ST. FRANCIS

"The convention has touched my heart in many ways, it's been very emotional. It opened my eyes, to hear so many testimonials."



Terry Murray
INSTRUMENT MECHANIC
VGH

"I thought it was a good chance to meet, hear and understand the issues of both the community and facilities sectors."



Lorna Ayson
COMM. SUPPORT WORKER
S.J. WILLIS HOUSE

"Overall I had a really good experience. The strength of our union is especially encouraging for those of us in new certifications."

Delegates in mood for change, adopt equity initiatives, action plans for community bargaining and LPNs, and map out regionalization course

Convention embraces diversity

THE MORE than 560 delegates who took part in HEU's 20th biennial convention clearly had an appetite for change as they adopted important, and in some cases historic, resolutions to chart the union's course for the next two years.

Centre stage at the Sept. 16 to 20 convention was a constitutional change to formalize HEU's four equity caucuses—established at the last convention—to battle inequality and discrimination in the workplace and within the union.

The powerfully-debated resolution was approved overwhelmingly and gave constitutional standing to the four caucuses—First Nations, Ethnic Diversity, Lesbians and Gay Men, and People With Disabilities—as well as one delegate credential for each new standing committee at union conventions and wage policy conferences.

In other convention highlights, delegates elected a provincial executive with 11 new faces, heard keynote speakers like B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken Georgetti and CUPE national president Judy Darcy, adopted plans to press for action on community bargaining and LPNs, and charted policy on regionalization. They also debated many policy resolutions and constitutional changes, including one successful amendment which expanded the role of the president in the union's decision making structure.

But these positive events were almost overshadowed by a decision made late in the convention by the outgoing Provincial Executive to send most of the union's staff assigned to convention back to their normal duties. Taken because of perceived concerns about the role staff were playing at the convention, the decision spilled discordantly onto the convention floor in the last two days of events.

The equity issue, on the third day of convention, featured two hours of emotional debate with tears, laughter, anger and pride as delegates recounted incidents of discrimination they have suffered, some of them at the hands of other members.

Louise Hutchinson of the Children's Local and of the Lesbian

and Gay Caucus, told of how she and other lesbians have seen attitudes to them change after they came out of the closet. Despite being an activist and having written many bargaining demands, her local did not send her to last year's wage policy conference, she said.

Mary-Lee Jetko of the Mount St. Francis local told of the racial slurs she and other members of her family have faced. And despite being chair of her local, she nearly wasn't elected as a delegate to convention.

"I felt so discriminated against. I was the chairperson and I wasn't going to be able to come here," she said, fighting back tears.

"Let us go forward to unity and towards equality, let us step forward to make history in our union."

Some delegates opposed the constitutional amendment, which had come to the floor with the endorsement of more than 20 locals, because they felt the equity standing committees should not have the right to each send a delegate to conventions and wage policy conferences.

Laura Neil of the Royal Jubilee local said giving the committees delegates would establish a "two tier system" of delegates, which isn't necessary because many members of the caucuses are present at convention as local delegates.

Wrapping up the debate, Lorna Partridge of the Arranglen Local said: "Let us go forward to unity and towards equality. Most of all, let us step forward to make history in our union."

After convention, the new Provincial Executive took steps to heal the rift with staff. Secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt said the events "hurt people who are actively committed to the union." He says an agreement had been reached with union staff to work together to heal and to learn from the events of convention.



NOTEBOOK

ALLEVATO PLEDGED, ENDORSED
Convention delegates gave former HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato an overwhelming show of support for her next job application—Mayor of Vancouver.

Allevato, who was made an honorary union member in recognition of her 10-year contribution to HEU, is running on the Coalition of Progressive Electors (COPE) slate in the November 16 civic election. Her candidacy was endorsed at convention by CUPE national president Judy Darcy and B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken George.

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B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken George told delegates that the public release of campaign contributions and donors shows that B.C.'s major media outlets were heavy financial backers of Gordon Campbell's Liberals in the May 28 provincial election.

George told delegates the corporate media for criticizing labour's support of the NDP while concealing its own support of the Liberal Party. Conrad Black's Hollinger Inc.—the majority shareholder of the Vancouver-Sun and Province—never reported its Liberal campaign contribution to its readers, he said. Nor did Western International Communications (WIC) inform BCTV viewers or KGNW listeners of its Liberal loyalties. "We never made any secret of our donations," said George. "But Conrad Black did. Media corporations should not make political donations on one hand, then claim to be objective on the other."



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CLERICAL WORKERS held a special meeting to discuss technological change.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Rekindling passion for social justice

With an historic collective agreement under their belts, HEU members need to stay militant in the fight for fairness, says union president Fred Muzin.

Muzin's report cited numerous encouraging developments since last convention. The facilities sector agreement that includes employment security provisions, has allowed the union to "shift from being defensive to being proactive" on several fronts. The union was instrumental, for example, in reflecting the NDP government on May 28.

Clark's budget balance won't hurt health

THE B.C. government's planned \$750-billion budget cuts will not come at the cost of health care services or the workers who provide them, Premier Glen Clark promised delegates.

Clark, speaking at his first provincial labour convention since the NDP's election victory, drew a clear distinction between his party's deficit reduction plans and those of Gordon Campbell.

"His primary concern was a \$1-billion tax break to banks and corporations," Clark said. "A victory for Gordon Campbell would have been a massive blow for medicare."

Despite a \$435 million cut by the federal government this year, the NDP is committed to a \$200-million increase for health care, including \$25 million to cut hospital waiting lists and keep up with an aging population.

Clark told delegates he was dismayed by the number of NDP supporters who disagreed with his public support, before the election, of a renewed Employment Security Agreement.

"They said 'Gee, why did you do that, Glen? Don't you realize that's not a popular thing to do? We're behind — we want to win,'" he recalled. "Well, one of the things that was key to our success was to be completely and brutally honest about whose side we're on."

'Whether you're working in the community, or in the hospital, you should get paid the same'

PREMIER CLARK was warmly greeted by delegates, on, because people want to hear that. And we have always said that health care reform should not come off the backs of the workers."

Clark told delegates that his government intends to balance the budget, but that this goal need not come at the expense of health care services. "I think it's going to test us, I think the challenge is very, very real. Can a social democratic party committed to the values we've come to believe in, balance the budget? I believe that we can."

During the question period following his speech, the premier pledged to aim his cutting knife at management.

"If we are to protect public services and make cuts, then we have to cut fairly deeply in that relatively unproductive layer of management right across the public service," said Clark.

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Don Payzant of the Children's local said: "I would appreciate HEU coming up with a coordinated strategy to deal with Marriott and other corporations. It's what we need to do to get these companies out and get them to stay out. Each time they fall, they also learn. And they keep coming back."



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CHRIS ALLNUTT
Secretary-Business
Manager



MARY LAPLANTE
Financial
Secretary



DAVID RIDLEY
1st Vice-President



**COLLEEN
FITZPATRICK**
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ment a plan of action up to and including job action" en route to a fair and equitable agreement in the communities sector.

"Bill 48 has created a ghetto," said Margaret Cavin, a residential counsellor in a group home who works a 40-hour work week and pays for her own benefits. "I make \$13.12 an hour with no employment security, successorship rights or pension plan. The government needs to get rid of the wall that Bill 48 has created between the facilities and community sector."

Richard Dennis of the Yaletown local urged HEU members in the facilities sector not to become complacent about the issue.

"When those people joined this union, we made a commitment to them, and this union lives up to its commitments," said Dennis. "We are not going to let these people down."

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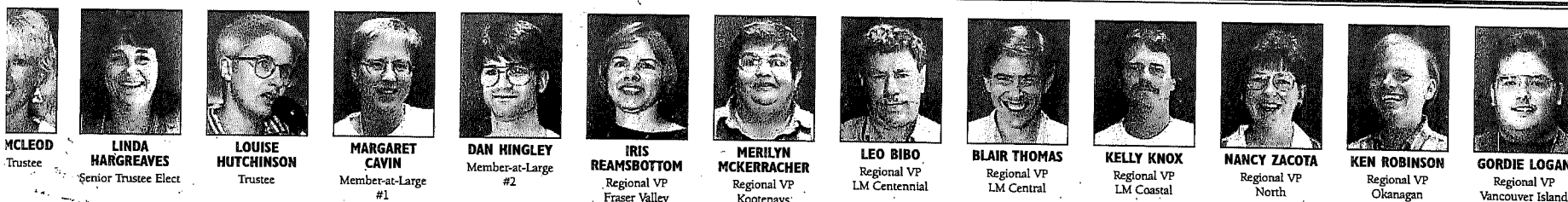
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Muzin also took the federal government to task for its regressive social legislation.

"Today's ticking time bomb is the dismantling of the Canada Pension Plan and the attempt to create conflict between retirees and young people," he said.

"HEU membership is more than an insurance policy for wages and benefits—it is a commitment to being at the leading edge in demanding and achieving fairness for all."

Muzin, who was reelected president by acclamation for a second full term, has assumed the position as HEU's B.C. Federation of Labour officer. He also serves on CUPE's national executive board.



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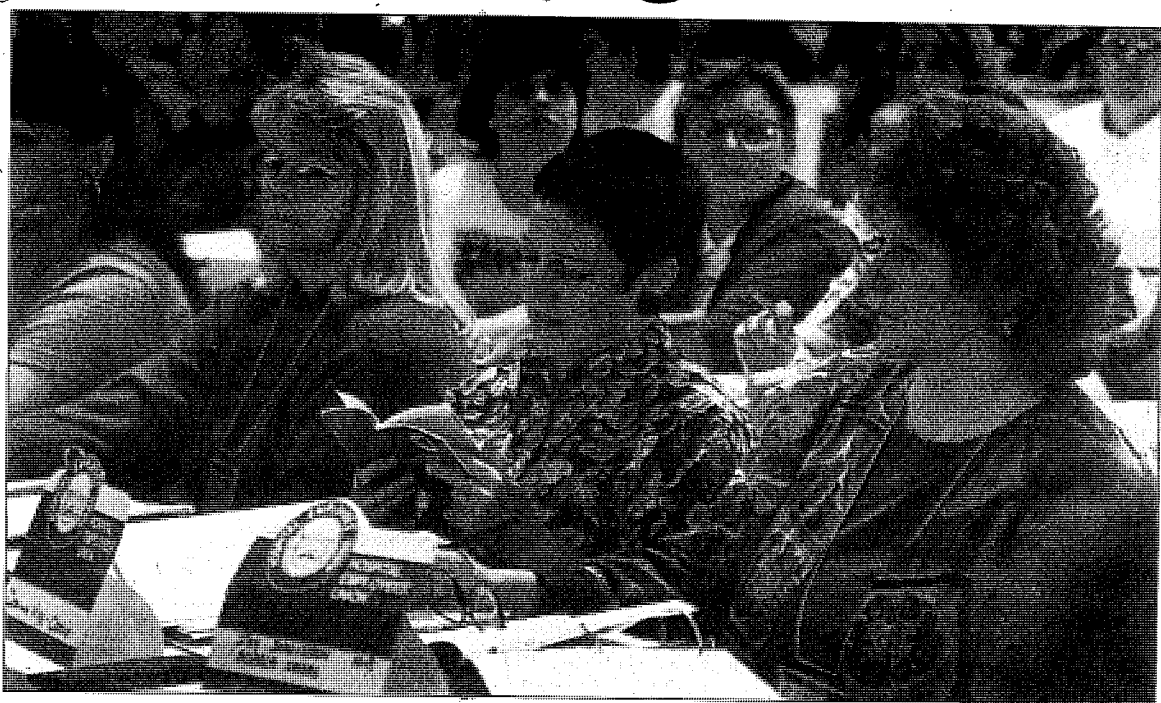
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The union is 2,000 members stronger, said Allnutt, and, with four active equity caucuses, more inclusive. The facilities collective agreement with employment security was achieved without a single day's lost pay, and the union played a significant role in electing the first second-term NDP government. HEU also withstood the Bill 48 challenge involving a review of the definition of paramedical professionals.

He also welcomed Victoria's decision to put regionalization plans on hold. "The process had begun to drift, with the powerful in the health care system — management, the private sector and doctors — taking advantage."

Allnutt also pledged to get a fair agreement for health and support workers in the community subsector. "HEU will not tolerate a wage ghetto for these workers," he said.

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PRESIDENTIAL ROLE EXPANDED

Convention delegates also approved a constitutional measure that expands the role of the president in the union's administrative process. Before, the secretary-business manager acted under the direction of convention and the Provincial Executive. Now, the position also functions under the direction of the president. Current secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt supported the measure. "It's part of the evolution of change within the union," he said.

BCNU LEADER CHALLENGED ON ANTI-LPN POSITION

The convention appearance of B.C. Nurses Union president Ivory Warner was a lightning rod for delegate debate of recent statements by BCNU leaders against the use of LPNs. VGH delegate Leo Bibb challenged Warner—who attended to deliver solidarity greetings—on her recent statements regarding the HEU's proposal to use the VGH education fund to upgrade LPNs. Warner denied that BCNU is trying to phase out LPNs. "Sometimes our jurisdictions cross over," she said, "but we don't need less of you. We need more of us and more of you, and we're very clear about that."



WARNER

GAVEL GOES TO QUESNEL ALCOHOL AND DRUG

In recognition of their struggle to win a first contract, members of the small Quesnel Drug and Alcohol local were awarded the coveted convention gavel. The gavel is awarded each convention to the HEU local which epitomizes the union's traditions of solidarity and militancy. The four member local stuck together through thick and thin to win a collective agreement after more than 200 days on the picket line in 1995.



FAIRNESS Coast Foundation delegate Marty Norgren wants a fair settlement for his fellow community sector care givers.



FIGHTING FOR LPNS VGH delegate Doreen Plouffe was one of many LPNs who took to the microphone to urge the union to adopt tougher measures to press for full utilization of LPNs and the nursing team.

KATE WILLIAMS PHOTO

LPNs set to wage fight, get support

LICENCED Practical Nurses (LPNs) received a strong show of support at convention, thanks to a resolution promoting full LPN utilization within community based health care as well as established facilities.

"We're in for the fight of our lives," said Doreen Plouffe of the VGH local. "If we are to remain LPNs in this union, we have to look to our brothers and sisters to support us."

HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt pledged the Provincial Executive's commitment to the issue. "LPNs are essential to a progressive public health care system," he told delegates. "We have to work with our members to help them understand that, and we need to work with the nurses union so that all nurses are used to the full extent of their abilities."

There was continuing scepticism, however, about BCNU president Ivory Warner's willingness to cooperate.

Warner's presence as a guest speaker at convention was questioned by Plouffe and VGH local chair Leo Bibb (see related story), who argued that LPNs are currently being laid off partly because of BCNU's lack of support.

Allnutt responded that HEU has frequently had disagreements with BCNU but has always worked hard to reach a fair compromise.

The way forward, says Allnutt, is to work together on issues that unite us as we work on solving our jurisdictional problems.

HEU's LPN and nursing team activists will meet later in November at a special conference designed to launch a nursing team campaign.

Our seniors left to fend for themselves?

The Canada Pension Plan is basically financially sound says pension expert Monica Townson, but radical and unwarranted changes now being considered by the federal government could mean the old age pension plan is only five years away from extinction, she predicted.

Townson delivered a sobering convention address on the future of social security benefits for seniors.

By the year 2001, she forecast old age security benefits will be converted to a welfare program with eligibility based on family income.



TOWNSON

And Ottawa bureaucrats are currently drafting legislation that would gut the companion Canada Pension Plan.

"We are moving away from our longstanding commitment to collective responsibility for our seniors to an individual system where people are expected to fend for themselves," she said.

Federal Liberals in privatization concert

National CUPE president Judy Darcy's opening day convention address was a rousing call "rip the masks off" the federal Liberal government and expose the hypocrisy of public sector cutbacks.

Darcy also congratulated delegates for their role in reelecting the NDP government. "What you might not know is how important that election was for CUPE members across this country. It gives us hope that we can push back the



DARCY

right — not only in B.C. but in Alberta, Ontario and across the country."

Despite success on the provincial front, however, Darcy reminded delegates that "the right never gives up and our gains are never secured."

Darcy pointed to the concerted efforts of Jean Chretien, the Canadian Medical Association, and drug companies to undermine Canada's \$72 billion health care system. "They want to cash in on the elderly and the ill. They want to cash in on that \$72 billion. It's about time we tore the masks off this Liberal government and exposed them for what they really are — and that's enemies of health care."

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

HEU meets challenges, stays financially sound

Despite the pressures of bargaining and the push to win re-election for the NDP, HEU's financial situation remains solid, union financial secretary Mary LaPlante reported to convention delegates.

"In this year's bargaining, HEU was under enormous pressure due to the Employment Security Agreement expiring on March 31," said LaPlante.

"We all knew that we were in for the fight of our lives. It was not business as usual; it was a matter of pulling out all the stops to ensure that our members

received a fair and equitable settlement."

HEU's finances were stretched further by the provincial election call in May.

The campaign against Bill 48, which could have affected more than 50 per cent of HEU classifications, was also costly to the union.

"The money spent was absolutely imperative to ensure HEU would continue to exist," said LaPlante.

Since the 1994 convention, the union has increased its certifications through Bill 48 and organizing by 69 new locals for a total of 2,241 new members.

At the time of convention call, there were 311 locals. Of that number, 154 locals (49.5 per cent) have less than 50 members; 26 locals have less than 10 members. Locals were encouraged at the last biennial convention to merge on a voluntary basis;



LAPLANTE

since then, three locals in Kelowna have merged.

LaPlante also reconfirmed the union's support for education programs.

However, while financial pressures forced cancellation of this year's summer school, LaPlante pledged that the popular union education program will be held in 1997.

Also encouraging is that the strike fund is "very healthy," with \$9.5 million invested. On the operating side, the union ran a small deficit in the 1995 fiscal year, which will be offset by a small projected surplus in 1996. LaPlante said the union is committed to responsible spending.

Record 25 bursaries awarded to students

HEU HAS awarded a record 25 bursaries to HEU members and their spouses and children to attend post-secondary institutions in the 1996/97 academic year.

Union financial secretary Mary LaPlante said more than \$11,000 in bursary allocations was approved by the Provincial Executive for this increasingly popular program.

"Post-secondary education is expensive," says LaPlante, "and ensuring that HEU members and their families have the financial resources to expand their skills and horizons is a priority of our union."

Bursary recipients include Jillian Boyce (daughter of Eagle Park member Susan Boyce); Louise

Buschman (mother Loes Berling, Delta); St. Mary's local member Cailean Cameron; Sara Clancy (mother Joan Clancy, Burns Lake); Michele Farrell (mother Faye Thompson, Lions Gate); and Yasmin Hasham (daughter of Delta member Mariam Hasham).

Seven union members are also returning for studies. They are Fellburn/Queens Park member Mary Grace Henderson; Wendy Hulko who hails from the Aberdeen local; Nancy Leonard from the Kelowna local; Donna McDonald from the Kamloops local; Mental Patients Association member Devon Sierra; Shannon Wilson from the Fort St. John local; and Brent Yalowica from Ridge Meadows.



LAPLANTE

Denise Kilpatrick (father William from Lions Gate) received financial support, as did Roland Kirsten (husband of GVMHS' Linda Lucier); Marsha Kupsch (daughter of Eagle Ridge's Herb and Pamela Kupsch); Robert Lafreniere (mother Lillian Lafreniere from Revelstoke); Ponderosa Lodge member Heather MacIsaac's son Jef; Thomas McAfee (father James a Hagwilget member); and Grace Pucket, whose mother Maureen works at Saanich Peninsula hospital.

Rounding out the bursary list are Kyriaki Rossi (mother Philomena from VGH); Doris Tamminga (mother Margaret Sather, Maple Ridge); Clayton Willms, whose mother Joan is a Coquitlam local member; Marika Wynne-Jones (mother Susan from Richmond); and Jennifer Zander, whose mother Eleanor is a Creston local member.

Funding for the bursaries come from the Provincial Executive, a number of union locals and individuals, and the HEU staff union.

letters

continued from page 2

LTD member eager to join retirees' organization

I was reading in the *Guardian* about the new organization, B.C. Forum. I would like to take out an annual membership. I have been on LTD since 1986 (ill Sept. 85 - Vancouver Hospital). Is the membership only for retirees or can LTD members join? Please send the application form for B.C. Forum.

It's always a pleasure to read the *Guardian* and recognize the work that has been done by the union in the past and see the tasks for the future.

THERESIA BOHM,
Chilliwack

• Bohm's application has been sent to B.C. Forum, a new group set up for retired union activists.

Equity editorial is offensive to Christian

I wish to register a protest against the libelous statements made by Mr. Allnutt in his editorial "Special Interest" label helps to maintain barriers.

Usage of the term "right wing" is an ambiguous and misleading idiom that is more often than not used to misdirect or misrepresent the position of the opposition. I am appalled and disgusted at the gross hypocrisy of a union that preaches against "LABELS" yet retains derogatory terms such as SCABS, ELITE NARROW GROUPS, AND HOMOPHOBICS. The latter quip is an effective one employed against anyone who takes a stand against special rights privileges.

Mr. Allnutt manipulates the tone by insinuating that the real questions are related to rental, services and independent living. He who frames the question also frames the answer. In my 41 years of life, the incidence of people experiencing these "traumatic" problems have been magnified by mass media hysteria. As far as slurs and avoidance are concerned (and I do not condone it), wake up Mr. Allnutt, there isn't a single per-



son I know that hasn't experienced it. What the union is attempting to do is legislate people's personality from the outside, inwardly. History proves that to be a fallacy, when will our union realize it as well?

By opening the door to these various special interest groups, which I see are defined as caucuses not simply groups as you say, I ask you where it will end? A caucus is a political power that can and does define policy ... in other words ... policymakers.

From the context of your editorial, it would appear as though this union needs another caucus established to deal with the concerns of the Christian element. How much of an opportunity do you think we would have at establishing this? It would be interesting. And not too surprisingly, I am hearing more and more people in this union looking for a way.

WILLIAM R. HILL, LPN,
Penticton Local

Change to end discrimination is inevitable

In a country ruled by law, legislation and a healthy system are the best ways to guarantee a fair society for all. It is important for a country to have a fair system plus good legislative processes and public education on ethnic harmony.

To prevent the spread of racial discrimination and to promote ethnic harmony, it is important

to build mutual respect and understanding. We all have merits and demerits. We should seek to live with our differences rather than confronting and reproaching each other.

We should be included in discussions to express our different ways - understanding, unity and cooperation can be achieved by respecting each other's right to be different. Two basic traditional beliefs are respect and kindness to each other.

Canada has a proud tradition of both recognizing and promoting cultural differences of our people that make this country special. I totally believe there are groups of people who have been excluded from participating in workplaces, unions, communities, etc. solely because of perceived differences between themselves and the ethnic diversity group.

Can we honestly say that the way things are now, with merit being the determining factor in holding a position, does this really work? If merit works, we would have equal representation of visible minorities, disabled, Aboriginal (First Nations) and other groups in this country.

How can you find answers to these problems if you do not have members of these groups sitting at a table while decisions are made? Despite qualifications, some groups cannot have the aspiration that others take for granted - there are barriers all over the place. Any institution should believe that all its

policies, activities and structures should reflect its commitment to equality for all its members.

It is upsetting that many people seem to be afraid of including someone with a disability or a visible minority or someone who is different, in their society or institution - opportunities should be given to people who are capable, smart and possess the ability to speak up their minds, irrespective of the colour of their skin or disability.

Until there are minority members present when discussions are held concerning policies and everyday running of any institution, systematic discrimination will remain invisible.

Often the decisions that perpetuate this type of discrimination are seldom seen by members of the mainstream society. This change is inevitable and much needed for the benefit of the ethnic diversity group.

NISHA BUKSH,
Vancouver General Local

Royal Jubilee also has lifting team project

I read with interest the article in the June/August 96 edition of the *Guardian* on "Lifting Smarter Lifting Safer." I believe we have a very different and unique lifting team pilot project at the Royal Jubilee Hospital in Victoria. There is also a lifting team at Victoria General Hospital.

Our team at RJH consists of myself and my partner Dan Desaulniers. We both have nursing experience. We work strictly in the acute care setting. We keep statistics of all our lifts in the pilot project area which consists of five acute care nursing units and have been paged for other areas of the hospital as well. Any nurse requesting a lift for a large or difficult patient transfer may just page us. The lifting team will assess the situation, then perform the lift manually or mechanically.

Our training for the lifting team consisted of a week of ergonomics, weight training and proper body mechanics at the Work Readiness Program situat-

ed at the Gorge Road Hospital.

The lifting team pilot project at the Royal Jubilee Hospital was started in June 1995 and the team at VGH, which consists of two women, Val Flynn and Shannon Caslow, was started December 1995.

Needless to say, the demand and acceptance by the nursing staff has been widespread.

SCOTT KENNEDY,
Royal Jubilee Hospital

LTD recipient welcomes contract measures

I've been on LTD since 1986 when I lost my eyesight as a result of retinal detachments. Having being forced to quit the workforce and into LTD with pay frozen at 2/3 of wages of 10 years ago hasn't been pleasant.

So it was with considerable interest a friend read to me the article in the *Guardian* concerning HEU's submission to industrial inquiry commissioner Vince Ready and his concerns about frozen benefits to claimants.

It is true some LTD recipients are having a hard time trying to have ends meet. It is also true claimants today receive, in many cases, less than they would receive on social assistance. For the Benefit Trust to return millions of dollars to employers is scandalous to say the least.

This is a matter I feel HEU should have attacked long ago on our behalf. While active workers may have "enjoyed" modest increases over the past 10 years, those of us on LTD have been stuck with benefits that are insufficient and way off today's living costs. Not only are our benefits frozen, but we must still endure an abusive and perennial nagging from LTD benefit managers in addition to the extended health coverage.

We have been the forgotten ones for too long, at least until now. Mr. Ready's recommendations are indeed most welcome and we trust some us at least will really see the light at the end of the LTD tunnel.

JACQUELINE ZAPPA

Global inequality and workplace issues were high on the agenda as thousands of AIDS activists explored avenues for change at the recent XI International Conference on AIDS in Vancouver

STORIES BY DANIEL GAWTHROP

one world, one hope?

C

ANADA MAY HAVE embarrassed itself as the host country of the XI International Conference on AIDS July 7-12, but the political fallout of a prime ministerial snub was overshadowed by a far more ominous development in the global fight against AIDS.

The vacationing Jean Chretien's absence was interpreted by many in Vancouver as a signal that the federal government has no plans to renew the National AIDS Strategy, due to expire in March, 1998. (Health Minister David Dingwall showed up at the opening ceremony to provide the official welcome from Ottawa, but his speech at GM Place was roundly booed by activists – about 1,000 of whom turned their backs on him.)

'A prime ministerial snub was overshadowed by a far more ominous development in the global fight against AIDS'

Much more disturbing, on a global level, was how recent statistics about HIV infection rates reveal an ever-widening gap between developed and developing nations.

Of the 22 million men, women and children in the world currently living with HIV, 93 per cent live in poor countries with no access to treatment. Of that number, 14 million – or 60 per cent of the world's total – live in sub-Saharan Africa. Nearly five million live in Asia.

Despite these numbers, only eight per-cent of all AIDS funding is allocated to developing countries, and with new combination therapies priced at \$10,000 annually per patient, the mortality rate in those regions is spiralling out of control.

Thus it was no surprise that much of the activism at the conference – titled One World, One Hope – focussed on renewed strategies for prevention and treatment in the developing world.

Eric Sawyer, a long-term survivor and co-founder of ACT-UP New York, challenged major drug companies to develop a two-tier pricing system.

People living with AIDS, drug companies, the business community and governments, he said, should form partnerships to provide low-cost treatment for tuberculosis, pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) and diarrhea diseases – the primary killers of people with AIDS in developing countries.

“And if you drug companies don't make this shift voluntarily,” he added, to much applause, “we will demand government regulations to mandate this, and then we'll fight to have your patents taken away from you.”

Unfortunately, developing countries were poorly represented at the conference. Although organizers provided \$2.5 million in scholarships to bring 1,076 delegates to Vancouver (there were 15,000 delegates in total), development issues were mostly ignored in the basic and clinical science tracks – two of the most important components of the conference. The broadest discussion of global AIDS issues took place in Track “D”: Social Science, Research, Policy and Action.

One Track “D” forum, on AIDS, Politics and Inequality, revealed some of the typical frustrations that activists and progressive researchers face. Michael Tan of the Philippines reminded delegates that delays in drug production are nothing new: during World War II, the production of penicillin was delayed because of patent competition.

Horton Meurig of the UK drew cynical laughter when he pointed out how conference organizers had adopted the language of the World Bank. “One World, One Hope,” he said, was eerily similar to the title of a recent video presentation by the International Monetary Fund: “One World, One Economy.”

Another panelist, Jeffrey O'Malley of the International HIV/AIDS Alliance, dismayed delegates by saying he had “given up” any hope of resisting global economic inequality. “Are we stuck in a paradigm of development defined for us by the IMF and World Bank?” he asked.

VANCOUVER's Waterfront Centre is half a world away from her usual venues, but as far as Gethwana Makhaye is concerned, the message is the same everywhere.

Makhaye, an AIDS education worker from South Africa, was part of a six-week tour this summer by JigsImbiza, a Newfoundland-based performance troupe sponsored by Oxfam Canada and the Newfoundland and Labrador AIDS Committee. (“Jigs” and “Imbiza” is a combination of Newfoundland and Zulu slang for “collective meals”).

The tour, titled *Protect the Ones You Love: Stop AIDS Now*, was designed to promote AIDS awareness and activism through street theatre and workshops directed at youth.

Makhaye is a consultant with Targeted AIDS Interventions, an umbrella group working in partnership with the AIDS Foundation of South Africa.



GETHWANA MAKHAYE building bridges with puppets

Recently, TAI has been doing contract work with church groups and traditional healers.

“We've got lots of people that cannot reach the health centres, so they go to traditional healers,” says Makhaye, who travelled to Uganda and Tanzania two years ago to study the relationship between churches and AIDS in those countries.

Last November, she coordinated an Oxfam-connected conference on community participation in the provincial AIDS program in Durban.

Like her Canadian colleagues, Makhaye is no stranger to apathy.

“People who know about AIDS pay much more

attention than people who are not into AIDS,” she says, describing the public's response to JigsImbiza.

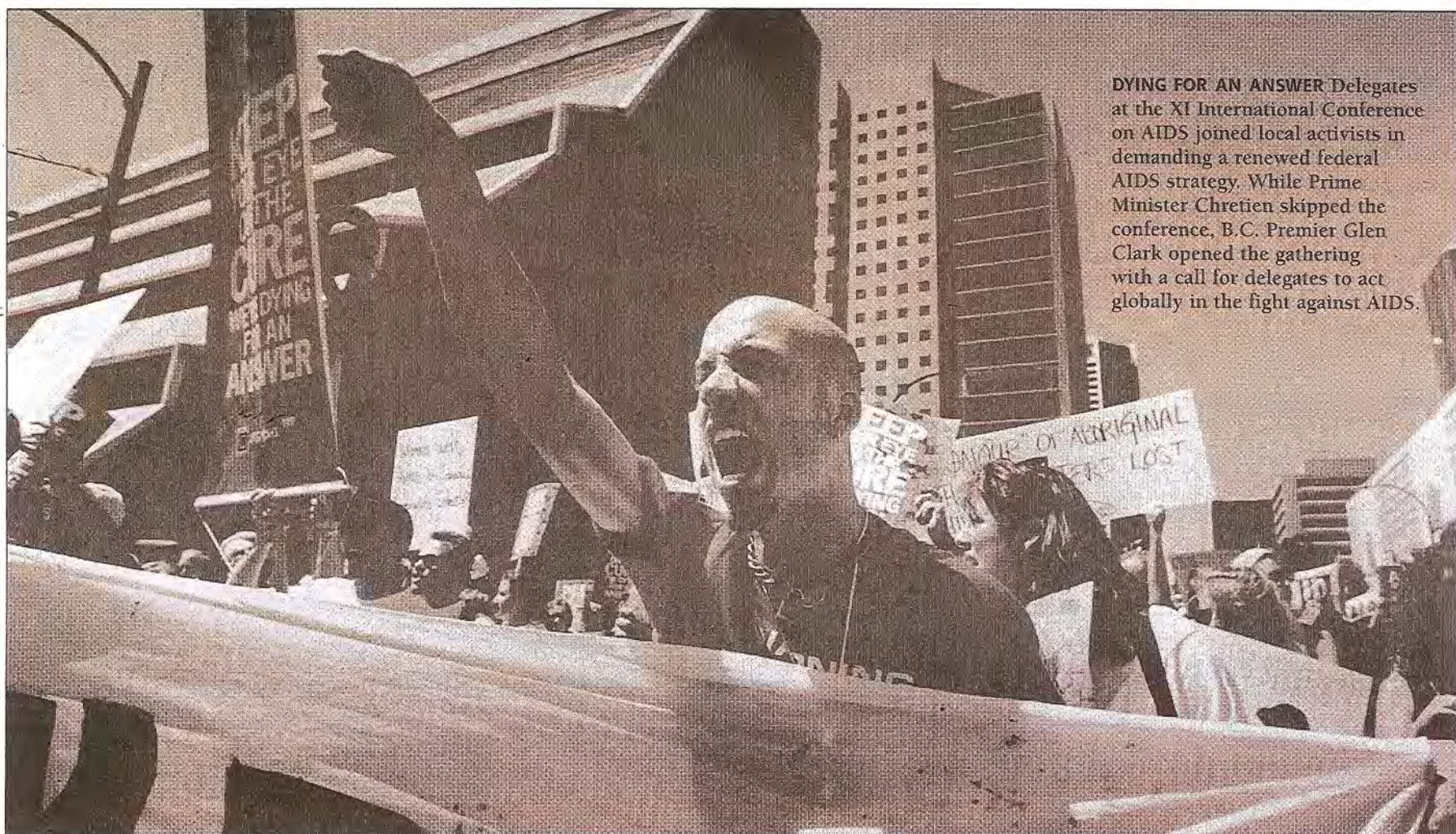
“We went to one venue – I think it was on the beach or something – and people were not interested. It was something that was far from them – too abstract. It's the same

thing in South Africa.”

One problem in her own country is the lack of adequate links between hospitals and community service organizations.

“They have these people sick in the hospital, and once they are discharged, they lose contact,” she says.

“Nobody actually checks to find out what is happening. If all the hospitals could form a linkage, then if [people] do have problems at home, the AIDS service organizations could come back to the hospital and say ‘This is the problem, what should we do?’”



DYING FOR AN ANSWER Delegates at the XI International Conference on AIDS joined local activists in demanding a renewed federal AIDS strategy. While Prime Minister Chretien skipped the conference, B.C. Premier Glen Clark opened the gathering with a call for delegates to act globally in the fight against AIDS.

KIM STALLKNECHT PHOTO

But John Foster of Oxfam Canada encouraged O'Malley and others not to give up. "It's important that we leave this conference with a practical agenda," he said, adding that a small tax on international transfers could make a big difference to a small country's economy.

However, convincing nation states and multinational corporations to move in this direction is easier said than done.

Peter Lurie, an assistant professor at the Centre for AIDS Prevention Studies at the University of California in San Francisco, told delegates how representatives of the World Bank had tried to prevent him from publishing an article last year in AIDS magazine.

(In his article, Lurie argued that structural adjustment programs had contributed to the spread of HIV in the developing world. This happens in four essential ways: the undermining of rural economies, the creation of transport infrastructures meant to serve a country's export needs rather than the cultural needs of the people, an increase in urbanization and migration, and a program of cutbacks in the public health sector which contribute to an erosion of health care resources and preventative education standards.)

More local solutions were explored in a forum on AIDS in the workplace. Here it was argued that multinational companies and banks, as well as local companies, could create trust funds for workplace prevention programs in the developing world.

Worksite prevention programs are already in place in at least

three African countries. Zimbabwe, Tanzania and Kenya currently have seven projects running at 420 worksites.

Closer to home, trade unions have begun to show interest in workplace prevention programs. Chuck Einloth, the director of HIV/AIDS in the Workplace Education Project at the George Meany Centre for Labour Studies in New Hampshire, received much attention after the seminar for his proposal of an international caucus of trade union leaders to deal exclusively with HIV/AIDS as a workplace issue.

In Canada, CUPE has already introduced an AIDS in the workplace program – including an information kit that provides a broad overview on how AIDS/HIV impacts on the workplace. CUPE delegates at the union's 1995 national convention adopted an AIDS/HIV policy statement that respects individuals' right to privacy and includes an action plan for collective bargaining clauses such as discrimination, the right to continue working, long-term and short-term disability plans, medical/health benefits, life insurance, pension plans and leaves of absence.

"Defending and supporting people with HIV/AIDS is part of CUPE's long-standing fight against discrimination in the workplace and the community," the statement says. "Advancing the rights of workers with AIDS is a step towards equality for all workers with disabilities."

• Gawthrop is a Vancouver-based freelance writer and author. He's a frequent contributor to the *Guardian*

'Of the 22 million men, women and children in the world currently living with HIV, 93 per cent live in poor countries with no access to treatment'

FOR MOST North American doctors, providing basic service for patients is a right, not a privilege. But for Brazilian AIDS physician Flavio Wittlin, advocating public health has often been an act of courage.

Ten years ago, Wittlin was working in Camocim (population: 50,000), a small fishing community on the northern Atlantic coast of Brazil's north eastern region. Despite a thriving fish industry, the town was plagued by widespread malnutrition and an infant mortality rate that reached as high as 250 children per 1,000.

Wittlin says that his efforts to provide universal vaccination were undermined by his 11 medical colleagues – all of whom cooperated with police officers, judges, landowners, right wing politicians and prominent members of the Catholic church to establish a medical system of preferential treatment. "They assisted only the poor people that voted for their respective leader," Wittlin recalls.



DR. FLAVIO WITTLIN rocking the AIDS boat in Brazil

By 1988, despite the increase in AIDS-related STD illnesses, local health clinics still lacked basic medical equipment such as X-ray machines. This meant that pneumonia and tuberculosis could only be diagnosed after a lengthy observation of symptoms.

Wittlin was able to address local health concerns through political action by small, rural syndicates. "[But] the social order was such that the powerful classes could come at these organizations in order to destroy them [by using] intimidation," he says, "and refusing to give drugs to their relatives."

Later, in Sao Paulo, Wittlin worked as coordinator of the STD program in the municipal health secre-

tary's office. By 1990, there were 120 people living with AIDS in his district, but there was no way of notifying those who were HIV-positive because the health ministry only kept statistics on full-blown AIDS.

Wittlin, armed with a camera, went into the poorest neighbourhoods in the city and produced a 15-minute video on AIDS and deprivation in Sao Paulo. When he showed the video to his employer, he was fired the next day.

Wittlin worked in various medical capacities after that incident, but since being sidelined in 1994 with a rare, non-HIV blood disease, he has spent more of his time working for the family newsprint business.

"To be an activist, I need to be in my original field," he says.

Wittlin was introduced to the *Guardian* by officials of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union, whose forest employee assistance plan hosted Wittlin's Vancouver visit.

OCTOBER 14

Thanksgiving Day, all HEU offices closed.

OCTOBER 16/17

Introductory OH&S seminars continue in Victoria, Vancouver Island region.

OCTOBER 16-18

Advanced shop stewards course continues in Cranbrook, Kootenay region.

OCTOBER 22-24

Advanced shop stewards course, Kelowna, Okanagan region.

OCTOBER 28-30

Advanced shop stewards course, Richmond, Lower Mainland and Fraser Valley regions.

NOVEMBER 4-6

Advanced shop stewards course, Victoria, Vancouver Island region.

NOVEMBER 11

Remembrance Day, all HEU offices closed.

Lewington Coulter's quilts sew strong social statements

by Della McLeod

IN 1994, I was thrilled when the HEU commissioned the creation of a quilt as part of our 50th anniversary celebration that would be used for the cover photo of our *Heart of Health Care* history book.

When I saw the quilt at our 19th biennial convention I was delighted with the piece itself – a beautiful, hand-crafted keepsake celebrating the work HEU members do. My disappointment lay in the lack of fanfare or opportunity to meet its creator, Wendy Lewington Coulter, or to ask questions about the making of the quilt.

Fortunately, the chance to meet Lewington Coulter and to view more of her artistry came August 9 at the opening reception of her exhibition of contemporary quilts, *Work, Work, Work* at the Kootenay Gallery of Art, History and Science in Castlegar.

I was immediately impressed by this petite woman's vibrant and friendly nature, her chatting with gallery visitors about her work and introducing them to her husband and three lively

young daughters. I overheard someone exclaim "where would she find the time to do this magnificent work?"

Some of her quilts make strong social statements, like *Home Sweet Home* which addresses domestic violence. The B.C. Federation of Labour used this quilt to make a poster on the subject. *Becoming* uses Barbie doll images to question the lengths women sometimes go trying to obtain an unrealistic standard of beauty.

The main theme of the series of large quilts is the unpaid work women do. *Wash the Dishes, Dry the Dishes, Turn the Dishes Over and Give Us this Day* acknowledge work so often unappreciated. *No Wife of Mine is Going to Work* portrays such tasks as sewing, growing food, and child care.

Daily routines and mundane tasks are stunningly portrayed using colourful fabrics and a surprising mix of techniques, including: dying, screen printing, hand painting, and appliqué. With objects such as doilies, earrings and buttons worked in, it was painful to obey Do Not Touch signs.

My favourite quilt is *Tea Cup Aunties*. It was created in honour of the artist's two great aunts, Rosa and Elsie, who on special occasions handed down their fine china tea cups to her.

I told her the quilt reminded me of the ladies who arrive with their baking at my nursing home's teas and bazaars, lend a hand and then stay to visit with those they sense to be lonely. Although elderly themselves, they are determined to keep helping others for as long as they can. Lewington Coulter responded:



JANE BURTON PHOTO

WORKING TV'S NEW FALL SCHEDULE

Working TV is back with a new fall season, and the program about working people has a new expanded schedule

The award-winning labour program grows to a weekly format, airing Friday nights at 7:30 p.m. on the full Rogers cable network in the Lower Mainland. The show repeats the following Monday at 1:30 p.m.

New audiences include local cable channels in Campbell River (CRTV 10 Wednesdays at 6:30

p.m., repeats Mondays at 8 p.m.) and Revelstoke (Wednesdays at 9 p.m., repeats Thursdays at 11 a.m. Some of the shows will be carried nationally by the Women's Television Network and Vision TV starting November.

Want to get Working TV on your local cable channel? Phone 1-800-562-1622.



Coffee break



All stories guaranteed factual. Sources this issue: CALM

How do machines buy cars?

In the 1950s Henry Ford had just automated another plant. He said to United Auto Workers president Walter Reuther, "How are you going to get these machines to pay union dues?"

Reuther replied, "How are you going to get them to buy cars?"

Entertainer embarrassed by sweat shop links

First, entertainer and talk-show host Kathie Lee Gifford said she was embarrassed to learn some of the "Kathie Lee Collection" clothing being sold at Wal-Mart stores was being made in sweatshops by Honduran teenagers working 13 hours a day for 31 cents an hour.

Then she was even more shocked to find that 50,000 "Kathie Lee" blouses were made under sweatshop conditions a

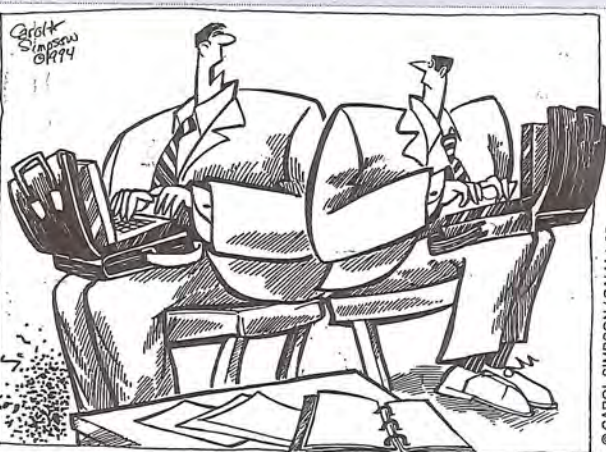
few blocks from her New York television studio.

Now the co-host of the Regis and Kathie Lee talk show has signed on with U.S. Labour Secretary Robert Reich in a campaign to combat sweatshops.

The world under a microscope

If we could, at this time, shrink the earth's population to a village of 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:

- 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from North and South America, 8 Africans
- 70 non-white, 30 white
- 70 non-Christian, 30 Christian
- 50 per cent of the world's wealth would be in the hands of only six people – all of these would be citizens of the U.S.
- 50 would suffer from malnutrition
- 80 would live in sub-standard housing



- 70 would be unable to read
- 1 would have a college education.

Olympic torch is union made

The Olympic torch carried the union label. When the summer Olympics opened in Atlanta on

July 19 a runner carrying the Olympic torch made by union workers in Erie, Pennsylvania lit the huge flame signalling the start of the games. Members of the International Union of Electronic Workers Local 621 assembled and quality-tested the 17,000 torches that runner carried in a months-long relay

HEU people

"Golden Spoon" Sloman finishes at Tofino General

An activist in the Tofino local for a quarter-century, Tofino General Hospital head cook **Margaret Sloman** retired from the hospital at the end of May.

A former chairperson and assistant secretary, Sloman's gala goodbye included the "Golden Spoon" award for 25 years of stirring and serving. She also received a special quilt depicting the many activities she's involved in.

Active in her local Legion branch, Sloman plans to travel, spend time with her grandchildren, and just enjoy life.

Cook has more time for bingo

On the other hand, retirement couldn't come fast enough for George Derby building service worker **Ursula Cook**, who finished at the Burnaby facility in August.

Cook, who started out at St. Paul's, plans to travel with her husband, garden, play bingo and spend time with her family.

Hill a reluctant retiree

Rose-Marie Hill's colleagues say the Valley Haven housekeeper liked working with the elderly so much that she wished she didn't have to retire. Hill, who's worked at the Chilliwack long-term care facility since 1974, plans to travel and go camping.

Noric House's Kertesz will be missed

Staff at Noric House in Vernon will miss **Ella Kertesz** after the long-serving housekeeper finished work in June.

Described as a hard worker, Kertesz worked at Royal Jubilee Hospital in Vernon until 1981, then moved with her family to Calgary before returning to Vernon and working at Noric House in 1984.

Kertesz says she'll learn needlepoint and crocheting.

Staff on the move

With the volume of retirements we've received for the last two issues of the

Guardian, we've been holding on to lots of news about developments for HEU staff.

Nancy Singh was hired earlier this year as a permanent research assistant for HEU's education and occupational health and safety department, while **Marcy Cohen** is now a permanent research analyst in the communication and research department.

There's much news about HEU's servicing staff. **Stan Hambley**, from the Victoria office, and **Janice Broadhurst**, who services Kootenay locals from the Nelson office, were made permanent representative/trainees earlier this year. And both have recently been upgraded to representative I positions.

A number of rep/trainees have been upgraded to rep I status. They are **Linda Whittaker** and **Robbin McCurrach**, who service Lower Mainland locals out of the Provincial Office, and **Bob Wilson** who works out of the Victoria office.

Joey Hartman has been hired to the part time position of assistant to the president. Hartman brings a long history of experience with her to her new job, having been a long time activist and executive member of the Vancouver, Municipal and Regional Employees' Union, now CUPE local 15.

Debbie Mann has been hired as a permanent rep/trainee. Mann services Fraser Valley locals from the Abbotsford site.

Rey Umlas is taking a leave from HEU's WCB department to move to Victoria, where the St. Paul's member assumes a new position as an advisor to Premier Clark on multicultural communities.

He joins HEU's former communications director **Geoff Meggs**, who became Clark's-top communications advisor in August.

Meanwhile, **Bonnie Pearson** has left HEU to take a position with the College Institute Educators' Association. Pearson had been serving in the senior position of acting coordinator of servicing and staff development at Provincial Office. Prior to that she worked as a rep II in the Okanagan. We wish Pearson well in her new job and extend thanks for her work on behalf of HEU members.

Original local member Faith Gordon retires at Jubilee Manor

Long-term care aide **Faith Gordon**, who was in on the ground floor when her co-workers voted to join HEU more than 15 years ago, retired recently from Nelson Jubilee Manor.

"It was a great place to work," says Gordon about the 32-bed long-term care facility in the Kootenays.

Gordon started work in 1980 and soon became active in the organizing drive when caregivers there joined the union to improve working and caring conditions. She was also a member of the bargaining committee that negotiated the local's first contract.

"It was a big improvement workwise, but not money-wise, because there was a provincial wage freeze on at the time and we were right in the middle of

it." The money issues eventually settled themselves in a few years.

Through the years Gordon was local chair, vice-chair, secretary-treasurer for 10 years and then shop steward.

What are her retirement plans? "I'm going to enjoy myself and do all the things I never had time to do." Like photography – an important pursuit – and her eight grandchildren, whom she hopes to get to know better.

Gordon doesn't have any big trips planned, "but I like to go camping for a few days at a time and sit by the campfire."



TALK TO US ... TOLL FREE!

You can call any HEU office toll free to deal with a problem or to get information.

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1-800-437-9877



GOLDEN SPOON Tofino local activist Margaret Sloman, centre, at her retirement party marking 25 years of commitment.

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across the United States.

Two of the Erie unionists, Mike Machinski and Pat Newby, were chosen by their co-workers to carry the flame on behalf of American labour for one leg of its cross-country tour.

West coast fishermen merge with CAW

The West Coast fishermen's union voted recently to merge with the Canadian Auto Workers. This brings most of the country's fishermen, from both coasts and the Great Lakes, into one organization.

The United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union (UFAWU) of B.C. has a proud and progressive history, but has been hurt in recent years by collapsing fisheries and U.S. intrusions into the B.C. industry.

After discussing the merger for two years, the 5,000 UFAWU members voted 95 per cent in favour of merging with the

205,000 member CAW.

President John Radosevic of the UFAWU said, "The merger will enable us to maintain the independence that we've always had but have the backing of the largest private sector union in the country."

Keeping temps in their place

A temporary worker who was chained to his work bench for more than an hour is suing his one-time boss/jailer.

Bobby Northington was in his third day on the job at Hambleton-Hill Publishing in Nashville, Tennessee when his supervisor chained and padlocked him to his workbench after he walked 10 feet away to give a piece of gum to a co-worker. He says he was chained for 70 minutes.

He quit, and filed a suit charging, "false imprisonment, outrageous conduct, and an abusive work environment."

Allevato wants to be mayor

Former HEU leader Carmela Allevato has launched her bid to be mayor of Vancouver. Four other HEU activists are in the Nov. 16 B.C. municipal election race.



PAGE 3

Making regionalization work

HEU fills a prescription for Victoria's regionalization headache. Here's how New Directions can get back on track.

PAGE 4

Convention covered

500-plus delegates converged on Richmond for HEU's 20th biennial convention. They mapped out a plan to guide the union for the next two years. Coverage starts on



PAGE 7

Working TV's new schedule

The award-winning labour TV show about working people starts a new fall season with an expanded schedule and national exposure. Check our TV guide on

PAGE 14



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This is the day we wash the clothes
by Wendy Lewington-Coulter
MARTIN ROLAND PHOTO

Fabric artist Wendy Lewington-Coulter sews strong statements in quilts like this one, *This is the day we wash the clothes*. Lewington-Coulter's work, which is profiled in this issue of the Guardian, uses a variety of techniques to present her quilts that highlight all the unpaid work women do.

The fabric of women's lives

An exhibition of Lewington-Coulter's work has toured B.C. this past summer, with the next venue being the Vernon Art Gallery from Oct. 11 to Nov. 16.