

Guardian



NOV./DEC. 1998

THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

VOL. 16, NO 4

Vowing to defend Medicare

500 plus delegates gathered in the big tent in Richmond to set the union's course for the next two years and beyond. Here, Lorna Hamill, Wrinch Memorial Hospital LPN, addresses Nisga'a chief Joe Gosnell.

PAGES 7-10

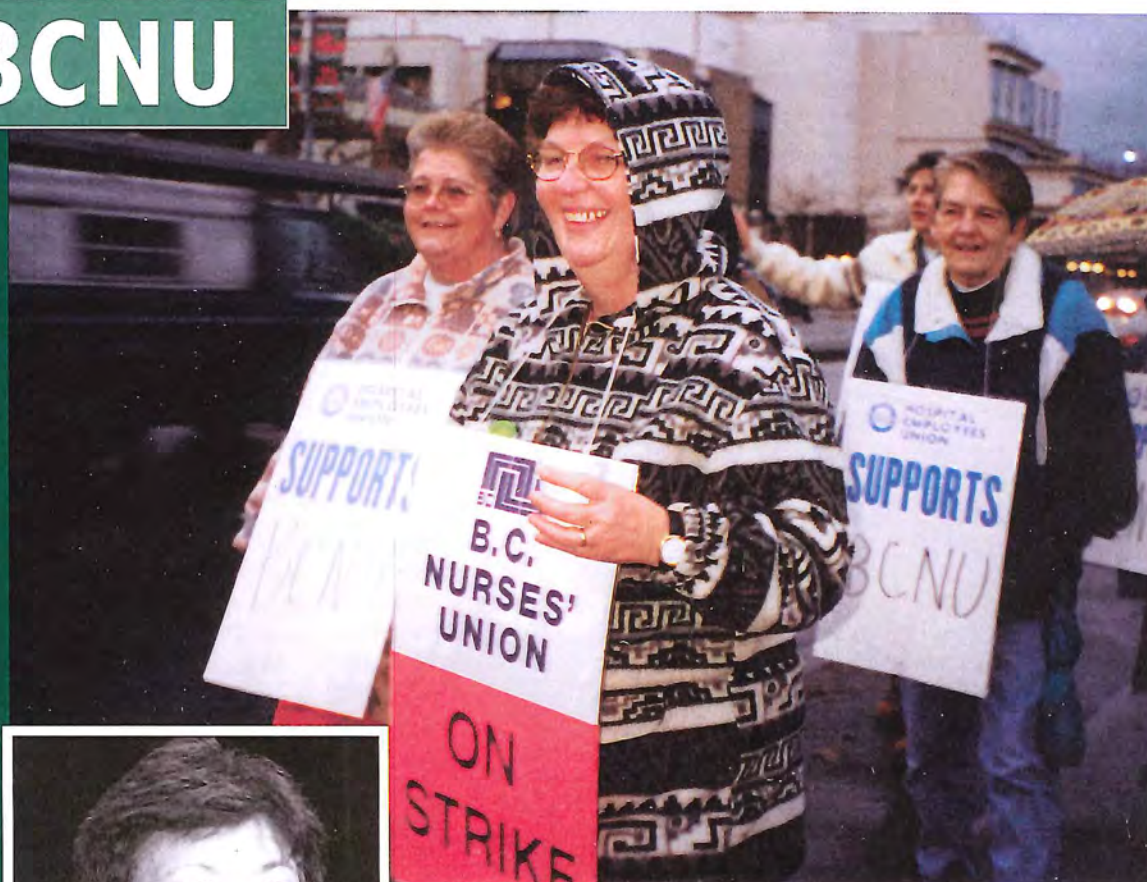
SUPPORTING BCNU

HEU members showed their support for the RN walkout. Lorraine Doucette and Sharon Brammer walk the line with their BCNU sister at Richmond General.

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HEU REMEMBERS THE 14 YOUNG WOMEN KILLED ON DEC. 6, 1989 WITH A STICKER CALLING FOR AN END TO VIOLENCE AGAINST ALL WOMEN.



Constitutional Amendment Committee member Donna Dickison. Profile PAGE 4.

COMMENT

Employers foiled by unions' solidarity

by Chris Allnutt

THE IMPRESSIVE solidarity HEU members demonstrated during the BCNU's recent job action is rooted in our union's commitment to respect picket lines – no ands, ifs or buts. But beyond those trade union principles lay other important reasons for our strong show of support for RNs.

Like workload, BCNU's main bargaining issue relates directly to HEU members who made safe workloads a central theme in facilities sector bargaining earlier this year.

The result of BCNU's overtime ban made it crystal clear, to anyone who cared to notice, that health employers are mismanaging patient care dollars and burning out RNs when they could be easing workload by creating permanent nursing jobs and properly using the entire nursing team. And BCNU's work-to-rule campaign revealed that many hospitals were using nurses to manage records and answer phones when they should be employing HEU clerks.

BCNU's president says the system needs more LPNs, care aides and nursing aides, along with more RNs, and both unions have signed a protocol agreement on nursing ratios.

I believe that our strong job action support will reinforce BCNU's resolve to move forward on nursing team and related workload issues.



'I am extremely proud of our members'

new tactic and locked out HEU members working in G.R. Baker's mental health unit even though no picket lines had been put up. That ill-conceived move resulted in BCNU moving to essential services levels in support of our members and a spontaneous cafeteria gathering of other union members from Quesnel.

So despite the best efforts of employers to undermine the effectiveness of job action, picket line solidarity remained strong. I am extremely proud of our members: those that walked the line in support, those who had to work essential services and the local activists who made it all come together.

Not that picket line duty was a painless act – the weather was terrible at times. And forfeiting regular pay cheques is a hardship anytime especially this close to the holidays.

But our union has demonstrated its commitment to improving working and caring conditions in health care and to fighting the employers' anti-worker tactics.

And our solid support for BCNU picket lines will leave an impression on our trade union allies and on health employers that won't be forgotten as we enforce our new contract and when our collective agreements expire in 2001.

Health employer attempts to undermine the effectiveness of job action also galvanized HEU support for the BCNU.

Constant requests from the employers for more essential services nurses and more ORs were designed to draw down BCNU picket strength and divide the unions. In response, HEU and other health care unions firmed up the lines joined by BCNU community nurses.

And health employers, after much huffing and puffing at the Labour Relations Board, finally test drove a

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.

Members on LTD

Not only have I not been notified in writing by my employer (Mountain View Lodge) of the 50/50 premium sharing option, but when I contacted Marilyn Garcia she informed me by telephone that I am not eligible for this option until April 1999 because of our standard agreement. Whoever advises her insists this is so!

I would certainly appreciate it if someone could clarify this matter. As far as Mrs. Garcia is concerned there is no option, period!

VIVIAN HILDEBRAND,
Direct Care Worker,
Mountain View Lodge

Unhappy casual

I am writing in response and support of Shelby Kirk's letter in the September/October Guardian.

I too, and many of my casual co-workers feel we have been misled

and misrepresented. I am the top casual at the facility where I work. I got where I am by always being available. I drive 45 minutes to work and back so I chose not to take a four hour/three day week position. I chose to stay on the casual list and be always available.

Now I am being unjustly punished. The people who took the four-hour positions were casuals who had been at the facility longer than I but have less than half my seniority.

Now they are to be rewarded for not being available in the past. They are being called in ahead of me. That is not right. I too would like to know what can be done about this injustice. I too, and my casual co-workers were not informed until the deal was signed.

Please let me know if we, as casuals, have any rights and what action can be taken.

RUTH MEYERS,
LPN / LTCA,
Mountain View Lodge

Social service sector growing

I too welcome all the new certs from the community and the social service sectors. I would also like to say that we will be a growing part of the future of HEU. It is these sectors where HEU will need to start an organizing campaign. We need members in these sectors in order to generate strength for support – support that is needed in bargaining and job action.

I am a bargaining committee member at the social service table and know firsthand how different each new local's level of funding is. Equal pay for equal work has been the slogan for these sectors since HEU organized us. This is an issue we (social service sector) have fought for over the last five years and will continue to fight for over the next three (the term of our next collective agreement).

Our goal this round is to start standardizing the sector and achieve job security through successorship rights. We first went to the table as independents, then a group of five, this round we are a stronger (700 and growing) group of 15. We are continuing to press upon the government the need for serious redress for the wage ghetto which they created.

We may be coming to an impasse soon with the employer group (CSSEA) and would like to call upon all our sisters and brothers for support in letting the employer know that we all require just and fair pay for the work we do.

I encourage you all to watch for the upcoming campaigns so as to

let the employers know we understand the issues and support them wholeheartedly.

TROY ZOHNER,
Social Service Bargaining
Committee member

Salute to participants

Congratulations to all who participated in the convention, delegates, members of the Provincial Executive and people who represented different unions, political leaders and guest speakers.

I especially would like to thank the PE for selecting me to participate in the constitutional amendment group. It was the highlight of the convention for me as a delegate and a member of Haro Park local of the Lower Mainland. We, as a group representing the eight regions, worked on the constitutional amendments that were sent in from around the province from the hospitals, facility sectors and group homes.

I would like people to know if you are selected to participate in this group do so because it is an asset in the educational field. The people I worked with are so knowledgeable, we worked together as a team and came to an understanding about the union and how it works with the involvement of all.

I shall always treasure the month I had and the people I've gotten to know. Debbie, Raj, Suzan, Doris, Wynn, Louise, Pierre, Betty, Megan. You are all truly fine people. Thank you.

DONNA DICKSON,
Care Aide,
Haro Park Local

Guardian

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

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What we're up to

Lillooet LPNs are ready-to-use

Lillooet District Hospital has taken a positive step towards full utilization of its licensed practical nurses. Discussion began early last year, and it resulted in a consensus among registered nurses, LPNs and administration. The employer wanted a standard skill level before changing the policy on LPN utilization.

With Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency funding, an instructor came from the University of the Cariboo, and the

sessions began. The training spanned five complete days and included instruction in pharmaceuticals, head to toe assessment, wound management, glucometer, sutures and maternity.

"We are all ready now to begin practising to our full scope," said Lillooet LPN Brad Teichreb. "The hospital is setting out its policies and procedures, and it should be up and running in one or two months."

Hurricane claims Rivera's relatives

After coming to HEU's convention in October Nicaraguan Josefa Rivera returned to her country to find that she had lost 40 family members to Hurricane Mitch.

Rivera, along with South African visitors Lungiswa Maqaga and Isaac Zulu, energized the International Solidarity Night at convention.



Cicera Ferreira of Lakeside/Renfrew and David Huespe of Western Human Resources share a joke with Josefa Rivera at convention's International Solidarity Night.

cane relief, donations can be made through CoDevelopment Canada, with tax receipts for donations over \$10:

CoDevelopment Canada, 101-2747 East Hastings Street, Vancouver, B.C. V5K 1Z8.

CoDevelopment Canada is a non-governmental organization which partners with HEU and other B.C. unions in international solidarity work.

Nelson activists tackle P3s head on

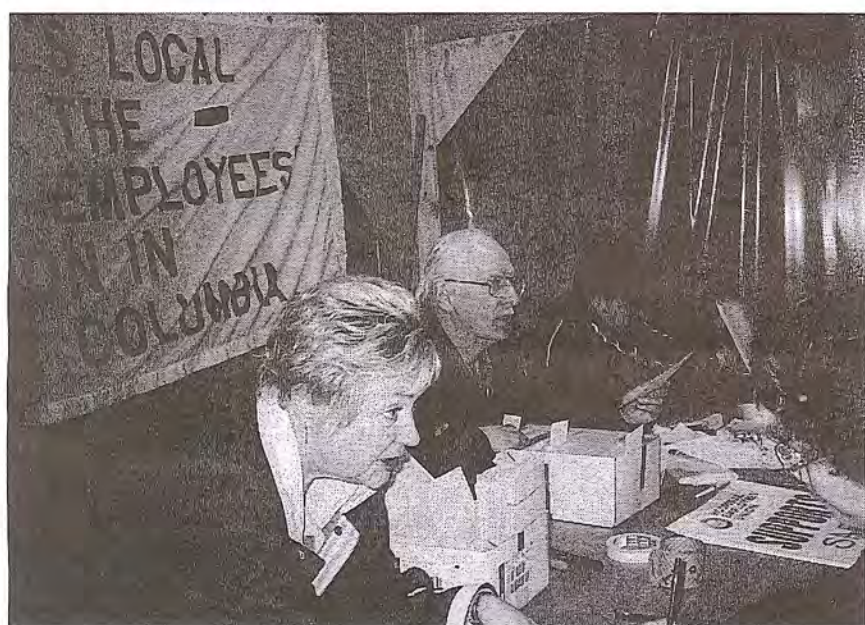
Health care workers are confronting public-private partnerships (P3s) head-on in the Kootenays. That's because Victoria directed the Nelson and Area Health Council to consider

replacing the aging Mount St. Francis long-term care home through a P3 arrangement. HEU activists from Kootenay Lake Hospital and Mount St. Francis organized a public information meeting Nov. 24 that attracted 45 seniors, caregivers and others concerned about the P3 proposal.

"There's confusion in our community about what P3s are," said meeting organizer Eleanor Schmidt. "We need to educate the public about this new label for privatization. But everyone at the meeting agreed that privatizing Mt. Saint Francis would mean lower quality care."

The gathering struck a committee which will organize a letter writing and lobbying campaign directed at MLAs and health council members to oppose privatization of the

continued on page 4



MIKE OLD PHOTO



DALE FULLER PHOTO

AT ST. PAUL'S HOSPITAL Carole Stephens, Peter Stokes and Ed Chow were registering picketers before dawn on Nov. 27. HEU picketers at Richmond Hospital Jasbir Baidwan, Jogindar Hundal, Kawaljit Badhesha, Tracey Greenberg and Traci Arkle also started their picket duty in the dark.

HEU supports BCNU job action

HEU solidarity on the picket lines helped force health employers to a mediated solution to stalled contract talks after a six day walkout by the British Columbia Nurses' Union.

The rotating pickets followed on the heels of an overtime ban and work-to-rule campaign during which RNs highlighted their key workload demand. When picket signs went up Nov. 27, HEU members were out on the line in force.

Labour Minister Dale Lovick appointed Brian Foley to mediate the dispute

the day pickets went up at Richmond General, St. Paul's, Nanaimo Regional, Royal Jubilee and Surrey Memorial.

On Nov. 30 pickets rotated to Vancouver General, Royal Inland, Kelowna General, Victoria General and Ridge Meadows. Pickets stayed up at Nanaimo Regional, a reflection of the abysmal labour relations climate at that facility.

The pickets came down when BCNU and the health employers agreed to refer unresolved issues to Foley, whose report will be voted on in early January.

BCNU president Cathy Ferguson

said, "We thank HEU members for their support and solidarity during the job action. We will stand together with HEU to lobby strongly for more HEU positions in our health care system."

"There's no doubt that strong picket lines at 10 hospitals over the last six days supported by thousands of HEU members put tremendous pressure on health employers to come to this agreement," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt, "despite attempts by the employer to undermine job action and divide health unions."



MIKE OLD PHOTO

BCNU MEMBER Gardia Perrault and HEU member Grace Gardner, both of Surrey Memorial's emergency youth clinic, show their solidarity on the picket line.

CLC says HSA raid must cease

An independent umpire has upheld HEU's charge of raiding against the Health Sciences Association.

As a result, Canadian Labour Congress president Bob White has instruct-

ed HSA, through its national union, to take steps to reverse the situation or face sanctions laid out in the CLC constitution.

HEU levelled the raiding charge at HSA when that union applied to the Labour Relations Board earlier this year to represent 29 HEU perfusionists. Not only did this move violate the CLC constitution, but it ran counter to a CLC-brokered 1990 agreement in which HSA promised to end its jurisdictional claim over health care workers represented by HEU.

Under the laws governing B.C. health care labour relations, both HEU and HSA have the right to represent paramedical professionals though HSA has made two attempts in the past year to have HEU members declared HSA members by the Labour Relations Board.

If HSA does not revoke its claim to represent HEU perfusionists, both it and its national union, NUPGE, will face a number of sanctions including ejection from the CLC and the B.C. Federation of Labour.

HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt says the decision of the umpire and the CLC directive to HSA should put the matter of HEU's representation of paramedical professionals to rest.

"We invite HSA to join with us in focussing on critical issues that build solidarity and improve our health care system," says Allnutt.

"Our first priorities must be winning a new contract for paramedical professionals and fighting for progressive lab reform."

WHAT WE'RE UP TO



Mike Hanke, foreground, was joined by about 50 union members and security guards on the front lawn of Royal Inland Hospital where he worked until he was fired for his union activities.

continued from page 3

long-term care facility. The health council is expected to decide on the future of Mount St. Francis by March 31.

Activist uses her training

LPN Marva Vidal, winner of the 1998 Marianne Gilbert scholarship, as reported in the

last issue of the *Guardian*, attended the 21st Biennial Convention as a delegate. The licensed practical nurse, who works at George Derby, has had a very busy last few months. She attended HEU's Nursing Team Conference as well as the Biennial Convention – putting to good use what she learned at the B.C. Federation of Labour's Summer Institute for

Women, which she attended on the BCGEU-sponsored scholarship.

Royal Inland stand on guards

When security guard Mike Hanke was fired, HEU local activists at the Royal Inland Hospital local in Kamloops said it was because he tried to organize the facility's security guards. Activists staged a protest in front of the hospital on Oct. 26.

Hanke indeed had been involved in organizing a union for the security guards at the hospital, who are employees not of the hospital, but Desert City Security Inc. The successful certification hearing was held on Nov. 2.

The former employee of the month was shocked to hear that he had been let go because of a "breach of honesty," but the union is contesting this. The day of the protest

Donisa Bernardo, chair of the local, said, "We're putting in grievances today."

The union will fight the firing before the Labour Relations Board.

Kootenay Lake supports Mujeres

A March/April 1997 *Guardian* story described the involvement of the Kootenay Lake District Hospital local's involvement in a community project supporting a Guatemalan women's group called Mujeres en Solidaridad, Women in Solidarity.

Mujeres works to support people in literacy programs, health, occupational health and safety, educational programs and family support. Alioto, the community where women live, is close by a free trade zone where many *maquiladora* sweat shops are found. There workers, mostly women, labour under

extremely adverse conditions.

The project lasted 10 months and over that time the Kootenay Lake District Hospital local sent \$25 per month after an initial \$200 to the group, part of a community effort to send \$150 per month. The remainder was raised by holding "Guatemalan auctions" – with local businesses donating goods or services for the auction.

The community is trying to put together another project or an extension of this one. Anyone interested in information should contact Barry Nelson at 250-352-3111.

HEU job postings

Recruitment for positions at HEU shall be made from the members of the union whenever possible, according to the HEU constitution and by-laws. The job-posting guidelines were sent to all local offices Dec. 3.

Donna has now found her voice

As a young child Dickison was taught that silence is a virtue

by Dale Fuller

DONNA DICKISON had been a union activist for years when she connected with the Aboriginal Women's Action Network (AWAN) one night a little over a year ago. She was attending a dinner for the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, and in the course of a conversation was invited to an AWAN meeting.

She decided she wanted to join AWAN, helping them in their work and helping herself in the process. "I felt lost and was looking for my identity," she says.

Dickison hails from Lillooet and belongs to the St'at'imx Nation. As happened to her mother and father before her and to all eight of her brothers and sisters, she was taken from her home and placed in a catholic residential school in Mission at the age of five, staying there until she was 14.

The horror stories that are coming from the adult survivors of the residential schools are shocking. It is hard to imagine what it would be like to be a young child, torn away from your family, with no one to turn to if you were being abused. "We were taught to be silent," says Dickison.

So it was many years before she was able to speak about her time at the school – and the years that followed. Her teachers taught her to be ashamed of who she was, and those lessons were deeply ingrained.

She moved to Vancouver at the age of 16, pregnant and alone. Her son was spirited away by the nuns at the hospital, and so was her daughter a year later. She always thought that they had grown up together. But, in reality, they did not even know of each other's existence. She found this out only when she was reunited with them a few years ago.

She eventually married and had five more children,

but it was not a happy home life. She began working odd jobs, housekeeping and waiting tables. Her work in health care started at a resource centre for the disabled. It was not unionized, but she was able to use the experience she gained there to obtain the job as a care aide at Haro Park which she has held since 1981.

She started taking out her suppressed anger on managers which, of course, got her into trouble. She had to take some time off work, but it was then that she saw how a union can defend its members.

She began her healing process about seven years ago. Her involvement in the union taught her to recognize racism for what it is. It opened a lot of avenues for her, she began to find her voice, but she still wasn't quite there.

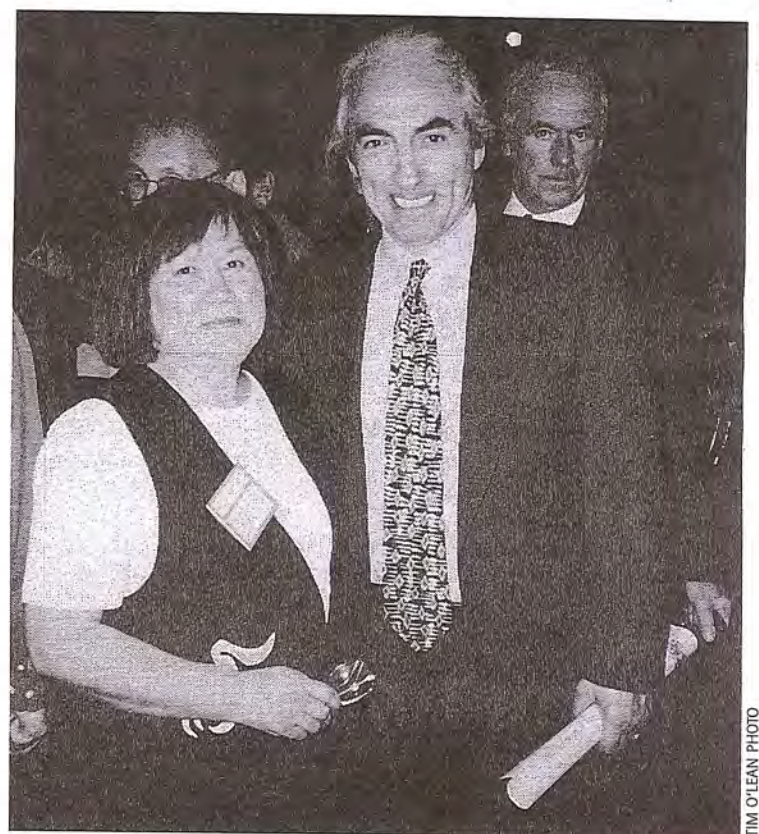
"It really struck me at summer school about four years ago," she says. "They asked if any of us had been oppressed, and it was there that I started speaking out. It was there that I realized the hold that the residential school had on me."

Her involvement with AWAN has given her focus. She has spoken to students at the University of British Columbia and Langara College about residential schools and the effects of what she calls multi-generational abuse. She will soon be going to the prisons to talk to the First Nations inmates there. She sees their high numbers in those institutions to be a continuation of the effects of the residential schools.

BALANCING



IT ALL



DICKISON with Phil Fontaine, chief of the Assembly of First Nations, in January of this year when the federal government formally admitted to Canada's aboriginal peoples that its role in the residential schools program was a mistake.

In October 1997 Dickison spoke out in Parliament about what was to so many aboriginal youngsters a devastating and traumatic period in their lives.

She attended the January 1998 ceremony marking the federal government's partial apology for its role in promoting the residential school program, after a personal invitation from Indian Affairs and Northern Development Minister Christine Stewart. That followed a phone call from Dickison explaining to the minister why an apology was vital to her people.

She says her work at AWAN now centers on Bill C-31, which will extend status rights to children of mixed marriages. Not one to give up her activism in the union, she is the chair and a shop steward of her local. And she is very proud to have served on the constitutional amendments committee for the recent HEU convention.

• *BALANCING IT ALL* is a regular *Guardian* column about the challenges facing women activists.

WHAT WE'RE UP TO

The posting provides opportunities for HEU members to work for their union in a variety of work areas and positions such as servicing representatives, communication staff, clerical/support staff, accounting, building services, research and education. Members can learn about the qualifications for the positions by consulting the posting in local offices or contacting HEU's human resources department at Provincial Office.

Turn out the lights

On Oct. 26 after the last Yarrow Lodge resident moved out, the facility's HEU caregivers began an occupation of the group mental health home. They were digging in to fight for monies owed them by the private, for-profit owner, Dr. Al DeVries.

The caregivers were demanding that their final pay cheques and vacation pay be delivered



BRIAN HOWELL/CHILLIWACK PROGRESS PHOTO

Around the table waiting to hear from Dr. Al DeVries, erstwhile owner of Yarrow Lodge, are caregivers Fatima Vincente, Carol Hill, Kathy Tuchsherer, Ruth Birmingham, Colleen Stewart, Evelyn Jones, Christina Boogerd and Wendy Taylor.

on Oct. 30, their last working day. They also wanted back pay from a raise that was never fully implemented. DeVries owed them \$29,000 in total.

"We had no doubt that our occupation was necessary in order to receive our money," said Wendy Taylor, caregiver and HEU spokesperson for the members at Yarrow Lodge.

At first DeVries wouldn't commit to a payment date, but cheques totalling \$19,000 arrived on the fifth day. A set-

tlement for the remainder was reached early in December.

Activist has designs

Arlita Keppler, secretary-treasurer of the Royal Jubilee local in Victoria, has been a de facto peer counselor for a long time. That experience prompted her to put together a training proposal to HLAA and her employer.

"The aim of the proposal is to provide continuing education to prepare employees for future integration and to support re-

structuring of health care delivery which will require labour force adjustment," Keppler said.

She grouped occupations and/or skills by industry sectors, then matched them to HLAA training criteria and identified which occupational groups needed what courses for upgrading and costed them out.

The proposal includes upgrading/training for LPNs, information systems techs, mental health workers, finance department staff, community health unit employees and medical records transcriptionists.

HLAA reviewed the proposal and has put it on hold, pending some reshuffling of employer/

HLAA funding and the outcome of a study being conducted by HLAA, HEU and the Vancouver/Richmond Health Board.

December 6 is for remembering

On Dec. 6 nine years ago, 14 young women were gunned down at L'Ecole Polytechnique in Montreal for no other reason than that they were female. The country was in a state of shock and mourned the senseless waste of those young lives.

The day is now recognized as A Day of Remembrance and Action to End Violence Against Women. Last year in Vancouver a moving ceremony dedicated a beautiful monument in the square in front of the train station to them and all women who die as a result of violence. This year almost every community in B.C. had a ceremony to remember, many of them candlelight vigils.

HEABC applies for mediator as paramed talks break down

The Paramedical Professionals Bargaining Association went back to the bargaining table with the Health Employers Association of B.C. on Dec. 2 with a 78 per cent strike vote backing up their demands, but talks came to a halt after only two days.

HEABC was asking for concessions on benefits and the classification system, and refused to consider parity for the community-based health professionals. The bargaining association, made up of HEU, HSA, BCGEU, CUPE, UFCW and PEA, represents about 10,000 workers.

After talks broke on Dec. 4, the unions announced that they would meet over the weekend to consider their options — including possible job action. On Saturday, HEABC advised the unions that it planned to apply for a mediator on Monday.

Mediator Brian Foley set mediation to commence on Dec. 16 and 17 with two additional dates set in January.



DALE FULLER PHOTO

COMMUNITY social service workers from HEU, CUPE and BCGEU take their message to the bosses' front door in downtown Vancouver on Nov. 17. The three unions are bargaining in separate negotiations with CSSEA but their message to employers and to the government was clear: wage and benefit parity with their health care counterparts, employment security, successor rights, and improved working conditions.

Taking it to the streets

HEU joined with CUPE and the BCGEU in a rally outside the Community Social Services Employers' Association's Vancouver offices. In a strong show of solidarity to support the bargaining demands of their community social service members and to pressure Victoria to put more money into community social services, a second rally was held on the steps of the provincial legislature in Victoria.

"Properly funded community social

services that provide fair wages and benefits to workers mean a better quality of life for clients," said CUPE national president Judy Darcy, who was the featured speaker at the Vancouver rally.

"The quality of workers' lives is getting worse," said HEU bargaining committee member Marilyn Rust. "We will be silent no longer."

HEU's talks broke off in mid-November when CSSEA failed to table a monetary package that addressed

wage and benefit parity. Community social service care providers make \$4 to \$8 an hour less than health care workers who do the same work.

"Our bargaining team worked very hard, tabling several reasonable monetary proposals," said HEU's secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "But the employers just wouldn't negotiate."

HEU community social service workers take their strike vote Dec. 6 to 11.

?AQ'am set to make HEU history

With the ratification of their first collective agreement, the 20 HEU members working at the ?AQ'am Community Care Home on the St. Mary's Indian Band reserve in Cranbrook will make union history. It will be HEU's first negotiated contract with First Nations that achieves wages and benefits comparable with the facilities sector.

"The agreement in itself is an important achievement," said HEU bargaining committee spokesperson Juli Rees. "But it's the issues and the way we resolved them that heightens its significance."

For example, this agreement includes an article pertaining to self-government. It recognizes that the Ktunaxa/Kinbasket, of which the St. Mary's Band is a member, has an inherent right of self-government, including jurisdiction over labour standards and occupational health and safety, throughout Ktunaxa traditional territory, which includes the St. Mary's Band reserve lands. Also noteworthy are the articles on employment equity and job selection criteria where sensitivity and understanding from the union and the employer were

necessary to reach agreement.

The most immediate impact on the members will be improved wages and benefits. Both will be brought up to those in the facilities sector contract over the life of the ?AQ'am agreement.

"For some workers the wage increases mean their annual incomes will almost double," said Rees.

In order to achieve this agreement, the St. Mary's Band worked hard to secure funding for the immediate and long-term viability of the ?AQ'am Community Care Home. This involved

extensive discussions with the federal government, which maintains jurisdiction for health care for on-reserve aboriginal peoples, and with the provincial government, which licenses the facility. As a result, an adequate, multi-government funding structure is now in place.

The ?AQ'am Community Care Home is a 16-bed, long-term care facility owned and operated by the St. Mary's Indian Band. ?AQ'am is unique as it is one of only two long-term care facilities located on a reserve and offers an aboriginal culturally-sensitive environment.

PRESIDENT'S DESK



Our members showed their mettle in 1998

by Fred Muzin

OVER THE holiday season, HEU members can reflect on 1998 and be proud to have been at the forefront of helping to create a better workplace. When confronted with adversity and struggle, we inherently know that staying true to our principles ultimately leads to victory. Despite a weak Canadian dollar, the B.C. economy being battered by the meltdown of the Asian markets, government wage controls of zero, zero, and two per cent, and a rabid anti-worker media, we have achieved significant progress.

Our determination and solidarity during HEU bargaining has resulted in many successes. In the facility sector we secured \$57 million in relief for those most vulnerable – our 2,200 members on long-term disability, many of whom live at or below the poverty line.

A new occupational health and safety agency is in the process of being established to deal with the high workplace injury rates in health care, which are in large part a result of excessive workload and understaffing. Also, the implementation of pay equity that was achieved in the 1993 round of bargaining

continues, with 85 per cent of HEU members receiving wage adjustments this year alone. Funding for employment security programs has been secured for the three-year contract term.

Community sector members, especially those working in home care, took a giant step forward in escaping the low wage ghetto, but their journey is far from complete. Our Biennial Convention delegates made it clear that the economic wall between social services and the facilities must come down.

Our continued success is directly linked to the strength of the bonds we are able to forge with our partners in health care. The BCNU picket lines that we faced starting on Nov. 27 required many local activists to leave the B.C. Federation of Labour convention early and to scramble to establish essential services and picket support. The paramount issue in the registered nurses dispute is inadequate staffing levels, which compromises the ability to ensure that the public receives safe and competent service. Although this dispute placed economic hardship on HEU members, they responded en masse, understanding that the fight for more RNs, LPNs, care aides and support staff is the struggle for quality public Medicare in Canada.

The New Year may very well bring more disruption in health care – both the registered nurses and the paramedical professional sectors are at various stages of mediation. Physicians who refuse to work with other health care providers to be part of the solution, will continue their withdrawal of services. The federal government is more intent on tax breaks for the rich than in restoring unemployment insurance benefits, alleviating child poverty or increasing transfer payments for health, education and social services.

The solidarity, compassion and principled positions of HEU members is our Christmas gift for a better society – and it lasts all year long!

NOTEBOOK

Top doc says Priddy must go

by Mike Old

The B.C. Medical Association's very public campaign against the NDP government reached a fevered pitch last month with their demand that Penny Priddy resign as B.C.'s health minister.

And what did Minister Priddy do to earn this scorn from the B.C. doctors group?

She suggested in an interview with the *Vancouver Sun* that the health care system is in need of major reforms. "We have to change our thinking about how we deliver health care," Priddy told the newspaper. Not exactly a revolutionary notion – no one can deny that new (and expensive) medical technologies and longer lifespans are putting pressures on our health care system that just weren't there in Medicare's early days.

But it was Priddy's suggestion that health care reform must include a change in physicians' roles – like sharing responsibility for health care delivery within a broader team of care providers and being paid salaries instead of through fee-for-service – that raised the ire of BCMA president Jim Lane.



'Whose ideology is really threatening Medicare?'

"The doctors of B.C. can no longer deal with a health minister whose irresponsible comments continue to alienate the profession and whose ideology threatens our ability to provide quality care to our patients," said B.C.'s top doc in a press release.

But whose ideology is really threatening Medicare?

Two years ago, Lane's predecessor Granger Avery said that the promotion of private health care would be a top priority of the BCMA – a move that would undermine the universal nature of Medicare by allowing physicians to charge higher fees for those who could afford to buy their way out of the public system.

And the BCMA's reduced activity days – 20 RADs in total by the end of this fiscal year – will lengthen surgical waiting lists and have served to undermine public confidence in Medicare.

And who was first to denounce the lab accord – a plan for progressive reform that would save \$25 million to be reinvested in Medicare by ending fee-for-service billing for lab tests and eliminating duplication in testing facilities? You guessed it – the BCMA.

Minister Priddy's candid suggestions about how B.C.'s health care system can be reformed deserve thoughtful discussion from all front-line health care workers. The BCMA should get on board.

Ironically, on the very day Lane was calling for Priddy's head, 300 American doctors and their supporters held a rally at the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C., waving Canadian flags and denouncing the U.S. for-profit health care system.

Maybe it's time to explore a physician exchange program.



SIMMONS loves to photograph the outdoors, especially flowers. Her work won an international achievement award from Kodak last year, and will be on exhibit in the Filberg Gallery in Comox in 1999.

Photography takes her where she wants to go

Sue Simmons began pointing her camera 35 years ago when she bought a little Cannon to accompany her on her first trip overseas. She continued through the years because it was something she loved to do – and eventually she became an accomplished photographer.

Every year there is a fall fair in Comox, and she was good enough to get her photos into the fair's juried photographic exhibit. And then she began to win prizes.

"Some of my friends said to me, 'Gee, you should be doing this full time.' But as most photographers will tell you, you need a day job to pay the bills," says Simmons.

Her "day job" is being a cleaner at Saint Joseph's General Hospital in Comox, where she has worked for 13 years. She works six days out of nine and is "running as fast as she can."

She launched her business two years ago with photographic refrigerator magnets and lately has branched out to producing blank greeting cards. "Actually the cards are the bulk of my business now," says Simmons.

She does do the occasional photo shoot – mostly for friends or colleagues. She recently did the wedding photos for a co-worker. "I have never

been so pleased with work in my life," Simmons enthused. The new bride brought her photo album to work to show everyone, and now all sorts of people come up to Simmons with their own special requests.

She succeeded in getting herself booked into a local gallery – but not until the year 2000. But when the gallery's program coordinator needed

some photographic work done, she made a swap for a less remote time slot next year.

Simmons plans to retire in six years and augment her retirement income with photography, but mostly it is something she is good at and enjoys immensely.

She isn't waiting until she retires to have fun, either.

In February she is going to Africa on a safari along with 44 rolls of film. She will take a sunrise hot air balloon trip over the Serengeti. Two years ago she went to Brazil "with not enough film" and swam in the Amazon. Simmons says, "I did not get malaria, did not get mugged, those things that they always tell you are going to happen, none of them happened to me."

Visit her web-site <http://mars.ark.com/~simmons/index.html>.

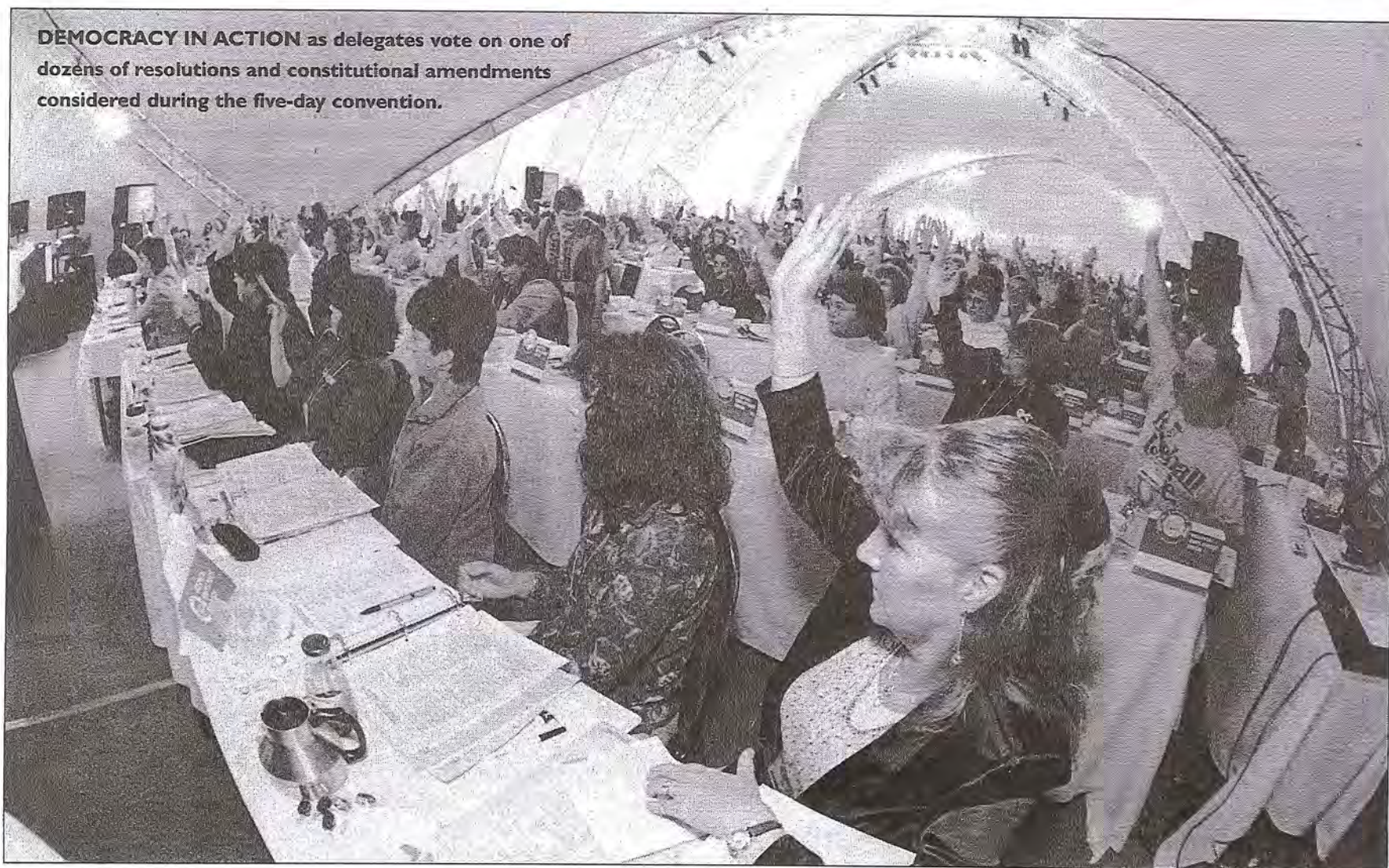
AFTER



THE SHIFT



DEMOCRACY IN ACTION as delegates vote on one of dozens of resolutions and constitutional amendments considered during the five-day convention.



KATE WILLIAMS PHOTO

FIRST TIME DELEGATES SPEAK



Christine Faber
COMMUNITY SOCIAL
SERVICE WORKER

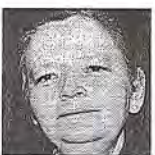
Crossover Enterprises

"It left me feeling more empowered to go back to my local and take on those issues that we are struggling with in my region."



Lois Doran
LIFESKILLS WORKER
CMHA Prince George

"Quite surprised, very educational. The more experienced delegates are very helpful; they make a big difference."



Gretchen Dulmage
COOK

Children's and Women's

"I thought it'd be a good idea if campaigning were allowed, or at least have clearer definition of what campaigning is allowed."

Nisga'a leader gives nod to parity and premier says there will be no cuts to health care funding

Delegates reject privatization

by Mike Old

Delegates meeting in Richmond for HEU's 21st Biennial Convention held Oct. 19 to 23 identified privatization as a major threat to health care and other public services and gave their support to the union's participation in a nation-wide CUPE campaign confronting growing corporate encroachment in the public sector.

More than 550 delegates from around the province kept busy debating dozens of resolutions and constitutional amendments covering a broad range of issues including First Nations land claims, elimination of "the wall" and stronger successorship provisions for public sector workers.

Delegates gave their support to a national campaign to fight privatization of public services organized by CUPE. And the convention backed that commitment up with support for the controversial lab accord between health care unions and Victoria that sets out a process for increasing the public role in lab, rehab and other services.

After hearing a moving presentation from Nisga'a leader Joe Gosnell, delegates were unanimous in their support for the Nisga'a land claims settlement while rejecting the notion of a province-wide referendum on the treaty. Gosnell told delegates that Gordon Campbell's Liberals were out "to derail the Nisga'a treaty and derail the treaty process in general." Pointed questions from First Nations delegates won Gosnell's commitment to parity for caregivers in First Nations communities.

In his convention address, Premier Glen Clark told delegates how important HEU's leadership on the Nisga'a land claims settlement would be. He also told delegates his government "will not cut health care funding" no matter what agenda Gordon Campbell pushed.

Eliminating "the wall" between the community and social services sectors and the facilities sector will remain a top item on HEU's agenda over the next two years as convention delegates passed motions supporting one contract for all caregivers and an end to the labour relations barrier between community and facilities sectors. As long as "the wall" exists, said Children's and Women's delegate Gretchen Dulmage, "none of us should be

sleeping well because we're in the facilities sector."

Another resolution called for strong successorship provisions in B.C.'s labour code and government policy providing successorship protection to all public sector workers. Convention delegates recounted how the lack of successorship protection has cost HEU members in contracted food and security services, and in social services.

Health employers "seem to take pride in their ability to move from contract company to contract company," said VGH delegate Mark Hooper, reflecting on his own experience as a contract security guard. "They're able to move from contract to contract, to drop wages to minimum wage, reduce all benefits, reduce all holidays and pick and choose who they want to keep."

And on the health care restructuring front, delegates approved guidelines for HEU participation in restructuring initiatives and instructed the incoming Provincial Executive to develop proposals to realign the PE to better coordinate HEU activities at regional health boards and community health councils.

Convention delegates supported measures to encourage increased accessibility between Provincial Executive members and local activists. And the equity standing committees, established at the 1996 convention, were given solid support by delegates. After a lengthy debate, delegates recommitted the union to the current method of conducting strike and ratification votes which requires the support of both 50 per cent of total members and 2/3 of HEU locals to accept or reject any measure.

Other constitutional measures supported by delegates include: access to the strike fund for purchasing office space and measures to make sure members on LTD and WCB can remain active in the union.

**Delegates
were unanimous
in their support
for the Nisga'a
land claims
settlement**



1998 HEU 21st BIENNIAL CONVENTION

HEU'S NEW PROVINCIAL EXECUTIVE



FRED MUZIN
President



CHRIS ALLNUTT
Secretary-
Business
Manager



MARY LAPLANTE
Financial
Secretary



DAVID RIDLEY
1st Vice-
President



COLLEEN FITZPATRICK
2nd Vice-
President



LEO BIBB
3rd Vice-
President



DAN HINGLEY
4th Vice-
President



SHEILA ROWSWELL
5th Vice-
President

NOTE BOOK

CUPE THANKS HEU MEMBERS

Geraldine McGuire, national secretary-treasurer of CUPE thanked HEU members for their support when CUPE asked its members for an increase in dues, so it can carry on the fight to defend Medicare and other social programs. She said CUPE will be half a million strong by the millennium, but we should not underestimate the power of even one member.

DALE FULLER PHOTO



HE'S GOT PAPERS, SAYS GORGE ROAD MEMBER

Katerina Marios, from Gorge Road Hospital in Victoria, insisted that the mascot at the table was a fully accredited delegate to convention. Marios and her colleagues from Gorge Road won the stuffed toy from HEU's Occupational Health and Safety department's raffle.

INSURANCE MONEY FOR THE INSURED Sister Angela Schira, secretary-treasurer of the B.C. Federation of Labour, spoke of the Unemployment Insurance fund surplus of \$20 billion – which exists because the government raised premiums and slashed payments. Now they want to use that money for everything but what it is meant for – the unemployed. She said that EI premiums are a fair way to pay for insurance, but it is not a fair way to pay for social programs or tax cuts.



WHAT A WAY TO START THE DAY CUPE National president and its secretary-treasurer, Judy Darcy and Geraldine McGuire, had a lot of fun addressing the first Women's Committee breakfast on Tuesday morning of convention. The breakfast was a great success, with more than 200 people showing up at 7:30 a.m. to enjoy breakfast and speakers before starting the day in the big tent.

THE NISGA'A FILE

Gosnell defends treaty, supports parity for First Nations caregivers

Nisga'a tribal council president Joseph Gosnell told delegates that a province-wide referendum on the historic Nisga'a treaty is a non-starter and he made a surprise commitment to wage parity for caregivers at First Nations health care facilities.

"No treaty in the history of North America has been subject to a referendum," said Gosnell referring to opposition leader Gordon Campbell's push for a province-wide vote on the deal. Their aim is to "derail the Nisga'a treaty and derail the treaty process in general."

Gosnell reflected on his experience as a youth sent to residential school for six years and on how the residential school experience sowed disorientation in many First Nation communities. "It's time we left that behind, turn around and face the future," said Gosnell. The Nisga'a land treaty offered "a positive alternative to blockades, stand-offs, law suits and continued uncertainty."

The 800-page, two volume treaty "is a result of more than 20 years of intensely adversarial negotiations," said Gosnell. "It is simply not possible to reopen or renegotiate one part of the treaty. It would be incredibly unfair to change the rules of the game now." He reminded delegates that no referenda were held on critical issues such as NAFTA, the GST or the Columbia River Treaty.

Delegates overwhelmingly supported the Nisga'a treaty and opposed a province-wide referendum on



Chief Joe Gosnell pledges wage parity for First Nations health centres after pointed questions from First Nations delegates like Trudy Spiller.

the deal. But it wasn't all smooth sailing for the Nisga'a chief.

Skidegate delegate Marie Sawyer told Gosnell that he and other First Nations leaders had a role in educating First Nations health employers about union issues. "I believe we deserve a fair wage for the work we do on reserve," Sawyer told Gosnell. "Why on reserve is it so different than everywhere else – the rules change when we get home."

Nisga'a local delegate Florence Nisyok explained that working conditions at the Nisga'a Valley Health Board were deteriorating while HEU members in the Nass Valley waited for their contract talks to begin.

"I would support any organization who will lend assistance to our people," said Gosnell in response to delegates, "to bring pay equity on a level playing field regardless of where you live."

Equity caucuses given ringing praise

Delegates overwhelmingly endorsed the equity standing committees, voting down a constitutional amendment to abolish them. This was not the emotional debate of two years ago, rather testimonials from members extolling the committees' work and their value to the union.

The equity committees were created to give a voice to equity groups within the union. The committees were established at the 1994 convention. They were formalized with a constitutional amendment at the 1996 convention. The debate was difficult, but it passed. The objectives of the caucuses have been more than fulfilled according to delegates at this convention.

Joanne Foote, spokesperson for the First Nations standing committee said, "I know all the caucuses have about 100 people on their mailing lists, and those are all people who would not have come forward without their caucus."

Dan Hingley, PE member from Nanaimo, reminded delegates of the LTD provisions in the new contract which would not be there without the work of the People with Disabilities caucus.



FOOTE

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

SOME VICTORIES, BUT MEDICARE FIGHT IS AHEAD

WE HAVE witnessed and participated in some tremendous victories during the last two years, said union president Fred Muzin in his report to the 21st Biennial HEU Convention.

Especially gratifying is the grassroots movement against the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI). HEU is front and centre in that battle, Muzin said, because health care would suffer immeasurably under the MAI, were it to go through.

The MAI may be going down to defeat after France pulled out of the agreement, with Germany possibly following. But it may pop up in another form under the wing of the World Trade



Organization – which smaller nations may not have the ability to fight. That work, said Muzin, is far from over.

In his report, Muzin touched on the many significant gains that have been made in Canada since the last convention. The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruled that the federal government must make pay equity restitution to its workers. And he applauded the historic Nisga'a Agreement. "After more than a century, we are on the verge of beginning to redress the shame of the residential schools and enabling our First Nations sisters and brothers to fulfill their social, economic, political and cultural aspirations," he said.

At last year's Wage Policy Conference, HEU members made it clear that the fight for dignity and justice for their sisters and brothers on long-term dis-

ability was at the top of the negotiating demands. The bargaining committee stuck to that commitment and achieved \$57 million in redress for those vulnerable members.

Muzin congratulated the members of the bargaining committee for their work, and the members who participated in the job actions which strengthened the committee's hand at the bargaining tables. "We will continue the struggle to conclude successful negotiations for all of our members – next will be the social services sector," he said.

Muzin concluded his report by saying that the fight to save Medicare is what is going to take us into the next century. "As front-line health care experts, it is imperative that we lead the battle to rescue Medicare," he said. Part of that fight is to join in with CUPE in its campaign to reject public-private partnerships by taking on private, for-profit companies in seniors' long-term care.



CUPE gears up for tough fight

Darcy sounds alarm on the repackaging of privatization

CUPE is launching a massive fight against the privatization of health care, education and other public services. And CUPE national president Judy Darcy told convention delegates that public-private partnerships, pitched as a magic solution by cash-strapped governments, are not partnerships at all but rather "privatization in a pretty package."

P3s are not the saviour of public services, said Darcy, "they're the beginning of the end of public services as we know them." And the best defense against privatization, added Darcy, are strong unions. Good collective agreement language is the first line in that defense.

She recounted the local campaigns CUPE members are fighting against P3s across Canada: privatized school construction in New Brunswick, the sell-off of social housing in Newfoundland, the privatization of water in Ontario and municipal services in Manitoba. And Darcy told delegates that she's arranging a meeting between the Premier, CUPE BC and HEU to drive home the message that P3s are no solution to the provision of public services in B.C.

Delegates endorsed CUPE's campaign against P3s. "We need a campaign to expose the fact that shareholders are making money off the needs of senior citizens," said PE member Sheila Rowsell in reference



THREE SISTERS Johanna Ulmer and Kate Marleau of the Mission local and Mary Nicholls of the Terrace local join in the round of applause for Judy Darcy's speech. Afterwards, Darcy talks to the media on CUPE's campaign to fight privatization of public programs, including Medicare.



to the Ministry of Health's objective that new seniors' care facilities are built through P3s.

Wendy Taylor, delegate from for-profit and recently closed Yarrow Lodge, explained that P3s put profit before quality care. The owner "skimmed 120 hours of care aide time a week, and ran the facility into the ground."

"P3s don't work for British Columbians," added Queen's Park's Teresa Prentice. "We have to lobby government and lobby them hard."

INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY

Strength in unity



Josefa Rivera, Isaac Zulu and Lungiswa Maqaqa inspired HEU members at convention's international solidarity event.

HEU's International Solidarity Night attracted more than 200 convention delegates. Linda Hargreaves, the committee's chairperson, welcomed Josefa Rivera of the Maria Elena Cuadra Movement of Working and Unemployed Women in Nicaragua, and Lungiswa Maqaqa and Isaac Zulu, both of South Africa's National Education Health and Allied Workers Union, and Thomas De Bruin of District 1199P of the Service Employees International Union in Pennsylvania. Each recounted stories of organizing in the face of overwhelming opposition and often violence – with passion and authority. They inspired everyone to keep fighting the good fight for fairness, justice and equality for working people everywhere.

Executive to get higher profile

Convention delegates supported measures to encourage increased accessibility of the Provincial Executive members to local activists. The convention also endorsed a resolution that commits more resources to providing leadership training for PE members in order to foster activism at the local level. Delegates said they want more accountability from the PE.

All these factors point to the PE being more of a presence in the locals. Activists will receive more information about decisions taken by PE members. Sandy Harper, former PE member, said, "People want

to see what the PE are doing and what they believe in." Gordie Logan, outgoing PE member, agreed, saying, "You can't have accountability without having the PE out in the locals."

But the other important factor is the training the PE receive. Delegates agreed that shouldn't just disappear after two years on the executive – they have to take it back to their constituents.

It is a two-way street. The PE has to hear about the problems in the locals, said PE member Louise Hutchinson. And the only way to do that is to talk to the membership.

SECRETARY-BUSINESS MANAGER'S REPORT

ACTIVISTS' HARD WORK REAPS BENEFITS FOR ALL

TURNING YOUR anger into action is what makes you an activist, Chris Allnutt told delegates in his second convention address as the union's secretary-business manager. He acknowledged that being an activist is not an easy job. There are many frustrations, a lot of meetings, failed campaigns, the challenge of lighting a fire under apathetic members.

But it is the work of union activists, said Allnutt, which has made HEU feared and respected in the halls of government and the opposition, at the Health Employers Association of B.C. and in employers' boardrooms across the province.

"They are afraid of us, because they know we are

right and know what we are talking about," he said.

Allnutt outlined some major inroads HEU has made in the last two years.

Last summer facilities sector members ratified a new Master Agreement after sending a message to the employer to get serious about negotiating by shutting down every hospital and long-term care facility in B.C. for four hours – without a picket line.

Allnutt spoke of the union's other achievements, including new ergonomics regulations and the new occupational health and safety agency. The lab accord is an important accomplishment – a milestone in the fight to save Medicare. The union's more than 2,000 disabled members will benefit from the new Master Agreement.

HEU's other significant breakthroughs would not



have been possible without the plain hard work of so many of its activists. But Allnutt sketched out for delegates some unfinished business, most notably the need for a general wage increase. HEU members have been saddled with a wage freeze in three of the last five years while the cost of living continues to rise.

And the walls between the community, facilities and social services sectors must come down. The flawed community sector agreement does not include the principle of parity between the community and facilities sectors. Following the union's recommendation, HEU community sector members voted 78 per cent no, but the other unions at the bargaining table carried the day, and the contract was ratified.

Allnutt expressed confidence that HEU activists will be successful in bringing about these changes. "What strikes me is the power and knowledge that exists within our own membership," he said. "The solutions lie within us."

NOTE BOOK



STEPHEN HOWARD PHOTO

MARIE SAWYER ACCEPTS THE GAVEL This year's Convention Gavel went to the House of Life local at Skidegate. Local chair Marie Sawyer accepted the gavel from president Fred Muzin on the last evening of the convention. "Not only did our First Nations members commit themselves to their traditional principles," said Muzin, "but they said they can be good members of their community and be good trade unionists." With the gavel in her hands, Sawyer turned to face the convention, saying, "On behalf of my health centre and our members, I'd like to say Howah, which in my language means thank you. I'm so proud to be an HEU member and proud of who I am, where I come from and what I am fighting for - wage parity and equal rights."

CONTRACTING OUT DANGEROUS TO OUR HEALTH

Brother John Fitzpatrick, Vancouver and District Labour Council's secretary-treasurer, warned against the trend of contracting out union jobs. He reminded delegates of the HEU members with years of seniority who were fired from the Cancer Society at the beginning of the year. "That contract has gone to a non-union firm, and that's a dangerous precedent that we are seeing all too often," he said. Contracting out is creeping into health care, and HEU has to be vigilant to stamp it out, he added.

RN WORKLOAD SOLUTIONS INCLUDE OTHER CARE-GIVERS HEU and BCNU agree on the link between quality of care and workload issues according to BCNU president Cathy Ferguson. "We can now go forward united in our shared conviction that the people of B.C. need more RNs, more LPNs, more care aides and nurses' aides throughout hospitals, in the community, and in long-term care." Ferguson told delegates that HEU and BCNU are leaders in the defense of Medicare and in their opposition to health care privatization.

MMM GOOD! "Solidarity knows no boundaries" and "Racism is a union issue" were two messages inside fortune cookies handed out at convention by the Ethnic Diversity Standing Committee. The OH&S Committee had their own cookies with messages of good health.



DALE FULLER PHOTO

Premier Glen Clark called on HEU to take a leadership position on the settling of Aboriginal land claims, because the fight for justice for working people is exactly the same struggle that the First Nations people are facing.

Clark's economic strategy includes commitment to Medicare system

Victoria is focussed on a economic strategy to deal with the province's flagging economy, Premier Glen Clark told delegates, and that strategy includes a continuing commitment to the B.C.'s health care system.

"We do have very serious economic problems in B.C.," said Clark, affected in part by a recessionary trend sweeping two-thirds of the world's economies.

But Victoria's other major problem, said Clark, is communicating the government's economic initiatives to the public through the mainstream media. Clark asked delegates if they were aware of key elements of the government's strategy: six per cent cut

in personal taxes; 22 per cent cut in small business taxes; \$600 million cut in stumpage rates; and a 50 per cent cut in oil and gas royalties, all implemented since the last election.

At the same time, Clark noted that his government protected public services while providing modest tax relief and increased funding for education and health care. He committed his government to work closely with workers, communities and small business to improve the economy. "We will never abandon workers in communities no matter what community and no matter what industry they work in," said Clark.

Attacking opposition leader Gordon Campbell's advice that B.C. follow Ontario Premier Mike Harris' policies, Clark pointed to the results - 36 hospitals have been closed in Ontario since 1994 and 6,600 nursing positions lost.

"The last thing we need to do is to create uncertainty and fear," said Clark. "We will not cut health care funding no matter what."

Clark urged HEU to speak out in favour of justice and reconciliation with B.C.'s First Nations and to support the Nisga'a treaty.

Public sector unions confront differences, fight for Medicare

HEU is not alone in the fight to protect and improve Medicare and other public services, according to representatives of B.C.'s largest public sector unions.

Barry O'Neill, president of the 65,000 member B.C. Division of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, told delegates that HEU's convention issues were also important to other CUPE members, their families and their communities.

In particular, O'Neill pointed to the threat a U.S.-style health care system poses for workers and their families. "There's a constant clamouring from the right for a two-tier system," said O'Neill. "And your union is in the forefront of the fight against it."

B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union vice-president George Heyman reflected on the common bonds between his union and the HEU: social unionism, working women's issues, opposition to discrimination and solidarity with the disadvantaged in our communities. And both unions, said Heyman,

are committed to the fight against the privatization of public services and committed, through the B.C. Health Coalition, to advancing Medicare.

But Heyman acknowledged that bargaining together in health care has meant that the two unions have had to confront their differences - not so much over divergent goals as "different histories and cultural ways of approaching things."

"We're building a solid relationship between our unions," said Heyman. "We need to do that from a basis of trust."

Heyman said that both unions made major gains in community health care bargaining but admitted the task was not complete. "We don't have to wait for a future round of bargaining" to narrow the wage gap between community and facility, he said.

And what's in the cards? Heyman said HEU and BCGEU should build an even closer relationship so that both unions can do what they do best: "Fight the bosses and protect our members."

FINANCIAL SECRETARY'S REPORT

FINANCES GOOD WHILE UNION WORK CARRIES ON

SISTER MARY LaPlante began her report as financial secretary with a warm welcome to HEU's new members, noting that the union has grown by 67 certifications and 1,141 members since October 1996. She paid tribute to the terrific work of the organizers.

LaPlante reported that the overall financial picture is good, with an excess of revenue over expenses for the year.

"In the past two years we have had many challenges to face, such as regionalization, restructuring, a federal election, privatization, contracting out, closures and bargaining for a new Collective Agreement," LaPlante said.



This year's operating budget focussed on bargaining and bargaining campaigns in the facilities, community, social services and paramedical sectors.

"Our members told us they wanted relief on workload, reduction in injuries, improvements for our members on long-term disability and improvements in wages and benefits," LaPlante said.

Facilities sector bargaining came to a head in May when a province-wide job action for four hours brought the employer back to the bargaining table with an acceptable offer.

And community sector ratification votes were just in at the time of convention, while social services and paramedical bargaining are not yet over.

But there were other expenses during the past two years. Educational opportunities for union members are paramount to the union's agenda, said LaPlante,

with emphasis placed on the values of collective action for change, democracy, social change and the building of confidence, self-esteem and self employment.

And committee work remains one of the engines of the union. The Provincial Executive sub-committees, the equity standing committees and HEU membership on CUPE national committees are all vital to HEU's strength and effectiveness.

HEU is going to be relocated to new digs in the near future, reported LaPlante, as the Provincial Office has outgrown its building. A Nanaimo office will open soon - maybe sharing space with CUPE. And the Victoria office may also move, due to the foreclosure of the Victoria Labour Centre.

"We are in a stable financial position and our budget is balanced," LaPlante said. She concluded by saying that she looks forward to the challenges of the next few years.

Labour

NOTEWORTHY NEWS ABOUT ISSUES AFFECTING WORKING PEOPLE HERE AND ABROAD

Key HEU issues win support of B.C. Fed convention

But BCNU job action meant short convention for many

by Margi Blamey

HEU DELEGATES spoke out on a wide variety of critical issues at the B.C. Federation of Labour's 43rd convention, Nov. 23 to 27. The convention slogan, *Fairness at Work – Closing the Gap*, was particularly appropriate for HEU, reflecting 1998 bargaining demands of fairness and equity for health care workers in all sectors.

BCFL president Ken Georgetti rallied delegates by taking on B.C. business for their anti-worker campaigns. But he also had some advice for NDP politicians in Victoria. "When you meet with delegates to this convention who represent 450,000 working women and men throughout this province, remember – that's whose side you're on."

HEU delegates spoke out on critical issues throughout the week. During debate on the Occupational Health and Safety Committee report, HEU president Fred Muzin highlighted the brutal statistics of B.C.'s most dangerous workplaces for on-the-job injuries: 6,500 health care workers on WCB claims in 1997, with 1998 numbers up six per cent. And Muzin was critical of WCB for eroding Medicare through its

controversial treatment of injured B.C. workers at a private hospital in Calgary and its proposal to queue jump surgery wait lists.

And HEU delegates reminded convention how critical successorship protection was for all workers.

"We're 10,000 but we need the support of everyone in this room," said HEU Cornerstone local activist Margaret Cavin, referring to HEU's community social services members whose current bargaining demands include successor rights. "Please give us your united support – united we can succeed."

On the serious and often-sidelined issue of violence against women, Provincial Executive member Linda Hargreaves spoke candidly and passionately about her own experience as a victim of violence, and the justice system's continued mistreatment of those who come forward to prosecute the perpetrators.

"I was accused of being drunk, being violent, being possessive, being jealous," said Hargreaves. "And all this despite promises that they would focus on the assault." Hargreaves received a standing



ROGER KISHI and Teresa Prentice discuss the BCFL OH&S committee report disputing the notion that workplace injuries are an inherent part of a job.

AT A NOON hour rally in support of the BCFL / CLC postcard campaign on the \$20 billion EI surplus, HEU members Darlina Ycaro, left, and Marie Pantelis, right, get support from Jean Jorisch.



STEPHEN HOWARD PHOTOS

ovation after her courageous testimony. HEU members took part in the debate on pay equity, public-private partnerships, the Canadian Health Coalition's Fight to Save Medicare campaign, a national home care program,

the MAI, bank mergers, the EI surplus and the restoration of CPP.

But it was a short convention for many HEU delegates who returned home early to organize support pickets for the BCNU walkout Nov. 27.

No way, we won't pay!

Twenty unionized longshoreworkers were recently ordered by the B.C. Supreme Court to pay fines for defying a court order to end illegal picketing at two sulphur terminals in Vancouver harbour last August.

But Barry Holloway, president of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union Local 518 said he and the other members will go to jail rather than pay.

"We've already paid with our jobs," said Holloway.

Holloway was fined \$1,000, the 19 other longshoreworkers between \$250 and \$500 each, and the local itself, \$10,000. The judge gave them four months to pay.

The union protest came after Sultran, an Alberta-based conglomerate of sulphur producers, awarded a sulphur-sampling contract to Certispec Services, a local non-



MARGI BLAMEY PHOTO

BROTHERS Russell Gurberg and Wally Rabey are two of 20 Local 518 members who were recently ordered by the B.C. Supreme Court to pay fines.

union firm. The unionized longshoreworkers were angry that the quality-control work they've done on the Port Moody sulphur docks for 27 years would now be done by untrained, non-union labour. Work has traditionally gone to companies employing members of Local 518.

"It's strictly a union-busting move," said Holloway.

Pay equity victories are on the horizon

In an unanimous decision Nov. 17, the Federal Court of Appeal found in favour of the Communications, Energy and Paper Workers' Union (CEP) and upheld the appeal of a decision handed down by Mr. Justice Muldoon that denied the right of 22,000 Bell Canada telephone operators to have their pay equity complaint heard by the Canadian Human Rights Commission.

"The court has sent a clear message to Bell and to other employers that it's time to do the right thing," said CEP president Fred Pomeroy. "And it reinstates our case to the Human Rights Tribunal."

The decision also impacts 200,000 current and former federal public service employees, all members of the Public Service Alliance of Canada, who remain in a pay equity battle with the federal government.

"The Federal Court of Appeal's ruling has pulled the rug out from under Liberal government," said PSAC national executive vice-president Nycole Turmel.

"It no longer has a legal argument to justify its appeal in the pay equity case against its employees. The appeal should be withdrawn immediately and our members paid."

The federal government refused to implement a Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision and launched its appeal using the Muldoon decision and conflicting methodologies as its argument. That legal argument is now history.

"The federal Liberal government needs to heed the message – it's time to support equality for Canadian women in the labour market," said CLC executive vice-president Nancy Riche.

'It's time to do the right thing'

Remind MDs, MPs: Medicare not expendable

by Isaac Sobol

DOCTORS. You'd think they would be in the vanguard of those promoting health and well-being for the community they serve. But at times they sadly seem blinded by ideology and consumed by matters of financial self-interest.

Doctors, who should be the staunchest defenders of and advocates for Medicare, are too often seen to be saying, "If the government won't give us the money we feel we deserve, open up the door to the private sector. We'll get it from them."

If we see doctors as simply business people – I suppose they have just as much right to protect their incomes as anybody else. But, shamefully, some doctors use other doctors – spin doctors – to distort their business message into a public campaign proclaiming that their patients are suffering from a shortage of cash in the system, and it's the fault of the provincial government, and it's about time we move to a two-tier system because there's nothing we can do to re-commit to Medicare.

To anyone who sees him or herself as positioned to the left of Atilla the Hun in the political spectrum, it often seems that doctors – or at least their political organizations – just don't get it. But doctors' organizations are very clever. And they spend a lot of money promoting their cause. We've got to do a better job of mounting a



'Some doctors use other doctors – spin doctors – to distort their business message'

counter-attack in order to focus the public's attention on the importance of Medicare. And of the importance of maintaining social equity for the sake of health.

We did just that when the Canadian Medical Association met in Victoria – and they defeated a motion calling for support for two-tier medicine. That motion was brought forth to the CMA again this past year. And, thankfully, the delegates once more rejected support for moving to a two-tier system.

But we must remain vigilant. And make sure that not only is such a motion defeated again, but it is never even considered again.

So what can we do? I offer a small suggestion – the next time you visit your doctor, take a minute to tell him or her that you are disappointed, or, perhaps, mad as hell, that some doctors seem to want to undermine Medicare.

Tell your doctor that Medicare works for you, works for your family, and works for Canada.

Tell your doctor that you are against two-tier medicine, which will cost everybody more, in more ways than one, and which will lead to poorer health and shorter life spans for Canadians. And tell them you expect their medical organization to actively support Medicare, with no ifs ands or buts.

And the next time you see, or write to, or fax, or e-mail, your member of parliament, remind your MP that you don't consider Medicare to be expendable, but you do consider MPs who help undermine Medicare to be very expendable.

• Isaac Sobol is a physician currently on educational leave from his position as chief health officer for the Nisga'a Valley Health Board. These comments are excerpted from a speech he gave to a public forum on Medicare in Vancouver, Oct. 15.

Child labour is not child's play

The Canadian Labour Congress and the B.C. Federation of Labour, along with many other social justice-seeking organizations in Canada and around the world, have been actively participating in a Campaign Against Child Labour.

In a world that has advanced so much over recent years, it is almost unimaginable that we can still force children, the most vulnerable members of society, to sacrifice their future for the sake of survival.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates the number of child labourers worldwide to be between 200 and 400 million.

These children are subject to dangerous, dirty and exploitative conditions. They work long hours at minimal pay. Their lives are a vicious cycle of poverty and hardship, and many are bonded into labour with little or no hope of release for debts incurred by poverty-stricken relatives.

Successful grassroots campaigns focussing on The Gap, Nike and Disney have created a political climate where industry-wide solutions to eliminate sweatshops may be possible. Union members can help in the CLC/B.C. Fed campaign:

- Raise your awareness by contacting the BCFL at (604) 430-1421, accessing their web site at <www.bcfed.com>, or looking up the CLC's web site at <www.clc-ctc.ca> for information on the campaign, then share the knowledge;

- Fax a letter to the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Foreign Affairs at (613) 996-3443 and tell him Canada needs a multi-stakeholder task force on the retail industry which would be established to find ways to eliminate exploitative child labour and promote respect for fundamental workers' and human rights in the retail industry here and abroad;

- Shop at these stores for your Christmas gifts – they've all signed on in support of a task force: the Hudson's Bay Company, Mark's Work Warehouse, Sears Canada and Dylex Limited which operates BiWay, Braemar, Fairweather, Thrifty's and Tip Top Tailors.

THE LOCAL CHILEAN community rejoiced after the Nov. 25 ruling by Britain's Law Lords that Augusto Pinochet does not enjoy immunity from Spain's extradition request to try the ex-dictator for torture, murder and genocide during his brutal regime. At a special celebration, people were invited up to the mike to share their thoughts and feelings. Tilbury local member Ruddy Villeda was one of many Latin Americans who stood up during the emotional evening to sing, dance, recite poetry or tell their stories. Villeda recited a poem about a Guatemalan political prisoner.



Latin American trade unionists assassinated

Trade unionists in North America labour under very adverse conditions sometimes, but in other parts of the world a commitment to fighting for workers' rights can mean a death sentence. But amazingly, people still do take on the struggle. Recently, there has been a rash of murders in Latin America – sisters and brothers have been shot down because they fought for justice.

Carrying out the mandate of the last two HEU biennial conventions to foster international solidarity with workers in other countries, HEU president Fred Muzin often answers urgent requests for solidarity – usually a letter to the leader of a country protesting a death or a disappearance. He wrote three letters to political leaders in November.

Hortensia Alfaro Banderas was the leader of the health care workers in Colombia before she was murdered, and was only one of many Colombian trade unionists assassinated in October. Her position was roughly equivalent to CUPE president Judy Darcy's in Canada.

Muzin fired off a letter to the president of Colombia, charging his government with not protecting these union sisters and brothers after they had been threatened continually.

President Irigoyen of Guatemala also received a letter from Muzin. Bishop Juan Gerardi had just fin-

ished a report condemning the use of army violence, when he was assassinated. His murderers have not yet been brought to justice.

In a letter to the Human Rights office of the Catholic Archdiocese of Guatemala, Muzin praised the courage of Monseñor Gerardi, "It is important that the bishop be honoured by continuing his essential work, despite the fact that others are still threatened."

The safety of a group of human rights activists in Guerrero, Mexico is causing concern to Amnesty International and other groups. Hilda Navarrete, a member of the human rights group called La voz de los sin voz (The voice of the voiceless), is in particular jeopardy. While at a church group meeting at a local teacher's house, Navarrete and others were threatened by patrolling soldiers. In a letter to the governor of the state, Muzin stated, "We urge you to direct the members of the security forces to abide by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights."

Navarrete is still alive and letters of concern from labour unions and other organizations like Amnesty International may guarantee her safety. It is important that trade unionists and others fighting for justice make the leaders of the countries where these human rights violations occur aware that they are being watched.

Pull out of the MAI dialogue, says coalition

Agreement is floundering, but it still needs a shove

by Mike Old

THE MULTILATERAL Agreement on Investment is in trouble. Grassroots opposition to the MAI earlier this year forced negotiators underground for six months and France's withdrawal from talks has left the future of the MAI in doubt.

In October, the B.C. Health Coalition joined global opposition to MAI when it briefed a committee of the B.C. legislature on the threat the proposed trade deal poses to health care.

"We have to look at the main elements of the MAI that affect health care," HEU president and coalition representative Fred Muzin told the committee. "Because what the MAI does is present an arsenal of weapons (for corporations) to use against public policy measures."

The MAI would limit the role government plays in providing health care services, giving health care corporations more power to challenge policies that eat into their profits.

For example, all health care providers, local non-profit hospitals and long-term care facilities or huge corporate home care providers and private insurance companies, would be treated similarly when it comes to the application of public grants and subsidies.

The "national treatment" provisions of the MAI mean that that equal treatment extends to foreign corporations as well.

Health care standards and goals may suffer under the MAI because governments would be unable to impose a wide range of performance requirements regulating practices of commercial health care operators.

And under the MAI, governments can't make contracts to corporations conditional on the purchase of local goods and services.

"The rules regarding expropriation and compensation are particularly problematic," said Muzin. "They provide formidable obstacles to any new public health care services or to expanding existing services."



HEU PRESIDENT Fred Muzin and B.C. Nurses' Union executive councillor Laura Dressel present MLA Joan Smallwood (right) the brief prepared by the B.C. Health Coalition outlining the impact of the proposed Multilateral Agreement on Investment on health care. Smallwood chairs the special committee of the B.C. legislature that's studying the MAI.

Under the MAI, a foreign company could seek compensation for any losses – including future losses – that resulted from the expansion of a public health care service like home care, for example. And when corporations sue for compensation because of government measures, they can do so in secret before an appointed tribunal.

"It's an undemocratic weapon to enforce an even broader set of corporate rights," argued Muzin.

The MAI has no exclusion for health care services – not even the weak exclusion that's in NAFTA. And the policies of provincial governments are subject to the MAI so most laws and regulations affecting health care would be affected by the agreement. And under

the MAI there would be no way to enforce labour standards.

"Another feature of the MAI is that if this were to be signed on behalf of our government, it would lock us – and future generations – in for 20 years," said Muzin. "What that does in effect is impose commercial property rights over democracy."

The coalition is calling for Canada's withdrawal from the MAI talks. In its place the coalition supports an international framework that balances property

rights of investors with the individual and collective rights of citizens.

That means multinational corporations must be required to support sustainable environmental practices, assist local economies and respect labour standards.

'The MAI has no exclusion for health care services'

Health care would suffer under the MAI

Workers' Compensation Board

WCB's practice of purchasing surgery time for injured workers in public hospitals has far reaching implications under the MAI because foreign commercial insurers could claim discrimination if they are prevented from purchasing hospital services on the same basis as the WCB.

A tribunal would have to rule whether national treatment under the MAI overrides the intent of the Canada Health Act.

Health Protection Branch

The HPB's mandate is to protect Canadians by independently monitoring the safety of food, drugs and medical products – a mandate that has been seriously compromised by the federal government's dismantling and deregulation of the branch's functions in favour of industry self-regulation.

The MAI would make it difficult to rebuild the HPB – any foreign-based firm that has taken over health protection functions could argue for compensation under MAI's expropriation measures.

Health Information Systems

The MAI threatens government efforts to protect the public interest and patient privacy by retaining control over use of health information.

Many hospitals and governments have contracted with private companies to provide HIS but the MAI would hamper efforts to develop health information systems controlled by public agencies.

Reference Drug Program

B.C.'s Reference Drug Program saves \$44 million a year by forcing physicians to prescribe lower-priced (but equal quality) drugs for patients covered by Pharmacare.

Foreign drug companies could claim such measures constitute expropriation under the MAI and claim significant compensation threatening the very existence of the program.

Tobacco Reduction

The B.C. government's aggressive campaign to protect the public against tobacco-related health risks

would itself be at risk under the MAI.

Under the expropriation provisions of the MAI, tobacco companies could argue that B.C. laws giving government authority over labelling, packaging, display and sale of cigarettes represent an interference with a trademark and apply to a tribunal for compensation.

Home Care

Progressive efforts underway in B.C. to integrate health care services like home care by reducing the number of non-profit and for-profit agencies and bringing them under the control of health regions could be at risk under the MAI.

Home care giants like Olsten, whose commercial interests are affected by such measures, could claim compensation under the MAI's expropriation and performance provisions. And that secure corporate-friendly logic could put other health care reforms on hold.

On the web

Catch the B.C. Health Coalition's presentation to the legislative committee at: http://www.legis.gov.bc.ca/cmt/mai/hansard/t12_1008.htm and the coalition's complete brief can be downloaded from the HEU website. Check under newsletters at: www.heu.org



DECEMBER 16

Libby Davies Open House, 5-7 p.m., 2410 Main St., Vancouver

DECEMBER 17

B.C. Fed / CLC Open House, 2-4 p.m., 200-5118 Joyce St., Vancouver

DECEMBER 24

Two community Christmas dinners, 5-8:30 p.m., Maritime Labour Centre, Vancouver and CAW Hall, New Westminster

DECEMBER 25

Christmas Day. Office closed.

DECEMBER 28

Boxing Day Stat. Office closed.

JANUARY 1

New Year's Day. Office closed.

JAN. 24 to FEB. 19

1999 CLC Winter School, Harrison Lake

JANUARY 21

Deadline to apply for Introductory OH&S Workshop (for OH&S committee members only).

Corporate threat to Medicare laid bare

by Mike Old

COLLEEN FULLER, the author of a new book examining corporate encroachment on Canada's Medicare system, says that Canadian health care is at a crossroads.

Down one path lies a market-driven system of health care while the other path builds on the basic principles of Medicare. *Caring for Profit* is a detailed study of both the history and current state of the relationship between public health insurance in Canada and the corporate interests who seek to profit from it.

"It's not intended to be a how-to book on fighting the corporate sector," says Fuller. "Rather it's a way to get information on the corporate players in Canada's health care system — who are they, where do they come from, what are they doing and why are they so greedy."

In the first part of *Caring for Profit*, Fuller documents the struggle for Medicare in Canada.

On the one side, trade unions, consumer groups, farmers, women's organizations and churches supported a public health services approach with salaried physicians and other care providers administered directly by gov-

ernment. This "socialistic" approach was opposed by physicians' organizations, insurance companies and businesses who favoured subsidies to the poor through which they could purchase private insurance while preserving free market medicine for everyone else.

In the end, Canadians got a hybrid system of health care — one that provided universal coverage through public health insurance while leaving the door open for doctors, pharmaceutical giants, insurance companies and health care corporations to profit from the public purse.

But it's Fuller's contention that growing privatization in health care isn't strictly the result of government coffers drying up.

Rather, in a chapter subtitled 'the politics of privatization,' she explores public policy initiatives taken by government that encourage the growth of a private health care industry in Canada and provide the means through which this industry can fuel its bottom line from Medicare dollars.

Fuller then goes on to expose those aspects of health care where corporate activity is most pronounced: health management organizations, workers' compensation, insurance of delisted medical procedures, outsourcing of

health care services and privatization of labs and health information systems. And she lays bare the growth strategies behind some of the largest health care corporations operating in Canada.

Fuller says that her book validates the daily struggle of front-line health care workers against privatization in their workites.

There's no question that *Caring for Profit* provides the most in-depth look at the corporate assault on Canadian health care available.



BOOKS



CARING FOR PROFIT:
HOW CORPORATIONS ARE
TAKING OVER CANADA'S
HEALTH CARE SYSTEM
by Colleen Fuller
NEW STAR BOOKS / CANADIAN
CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES
\$18

HEALTH CARE ON WORKING TV

New broadcast times ...

In the Lower Mainland, now two prime time broadcasts: Fridays at 7:30 p.m. and (NEW!) Mondays at 8:30 p.m.; on Kootenay Cable TV (Kimberley and Fernie) Tuesdays at 9 p.m., Wednesdays and Thursdays at 8 p.m.; and now on air in 50 American cities and worldwide on the internet at www.workingtv.com <<http://www.workingtv.com>> Julius Fisher, Working TV, Vancouver, B.C. Canada



Consider yourselves part of the family

As always, HEU organizers have been out there doing their job, and the union is happy to welcome 127 new members from six groups into the family.

There is a new certification in the paramedical sector, adding one member to the ranks, at Three Links Care Centre in Vancouver.

In the growing community social services sector there are 14 new members from Vancouver Island Autistic Homes (Cultra House) in Victoria.

Adding to our independent certifica-

tions, the Capital Mental Health Association in Victoria brings in 42 new members.

Thirty-three members providing security services at Desert City Investigations in Kamloops won their union certification in November.

The community sector has nine new members at the Canadian Mental Health Association in its 100-Mile House branch and 28 members at Murrayville Manor in Langley.

Greetings, sisters and brothers.

Coffee break



All stories guaranteed factual.
Sources this issue: BCNU,
Internet / CALM, Georgia
Straight, YTV, San Francisco
Chronicle

MR. CHAIRMAN, WITH THOUSANDS OF IMMINENT LAYOFFS, BRANCH CLOSURES, AND LESS CONSUMER CHOICE...HOW THE **HECK** ARE BANK MERGERS SUPPOSED TO "BENEFIT" CANADIANS.



Nurses honour Ralph Klein with "award"

Canadian nurses were flabbergasted to learn that the Vancouver Board of Trade recently bestowed its 1998 Public Sector Achievement Award upon Alberta premier Ralph Klein.

That's why, on the same day, the National Federation of

WELL, HAVING LARGER BANKS WILL ACT TO FURTHER SOLIDIFY THE BANKING SECTOR'S TRADITIONAL STABILITY IN THIS COUNTRY, STRENGTHENING IN TURN THE FINANCIAL SECTOR AS A WHOLE AND....



Nurses' Unions and the Canadian Health Coalition presented him with the first annual Canadian Health Care Demolition Award.

"Ralph Klein has done more to destroy health care in Canada than any other person," said NFNU secretary-treasurer Debra McPherson.

"Surely the Board of Trade doesn't consider his closing of hospitals, shutting down beds,

ALLOWING FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS TO COMPETE READILY AND MORE EFFECTIVELY AT THE GLOBAL LEVEL, TAKING ADVANTAGE OF NEW INVESTMENT STRATEGIES AND STRONG FINANCIAL SECTOR GROWTH INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM...

laying off of health care professionals or his attempts to transform Medicare into an American-style, for-profit system to be a shining example of public sector achievement."

For your listening pleasure ...

"Hello, I am Joan's answering machine. What are you?"
"Hi! David's answering

WORKS LIKE A CHARM!



machine is broken. This is his refrigerator. Please speak very slowly, and I'll stick your message to myself with one of these magnets."

"This is not an answering machine — this is a telepathic thought-recording device. After the tone, think about your name, your reason for calling and a number where I can reach you, and I'll think about returning your call."

HEU people

Oops, our mistake

Regarding a photo published in the Sept/Oct *Guardian*, the real **Joan Adams** wrote to say, "I would like to take credit for being the lovely younger woman in the picture but ...". Her gracious words were calling attention to our mistake – the retired member we identified as Joan Adams is really **Lilian Walton**. Despite our mistake, Joan also wrote, "I look forward to each edition of the *Guardian*. It makes me feel like I'm still part of the big picture."

Our apologies to Joan and Lilian for the mix-up.

HEU'S CONFIDENTIAL HUMAN RIGHTS HARASSMENT PROCESS

COMPLAINTS INVESTIGATORS can help if you are being harassed at work because of:

- sex (including sexual harassment)
- race
- sexual orientation
- disability
- religion

(see Art. 4.03 of the Facilities Sector Agreement)

1-800-310-6886

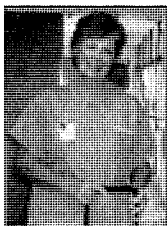
call for a recorded message about the process

Glad to be retired

Marie Epp was a care aide at Valley Haven Guest Home until her retirement this past August. Now she's glad to be retired and continues to enjoy jazz festivals, sewing and babysitting her adorable grandchildren. She plans to win a lottery to richly finance her retirement.



ADAMS



WALTON

Her good works continue

Gulbanu Devji retired Sept. 30 after 21 years in house-keeping at Deer Lake Hospital. Through the years, she served as local shop steward and as a representative on the health and safety committee. Sister Devji's future plans include continuing her community and church volunteer work.

Adjusting nicely to retirement

Sylvia Smith worked in the cafeteria at Richmond Hospital for almost 29 years by the time she retired this past August. She says she misses her workmates very much and was overwhelmed by their generosity when, at a staff-arranged retirement tea, they presented her with a trip to Hawaii as part of their good-bye tribute.

Sad news

As we were going to press, we received the news that long-time HEU employee

Bill Rolfe had passed away. Bill helped union members with their Workers' Compensation files, and had recently retired. Many union members and staff will remember him. Watch for more news in the next *Guardian* about Bill.

In memoriam Marie Braumberger

Sister Braumberger died Sept. 10 of cancer. She worked for eight years at Haro Park Centre as a care aide and loved her job.

Marie had said that taking care of the residents gave her joy and happiness. She is fondly remembered by her family and friends, who include Haro Park staff and residents.

In memoriam Edith Egan

The chairperson of the Fernie local, **Edith Egan**, passed away on Sept. 11, 1998 at the age of 45 years. Edith was a woman who put the needs of others before her own, and she earned much love and respect as a result.

She was a licensed practical nurse at Fernie District Hospital and was elected chairperson in 1997. She devoted her time and effort to helping her colleagues and co-workers, always there with a shoulder to cry on or dispensing advice.

The working conditions of her co-workers were of paramount importance to her. She is very much missed by her union sisters and brothers and her family.

FOR INQUIRIES ON LONG-TERM DISABILITY

HEU members can call toll-free:

Health Benefits Trust: 1-888-736-2087

EQUITY PHONE LINE

1.800.663.5813, ext. 514
Lower Mainland 739.1514

press 1

Ethnic Diversity

One union, many colours! Working across our differences! To participate, please call and leave us your name!



press 2

First Nations

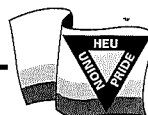
First Nations members would like to hear from you! Please call if you would like to help educate our union brothers and sisters on issues that affect First Nations people.



press 3

Lesbians and Gays

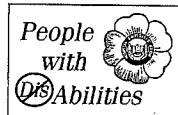
For support: afraid of being identified, feeling isolated, want to know your rights? Call for information on same sex benefits, fighting homophobia and discrimination.



press 4

People with disAbilities

We'd like to hear from you, if you are on WCB or LTD. Or if you are invisibly or visibly disabled in the workplace, let us know how the union can better meet your needs.



ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

TALK TO US ... TOLL FREE!



You can call any HEU office toll free to deal with a problem or to get information. It's fast, it's easy, and it's free.

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Vancouver site
1-800-663-5813

PROVINCIAL OFFICE

Abbotsford site
1-800-404-2020

VANCOUVER ISLAND OFFICE

Victoria
1-800-742-8001

NORTHERN OFFICE

Prince George
1-800-663-6539

OKANAGAN OFFICE

Kelowna
1-800-219-9699

KOOTENAY OFFICE

Nelson
1-800-437-9877

"Hi, this is Sally. I'm sorry I can't answer the phone right now. Leave a message and then wait by your phone until I call you back."

"Hi, I'm probably home, I'm just avoiding someone I don't like. Leave a message, and if I don't call back, it's you."

Black envy celebrated

Vancouver pranksters at Guerrilla Media have created a new Web site that pokes fun at newspaper tycoon Conrad Black and his wife, Barbara Amiel. Guerrilla Media claimed that a citizens' group, "The Friends of Conrad Black," has formed out of concern that there are too many Canadians who do not have access to the views of the publisher and wife.

For your perusal, the site may be accessed at <www.blackenvy.com>. Readers are encouraged to e-mail responses and

comments to: blackenvy@canada.com.

Kidfluence

Canadian Tweens are savvy consumers who exert a growing influence on their families' spending decisions, according to the latest YTV Tween Report 1998 Wave 4, a newly released national survey of Canadians aged 9 to 14.

Conducted by Creative Research International Inc., this survey of the lifestyles, attitudes and opinions of tweens reveals this group controls an increasingly large pool of discretionary income – \$1.5 billion, up from \$1.4 billion in 1997.

The top three items that tweens spend their money on are food, followed by entertainment and then clothing.

They're also earning less, on average, \$4.60 an hour in 1998 compared with \$5.00 an hour in 1995. And the gender gap in

earnings starts young: girls report average hourly earnings of \$3.60 versus \$5.50 for boys – a shocking 53 per cent disparity.

The YTV Tween Report 1998 Wave 4 is based on a 50-minute in-home interview administered between May 21 and June 23, 1998 in large and small communities across Canada.

A total of 698 interviews were completed, and the margin of error is +/- 3.8 percentage points 19 times out of 20.

Mixing it up

The *San Francisco Chronicle* suggests a few name changes for some hypothetical mergers:

- Polygram Records, Warner Brothers and Keebler: Poly-Warner-Cracker
- Yahoo and Netscape: Net 'n' Yahoo
- 3M and Goodyear: mmmGood
- Federal Express and UPS: FedUp

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Community crunch

Health providers in the social services community sector rally before taking strike vote in early December.

PAGE 5

Our convention

A look at what delegates mandated for HEU's entrance into the next century.



PAGE 7

MAI is bad for health

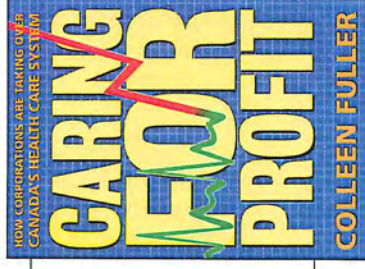
The B.C. Health Coalition has analyzed how the MAI would adversely affect Canadian health care.



PAGE 13

Health care for profit

A review of an important new book on the Canadian health care system and how and why corporations covet it.



PAGE 14



Return address:
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CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

