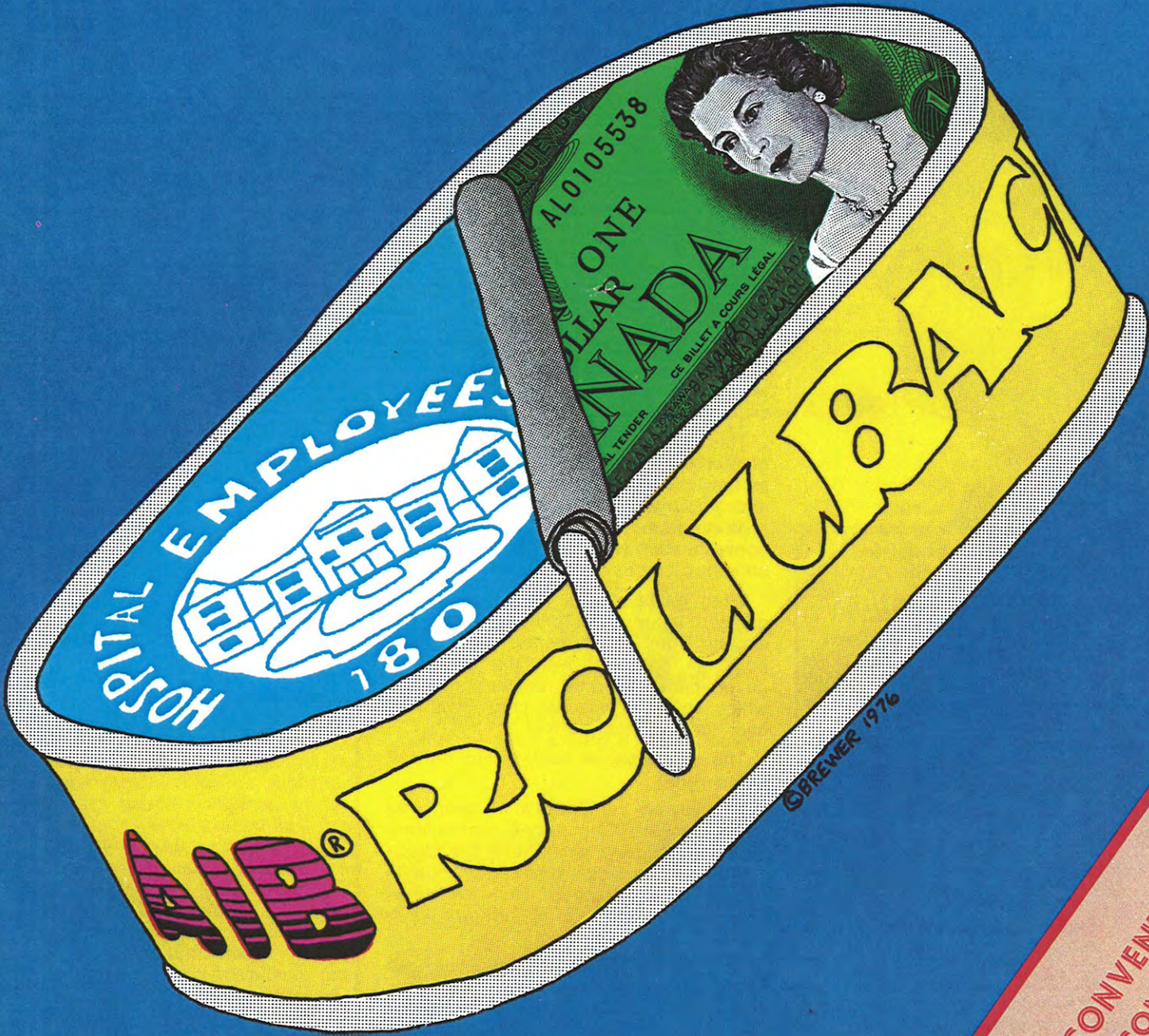


THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN

HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION, LOCAL 180

VOL. XIII, No. 6 ² SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER, 1976



ACT OF TREACHERY

SPECIAL REPORT
TENTH BIENNIAL CONVENTION
FIFTH WAGE-POLICY CONFERENCE

ACT OF TREACHERY

It probably shouldn't have come as any great surprise.

But when the federal Anti-Inflation Board announced, on September 9, that it was rolling back the provincial government-imposed collective agreement by a full 5.96 per cent — to a "total package"

increase of only 8 per cent — the shock waves were felt in every hospital in the province.

That a rollback was in the works became evident as early as August, when the province's Finance Minister, Evan Wolfe, called — unofficially, according to his cabinet cohort Labour Minister Allan Williams (see story, page 11) — on the federal Board to reduce contract settlements for not only hospital employees, but for teachers in the province as well.

That message was never formally placed before the AIB as a government representation . . . but there can be little doubt that the message got through to Ottawa loud and clear:

The government which had been forced to legislate the contract by the reports of its own Industrial Inquiry Commissioner and Special Mediator would not be unhappy if the federal government helped save it from its own financial incompetence by saving it money in any way possible.

The AIB, anxious to shore up its sagging credibility with the Canadian people as the first anniversary of its creation — and the largest protest ever mounted by organized labour in Canadian history — approached, was only too happy to oblige.

What followed was the treachery organized labour should have learned to expect from governments: the federal body, in collusion with the provincial government, gutted the master agreement which so many hospital employees had sacrificed so much to win.

The challenge, of course, was not left unanswered.

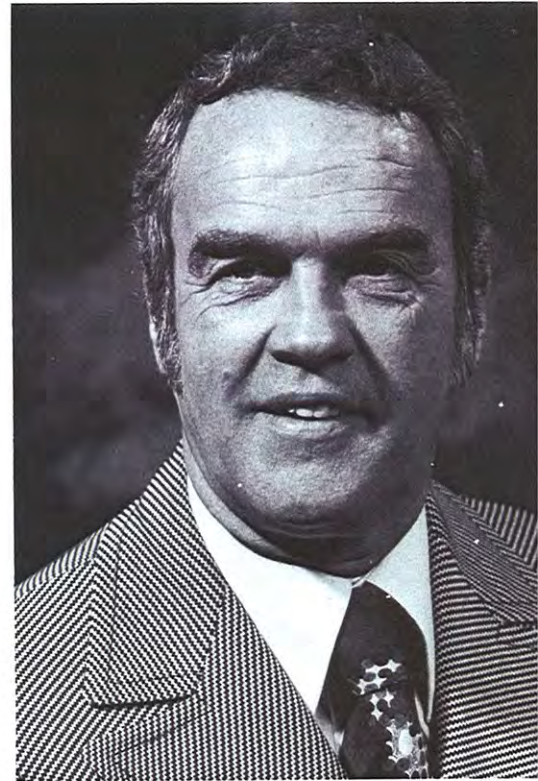
The ink on the Board's decision was barely dry when Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow announced the Union was appealing to the one person now in a position to get some justice for British Columbia's 16,500 plus hospital employees.

That person is Donald Tansley, administrator of the Trudeau government's anti-labour program.

Realistically, he probably cannot be counted upon to reverse the decision of the Board.

So the task of negotiating a "new" contract began.

In the strictest sense of the word, the



EVAN WOLFE

contract being hammered out under the supervision of the Special Mediator — Judge Ted McTaggart, the same man whose Report formed the basis for the contract which was subsequently voided — couldn't be called "new".

What is actually taking place is the suspension of certain cost items from the imposed contract made law by Bill 75.



Joe? Any chance of fitting another mercy killing into your schedule?

TED McTAGGART

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

THE HOSPITAL GUARDIAN

Provincial Executive

J. D. GEROW

Secretary-Business Manager

JOHN DARBY

Financial Secretary

Published by



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION LOCAL 180

STEPHEN BREWER

Editor

PROVINCIAL OFFICE:

538 West Broadway
Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1E9
Telephone 876-2291

OKANAGAN/KOOTENAY OFFICE:

No. 103, 2359 Highway 97 North
Kelowna, B.C. V1X 4H9
Telephone 765-5126

VANCOUVER ISLAND OFFICE:

No. 330, 990 Market
Victoria, B.C. V8T 2E9
Telephone 388-7304

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Exactly which items the Union is willing to give up was decided by delegates to the Tenth Biennial Convention (see *story in Convention Report*), who voted to establish priorities for what was to be left in the gutted agreement.

While negotiations went on, all new benefits gained by the Union's members in their three-week strike were suspended, with the exception of the Dental Plan and the new vacation schedules.

Plans for a cutback in the 8 per cent wage increase awarded Union members at the recommendation of Hospital Industry Troubleshooter R. Neil Monroe in early August were discussed, with the Union arguing forcefully for an extended payback plan to minimize the effects of the cutback on members' paycheques.

As hospital employees ruefully prepared to take already tight belts in yet an-

other notch, under the approving eyes of the provincial finance minister and smiling countenance of Health Minister Bob McClelland, Gerow reacted angrily to both the AIB's decision and the provincial government which had set the stage for it.

Calling on Wolfe to resign for his interference, Gerow pointed out the provincial government — which, politically, had no choice but to impose a fair and just contract because of the recommendations of its own Special Mediator — nonetheless had a "vested interest in having the terms of the collective agreement eroded even further . . ."

That vested interest, obviously, was the government's responsibility to pay the costs of the new agreement, a responsibility the minister of labour and the minister of health had both acknowledged and promised to meet when they introduced Bill 75 in the Legislature.

Because the federal government shares in the cost of providing health care in the province, it, too, had a vested interest in reducing the terms of the agreement.

In addition, the federal government had to try to "prove" to the Canadian public that it was doing something, anything, to fight inflation.

It chose to do so, Gerow said, "by throwing the entire blame for the socio-economic evil of inflation onto the sturdy shoulders of working people, ignoring the ever-increasing burden placed on those same shoulders by the uncontrolled spiral of rising costs and profits."

Gerow's call for Wolf's resignation went not only unheeded, but unanswered.

The provincial government, secure in its tenure of office, said nothing.

The real tragedy is that it didn't choose to do the same thing much, much sooner.

Something new, something blue... contract in binders

Unit officers have been given a new tool to help them in the almost constant struggle to see to it that the Union's hard-won collective agreement is implemented: a loose-leaf binder containing a copy of the agreement, master wage scales and the Union's Constitution and By-laws.

The binders—measuring a handy 5½ inches by 7 inches—were distributed to most Units before the Tenth Biennial Convention in Vancouver.

It's not the only edition of the agreement which will be published: smaller, bound versions of the agreement will be printed as a joint venture by the Union and the Health Labour Relations Association as soon as language is finalized.

Those bound editions, as in the past, will be made available to each and every Union member.

But they won't be available until the agreement is finalized, something which obviously won't happen until all the appeals and negotiations necessitated by the Anti-Inflation Board's rollback of the imposed contract have been completed, probably sometime in the late fall.

The Union didn't want to wait that long before getting copies of

the contract into the hands of the Units.

But, since language could change, it was impractical to have a bound edition of the contract prepared before the agreement was finalized.

The solution to the problem: a looseleaf version for Unit officers, one in which new pages could be substituted for existing ones when and as they were amended or changed.

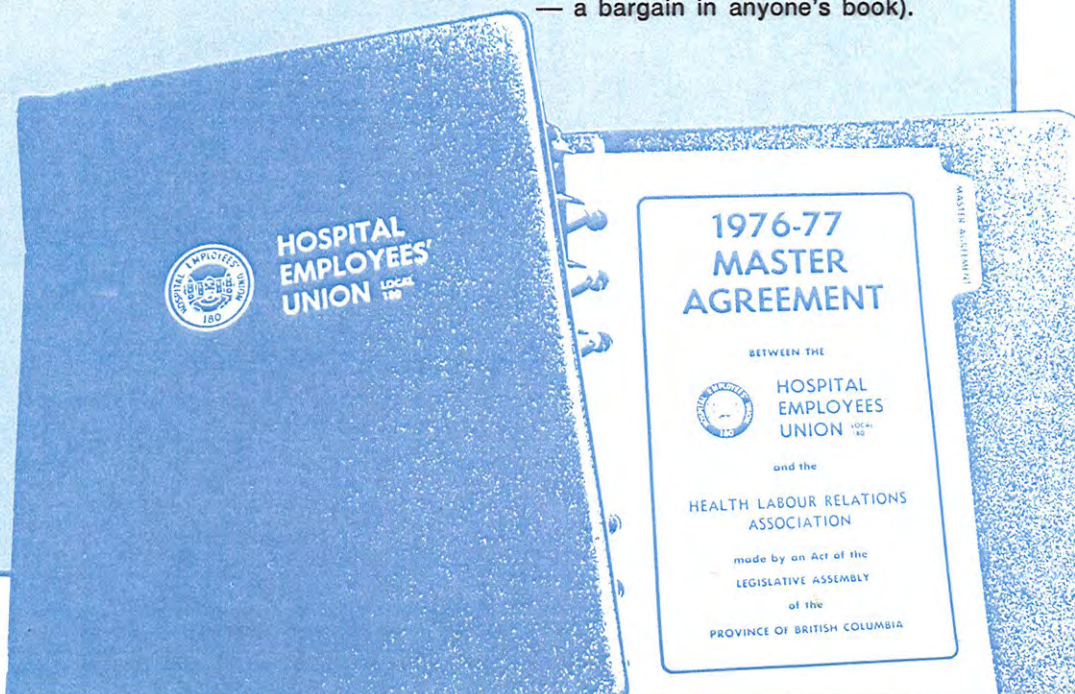
The Union approached the HLRA with the idea, asking if the Associ-

ation would be prepared to share the costs of such a printing (it pays half the costs of printing and distributing the smaller bound version).

The Association declined . . . but the Union felt the matter was important enough that it went ahead with the printing at its own expense.

The printing was expensive, which is why the binders were made available to Units on a limited basis.

But additional copies of the binders are available to any Unit which wants them, for the price the Union paid out for the ring binder (\$3.25 — a bargain in anyone's book).



ASSOCIATION COSTS CHALLENGED

In what was to prove a futile attempt to seek justice for British Columbia's 16,500 hospital employees, the Union sent three representatives from the provincial office to Ottawa to present its case before the federal Anti-Inflation Board.

The Board, empowered to review (and roll back) the collective agreement imposed on the Union — and on the Health Labour Relations Association and its members — by Bill 75 (*Guardian*, May-June and July-August, 1976) obviously wasn't listening.

Exactly who it did listen to most is uncertain: both the HLRA — predictably — and the provincial government — unjustifiably — had called on it to roll back the modest settlement.

The Union representatives—Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow, Director of Technical Services Lee Whyte and Representative Grant McArthur — made two trips to the nation's capitol in their attempt to have the Bill 75 contract confirmed.

The Union's brief to the Board was 24 pages long, Whyte told *The Guardian*, not including 24 exhibits.

Most of it, she said, consisted of rebuttal to the HLRA's earlier submission to the Board, in which it estimated that the contract would increase its members' 1976 operating costs by a whopping 19.5 per cent (the Union estimated 12.9 per cent).

Under the legislation which established the AIB, the employer is allowed to submit to the Board a claim-of-cost estimate, in which it estimates the total cost of the contract being reviewed by the federal body.

The same legislation prohibits Unions

from submitting similar estimates, though they are allowed to challenge and contest the employer's figures.

The union's submission was limited primarily to such challenges, Whyte said.

Among the things the HLRA said would increase its members' costs during 1976, but which weren't really items covered by the collective agreement (and therefore not subject to AIB review): the anti-discrimination payments to some Union members (*Guardian*, March-April, 1976), the northern differential and the increased cost of medical plan premiums.

"They also inflated the cost of many items," Whyte said, "overestimating how much it was going to cost them to implement the dental plan, to pay the cost-of-living adjustments and superannuation benefits, just to name a few."

The Association also tried to include the \$6 million the provincial government has set aside for job evaluation.

Probably the most aggravating, and frustrating, section of the HLRA brief, Whyte said, was the one which dealt with costing of some new benefits included in the collective agreement for the first time.

"Somehow, they came up with last year's costs for new benefits, such as educational leave, special leave and time off provisions, when there were no such benefits last year, or at least not at the majority of hospitals."



Clockwise from Top: Jack Gerow; Lee Whyte; Grant McArthur; Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, where it all began — and ended.



organizing

Unity planned for 125,000 workers

On November 8, representatives of 15 unions — the Union among them — will sit down in Vancouver to form a new provincial front to fight attacks on public service employees in British Columbia.

The meeting will be the founding convention of the British Columbia Public Service Employees' Council (PSEC) and it will mark the first association of the Union with other union organizations since it separated from the Canadian Union of Public Employees in July, 1970.

PSEC represents over 125,000 public service employees in 15 unions: Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180; Association of University and Clerical Employees; B.C. Government Employees' Union; B.C. Government Professional Employees' Association; B.C. Teachers' Federation; Canadian Union of Public Employees; Canadian Union of Public Employees, Local 881; Health Sciences Association; International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, Local 213; Office and Technical

Employees' Union, Local 378; Registered Nurses' Association of B.C.; Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Association of B.C.; Service, Office and Retail Workers' Union of Canada; Social Service Employees' Union; Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees' Union; Workers' Compensation Board Employees' Union.

The Council was born at an exploratory meeting on May 6, when the BCGEU suggested public service sector employees band together to fight Premier Bill Bennett's provincial wage controls, announced in late February.

A sub-committee was struck at that meeting to prepare a working paper for discussion at the next meeting, on May 27.

At the May 27 meeting, a seven-member interim steering committee was established, with one Union representative and representation from six other unions.

The Union was assigned the task of drafting a Founding Statement for the

Council, to be presented to the founding convention for ratification.

Decisions were made about what form the Council should take, who should sit on the steering committee, how representation should be arranged.

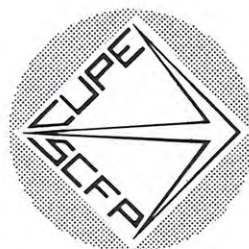
Out of it all came a statement of policies which listed as the Council's objectives the desire to provide a united voice to speak on all matters of mutual concern, to administer and co-ordinate the efforts of the member unions in defending their members, to undertake a program of public education to defend the rights of public employees, to plan joint membership meetings and rallies and to try to raise public awareness of the "vital social role" of public employment.

Exactly how all that is going to translate into action won't be known until after the founding convention.

But the Union believes the establishment of the Council — and the Union's participation in it — could well be the first step in the creation of a truly united front for public service employees in this province.



**HOSPITAL
EMPLOYEES'
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180



HAZELTON, COMOX CERTIFICATIONS SOUGHT

As this issue of *The Guardian* went to press, Northern Servicing Representative Bernice Gehring was in Hazelton, attempting to bring 38 hospital employees there under the protective umbrella of the Union's certification.

Gehring — who reported she was being forced to explain to the employees exactly why the Union was better-equipped to represent them than the International Union of Operating Engineers (whose organizer Paul Peregoodoff was also reported to be in Hazelton) — was trying to get the employees at Wrinch Memorial Hospital to sign membership cards and support the Union's bid for certification.

Wrinch Memorial was built in the late 1920s by the United Church.

A new hospital has been built in the northern community, with about 50 beds, but there is apparently little hope of moving staff and patients to the new building until "after the spring thaw," Gehring said.

The bid to organize the Hazelton hospital came just after a move to organize St. Joseph's General Hospital in Comox, where the Union made new inroads into the firmly-entrenched "employees' association," now "bargaining" for about 170 employees in the Vancouver Island community.

Four organizers — Vancouver Island Representatives Bill Muir and John Weisgerber, provincial office Representative Keith Wilson and *Guardian* Editor Stephen Brewer — spent a week in Comox leafleting, distributing membership cards and meeting with the employees.

The Comox hospital is the only major public hospital in the province which is not represented by a trade union, and only one of two such hospitals where the Union is not certified.



I'm sorry Mrs. Contzen, but, first of all, if I were to do a vasectomy on your husband for his birthday, he'd have to agree to it, and secondly, I do not have gift certificates . . .

human rights

Juan de Fuca Hospital Society guilty at Aberdeen

The Juan de Fuca Hospital Society was ordered to compensate two of three former employees of the Aberdeen Hospital in Victoria in a recent decision of a board of inquiry convened under the Human Rights Code of British Columbia.

The Society — which has administered the extended care hospital since the provincial government purchased it on June 1, 1975 — was ordered to pay Filomena Lopetrone and Maria Guarascio compensation after the three-member board ruled it had violated a section of the Human Rights Code which prohibits an employer from refusing a job applicant employment without reasonable cause.

A similar claim for compensation made by Surinder Kaur Bilga was dismissed by the board.

The three were among 10 former employees who were not rehired by the Society when it took over the Victoria hospital and who filed grievances with the Human Rights Branch.

When the provincial government purchased Aberdeen, the former owner routinely terminated all 60 employees, but assured them they would be given full consideration for their old jobs by the new administration.

Of the 10 who were not initially hired by the Society, three dropped their complaints when they were hired by the

Society and four others withdrew their complaints when they found other employment, or for other reasons.

The three complaints which were heard all alleged discrimination by the Society in its hiring practices.

Lopetrone, who was awarded \$750 compensation by the board, had been an Aberdeen employee since sometime in 1971, working as a housekeeper and, later, a nurse's aide.

For the eight or nine months immediately preceding the takeover, she had been the hospital's cook . . . which, as far as the Society was concerned, was her undoing.

Evidence given at the board hearing indicated the person responsible for hiring for the Society had decided not to rehire Lopetrone after an inspection of the kitchen showed it to be in less than sanitary condition.

The Society's officer, apparently unaware of the conditions prevalent at most British Columbia private hospitals at the time, determined the condition of the kitchen — coupled with Lopetrone's admission that she had some difficulty with English — was sufficient cause to deny her continued employment.

The officer, the board decided, had been less than fair, failing to take into consideration the fact that Lopetrone had

to cook for 75 patients, without an assistant, and could not be held responsible for the condition of the kitchen.

Additionally, while the cook's English was less than perfect, the board ruled, it had obviously been sufficient to allow her to perform her duties for four years.

On that basis, the board ruled, the Society had been in contravention of the Code in denying Lopetrone employment.

Guarascio, who had been employed as a nurses' aide at the hospital before the government takeover, was awarded \$450 under the same section of the Human Rights Code as Lopetrone, though the basis for the award was substantially different.

In her case, the Society simply lost her application for employment and she was never considered for rehiring, though evidence at the inquiry indicated she would have been employed had her application not been lost.

Because the Society did lose it — and the board noted it could not really find fault with it for having done so, considering the confusion in the takeover — she was given compensation.

Bilga, a dishwasher and tray assembler, was denied compensation because the board was not satisfied she had been denied rehiring for any reason other than that she was not among the best qualified persons to apply for the position.

Three persons were hired by the Society to perform the work Bilga and others had previously performed for the private operator at Aberdeen.

Six people had applied for the position.

cutbacks

Fellburn protest 'just a start'

A demonstration at Fellburn Hospital in Burnaby was the first evidence of the Union's growing anger with staff cutback at British Columbia's hospitals.

The demonstration, which Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow said was "just the beginning" of the Union's program to fight staff layoffs due to budget restrictions, drew not only Union members but Registered Nurses and other hospital staff out onto a two-hour picket line.

The Fellburn demonstration was called after the Union was told 20 employees would be out of work as of October 1, despite a recognition on the part of the hospital's administration that such cutbacks would reduce the level of patient care.

The hospital's position was that

it simply wasn't getting enough money from the provincial government to continue providing the level of care it had been.

The Union, while recognising the plight of the people running the hospital, decided to grieve the layoffs and, to make it clear exactly where the real blame lay, to stage the demonstration against provincial government health care money restrictions and cutbacks.

Other demonstrations, and other political action, could be expected at any hospital where the Union was satisfied that the delivery of health care to the people of British Columbia was being placed in jeopardy by the government's money policies, Gerow told reporters at the demonstration.



Our coughing is much better this morning, since you've been up practicing all night.

All work, no play . . . but not dull

Conventions are large gatherings of people assembled for the primary purpose of having fun — and — as a sort of afterthought — of dealing with a few items of business which don't really mean anything to most people.

That may be an accurate summary of most conventions, but it's one which cannot be said to reflect the Union's Tenth Biennial Convention, held at the Broadway Holiday Inn in Vancouver October 4-7.

If anything, the summary would have to be completely reversed to describe what the 300-odd Delegates did during their four-day stay in Vancouver: there was a dinner, and a dance, and some "free" time; but most Delegates spent that time discussing resolutions, Constitutional Amendments and policy matters which were to come to the Convention floor later.

In all, more than 65 Constitutional Amendments were dealt with, more than 70 Resolutions discussed and voted on, reports were made by the secretary-business manager, by the financial secretary, by the trustees, a full slate of nominees for positions on the Provincial Executive was considered, heard and voted for, invited speakers were listened to, plans for the future of the Union were made.

Opening each day at nine, the sessions were originally scheduled to last until around five in the afternoon . . . there just wasn't enough time to deal with everything which had to be dealt with, though, and a special night session had to be added on the evening of October 6.

Before the opening gavel, during lunch breaks, after the closing gavel, committees met, considered the things they had been asked to consider and prepared reports for the next session.

By the time the final closing gavel was brought down by the newly re-elected President, the Convention floor was a sea of black rimmed, red-tinted eyes . . . and they didn't get that way because of dancing, dining and living it up.

The four-day Convention started with speeches by the leaders of the Victoria Labour Council — Larry Ryan — and the Vancouver and District Labour Council — Paddy Neale — both of whom urged the Delegates to support the Canadian Labour Congress' call for a National Day of Protest against federal wage control on October 14.

Then Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow gave his report to the Convention, telling the Delegates the 28 months since the last Convention had been "among the most difficult and threatening ever experienced by this Union."

The Union, Gerow said, had been conspired against by both the federal and provincial governments, "with the whining assistance of the Health Labour Relations Association 'lap dogs'." Even so, he went on, "the Union is strong, the Union is getting stronger and the Union is working

BLACK FIRST

Bill Black, of the Royal Columbian Unit, became the first full-time, paid President of the Union October 7, when delegates to the Convention re-elected him to the post he has held for the last eight years.

Black was first elected to the post at the Union Convention of 1968, after serving in several other executive positions before then.

He defeated Delegate Paul Urmson, of the Shaughnessy Unit, in balloting at the Convention, being elected to his fifth consecutive term as the Union's chief executive.

Because Delegates at the Convention had earlier passed a Constitutional Amendment which provides, for the first time, that the Union Presidency will be a full-time, paid position, Black will now take leave of absence from his works co-ordinator job at Royal Columbian to assume his expanded duties.



TENTH
BIENNIAL
CONVENTION



DR. SCOTT WALLACE

towards the day when would-be princes, used car dealers and disc jockeys — the petty politicians in our lives — will no longer be permitted to use health care workers as a means to balance mismanaged and anti-people budgets."

On Tuesday, the provincial bargaining committee, the provincial trustees and the Union Financial Secretary, John Darby, delivered their reports to the Convention.

The following day, Dr. Scott Wallace, MLA for Oak Bay and leader of the British Columbia Progressive Conservative Party, told the Convention he agreed with the Union in its call for the dissolution of the HLRA, saying he felt the "shadow bargaining" the Association's continued existence would ensure was guaranteed to cause nothing but continued discord and unrest in the hospital industry.

Dr. Wallace proposed the Union bargain, as it has long wanted to do, with the provincial government.

Sandwiched between speeches and reports, the Delegates performed the real work of the Convention: they made policy for the Union for the next two years, passed — and defeated — Constitutional Amendments and dealt with Resolutions submitted by the various Units and the Provincial Executive.

Among the things decided:

- The Union, for the first time ever, will have a full-time, paid President.

- Members who have, without lawful excuse, failed to pay the one-day's pay assessment levied by the Provincial Executive during the strike by November 1 will be hit with a double assessment, forfeiting either two days' pay or facing expulsion from the Union and loss of their jobs.

- A Northern Regional Office of the Union will be established, when funds are available, most probably in Prince George. This will be the third Regional Office opened by the Union, with offices already operational in Victoria and Kelowna.

- Union dues, which have held steady at \$5 a month for many years, will be upped to one per cent of one month's gross salary.

- The initiation fee for new members in certified units will rise to \$10.

On the final day of the Convention, Delegates elected a new Provincial Executive. Balloting results were:

Support urged for Day of Protest

Among the resolutions passed by delegates to the Convention was one which urged all Union members to show their support of the National Day of Protest against federal wage controls by staging noon-hour demonstrations in front of every hospital in the province where the Union is certified.

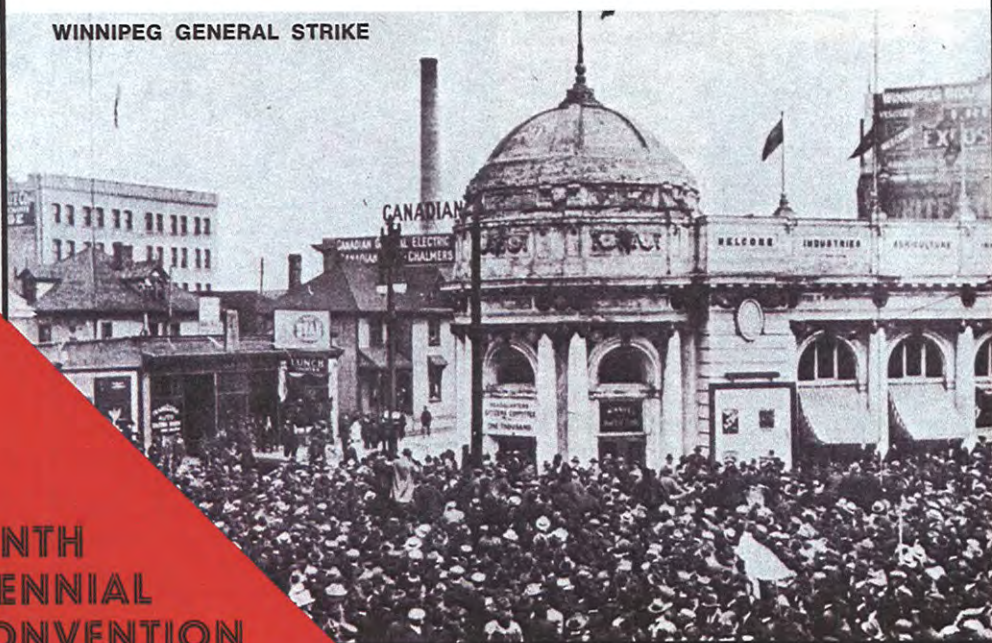
The call for the demonstrations came in a resolution presented to delegates by the Provincial Executive.

The resolution received unanimous support from the delegates, though some — as evidenced by a defeated motion to refer the matter back to committee with instructions to "toughen" the Union's stand by Bevan Lodge Delegate Susan Bunn — felt the matter should have been handled through a total work stoppage.

The National Day of Protest, called for by the Canadian Labour Congress, stopped just short of being a call for a General Strike, and marked the first time since the Winnipeg General Strike of 1919 that Canadian Labour has joined in action on such a massive scale.

The resolution meant Union members were asked to help bring home to politicians in Ottawa and Victoria the point that they cannot forever saddle the country's workers with the blame for the evils of inflation, while leaving untouched the rising prices and soaring corporate profits which do so much to make any program of wage control an unfair and inhumane burden on working people.

WINNIPEG GENERAL STRIKE



TENTH
BIENNIAL
CONVENTION



President:

Bill Black, Royal Columbian Unit

First Vice-President:

Paul Urmson, Shaughnessy Unit

Second Vice-President:

Gordon Meagher, Vancouver General Unit

Third Vice-President:

Pete Endres, Victoria General Unit

Fourth Vice-President:

Gaynelle Wallbank, Fort Nelson Unit

Fifth Vice-President:

Ed Ashmore, Surrey Unit

Financial Secretary:

John Darby, Royal Columbian Unit

Senior Trustee:

Gwen Parrish, Vancouver General Unit

Trustee I:

Gordon MacPherson, Victoria
General Unit

Trustee II:

Steven Polak, M.S.A. Unit

Fraser Valley Regional Vice-President:

Harlin Fry, Langley Unit

Kootenay Regional Vice-President

Russ Cole, Kootenay Lake Unit

Lower Mainland Regional**Vice-President I:**

Bill Third, Lions Gate Unit

Lower Mainland Regional**Vice-President II:**

Wanda Ricketts, Vancouver General Unit

Northern Regional Vice-President:

Arnold Sweder, Quesnel Unit

Okanagan Regional Vice-President:

Dennis Jeffery, Penticton Unit

Vancouver Island Regional**Vice-President:**

Stewart Fyfe, Gorge Road Unit

Alternate I:

Ken Black, Royal Jubilee Unit

Alternate II:

Carol Lambert, Kelowna Unit

Alternate III:

Penny Fulton, MacKenzie Unit

Alternate IV:

Janice Broadhurst, Kimberley Unit

Alternate V:

Steve Trickett, Vancouver General Unit



TENTH
BIENNIAL
CONVENTION

GUARDIAN 9

Contract priorities set

By the time the Fifth Wage Policy Conference was convened Friday morning, most of the delegates had already been four days with too little sleep, too little to eat and too little time to sit back and draw a deep breath.

If there were red eyes at the conclusion—the night before — of the Tenth Biennial Convention, there were eyes reduced to slits in tired faces the next morning, when the delegates heard President Bill Black bring down the gavel on the session which was to decide what demands the Union would carry to the bargaining table in the next round of negotiations.

There wasn't really a lot to discuss: the Hospital Services Collective Agreement Act, the legislation which ended the Union's strike last June (*Guardian*, May-June and July-August, 1976), imposed a two-year contract on the Union and the Health Labour Relations Association, bargaining agent for 99 of the 105 British Columbia hospitals where the Union is certified, one which won't expire until December 31, 1977.

The only thing the Act didn't do, in fact, was set wage increases and Cost of Living Adjustments for 1977.

It was determining what to go for in those areas which made it necessary to stage the Conference.

Discussion, as at the Convention which immediately preceded the Conference, was often heated.

But by the middle of Friday afternoon, most Delegates seemed to agree on three basic bargaining demands for the 1977 Collective Agreement:

- An across-the-board wage increase of \$1.50 an hour for each and every one of the Union's Members;

- If federal wage control legislation is repealed, a Cost-of Living Adjustment clause, retroactive to January 1, 1977, which would see salaries rise by one per cent for each one per cent rise in the Cost of Living Index;

- Payment of interest — at the prevailing personal loan rate at chartered banks — on retroactive money owing to Members upon implementation of the new wage scales.

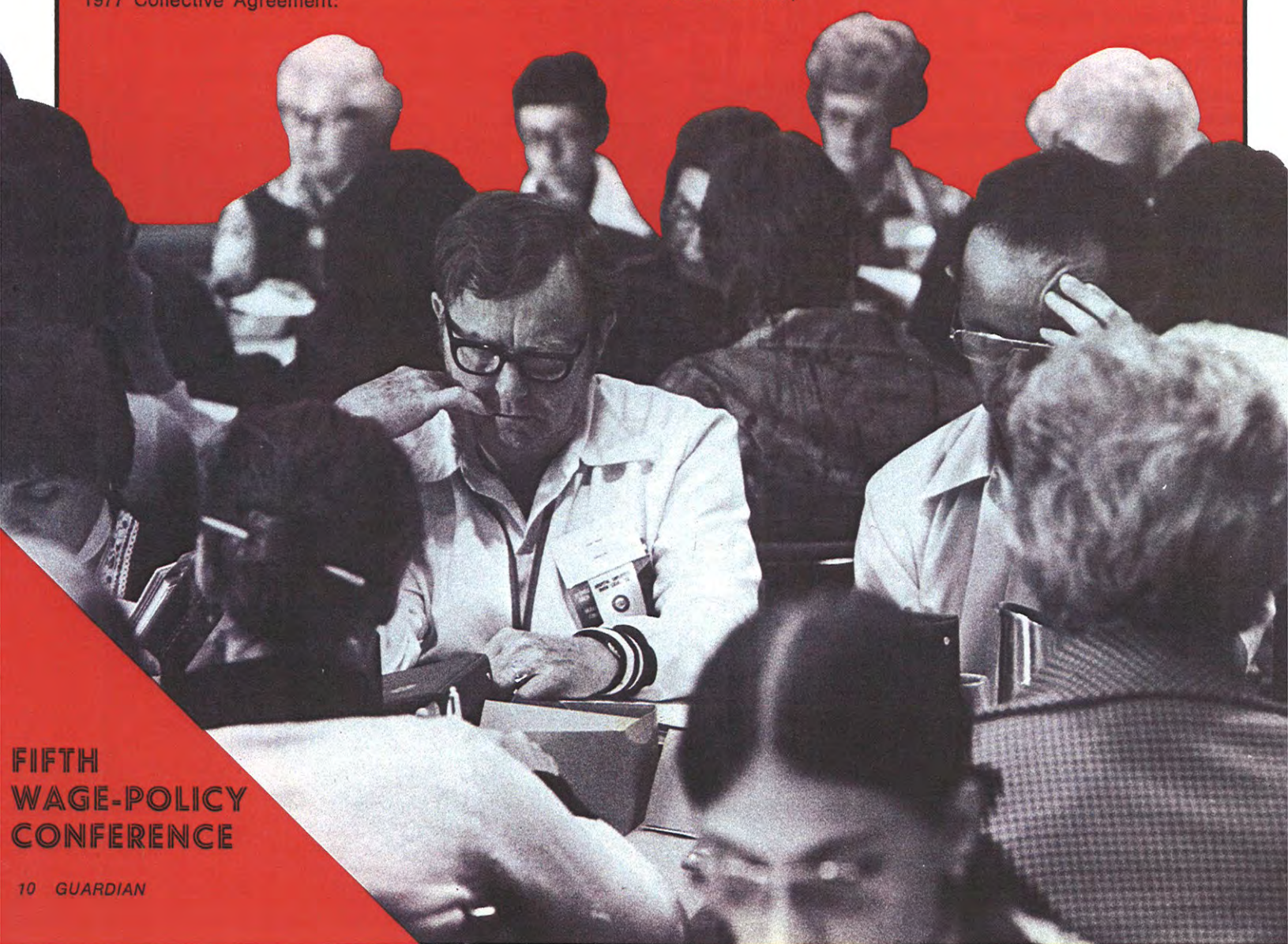
To go after those demands, the Delegates elected a five-member Bargaining Committee (plus three alternates): Paul Urmson, of the Shaughnessy Unit; Peggie Heinze, of the Prince George Unit; Gordon Meagher, Vancouver General Unit; Gordon MacPherson, Victoria General Unit; and Dennis Jefferies, Penticton Unit.

Alternates elected by the Conference were Ken Black, of the Royal Jubilee Unit; Cliff Weisner, Shaughnessy Unit; and Gay Burninson, Burnaby General Unit.

What to include in the 1977 agreement wasn't the only thing considered by the Delegates, unfortunately.

As a result of the federal Anti-Inflation Board's gutting of the 1976 agreement, priorities also had to be established for what items the Union wanted to retain in its contract for this year.

Delegates voted to establish priorities which would see the dental plan at the top of a short list, followed by improved annual vacations, hourly rate conversions, special leave clause, special adjustments and, finally, a general wage increase of about 6 per cent (depending on the cost of the other benefits).



FIFTH
WAGE-POLICY
CONFERENCE

interview

CURIOUSER AND CURIOUSER

Finance Minister Evan Wolfe was not speaking for the government of British Columbia when he called upon the federal Anti-Inflation Board to roll back the Union's government-imposed collective agreement, Labour Minister Allan Williams told *The Guardian* in a recent interview.

Williams, who as minister of labour was the man who introduced the legislation ending the Union's first strike with an imposed contract based on the reports of Industrial Inquiry Commissioner D. R. (Bert) Blair and Special Mediator Judge Ted McTaggart (*Guardian*, July-August 1976), said any claim that Wolfe was speaking for the government when he called for the rollback was "a false statement."

"The government has not gone to the AIB . . .", Williams said.

"It has not, in any way, involved itself in representations to the AIB concerning any public sector agreement which falls under the Board's review."

The minister's remarks came despite the fact that his cabinet contemporary had told reporters in early August that wage settlements for hospital and school employees were of "particular concern" to his government.

Wolfe's remarks — which came as he released the first-ever quarterly report on the province's finances — included a statement that, unless the AIB rolled back the contract imposed on both the Union and the Health Labour Relations Association, that settlement "could result in an uncontrollable over-expenditure for the province."

Minimizing the role of his government had played in settling the strike, Williams said the HLRA — which has not signed the collective agreement imposed by the government — was the certified bargaining agent for the hospitals of the province, and that the Association had submitted the collective agreement to the AIB "because they feel they fall within the (federal anti-inflation) regulations."

(Williams' government passed legislation in the last session of the Legislative Assembly bringing British Columbia's public service employees under the regulations.)

Williams was evasive when he was questioned about alleged irregularities by the Union in the taking of strike votes during the recently-ended strike.

Asked for specifics of the charges he made in the Legislature during its last session — when he claimed he had re-

ceived "letters and telephone calls that there were irregularities"—Williams said he "did not propose to be specific because the letters were sent in confidence and the letters indicated that the writers were concerned as to what action might be taken against them by the Union."

Those letters and telephone calls, he intimated on the floor of the Legislature, were at least partially responsible for his decision to introduce new legislation which made the Labour Relations Board responsible for the supervision of the taking of strike votes in the province.

"I have no way of judging whether the

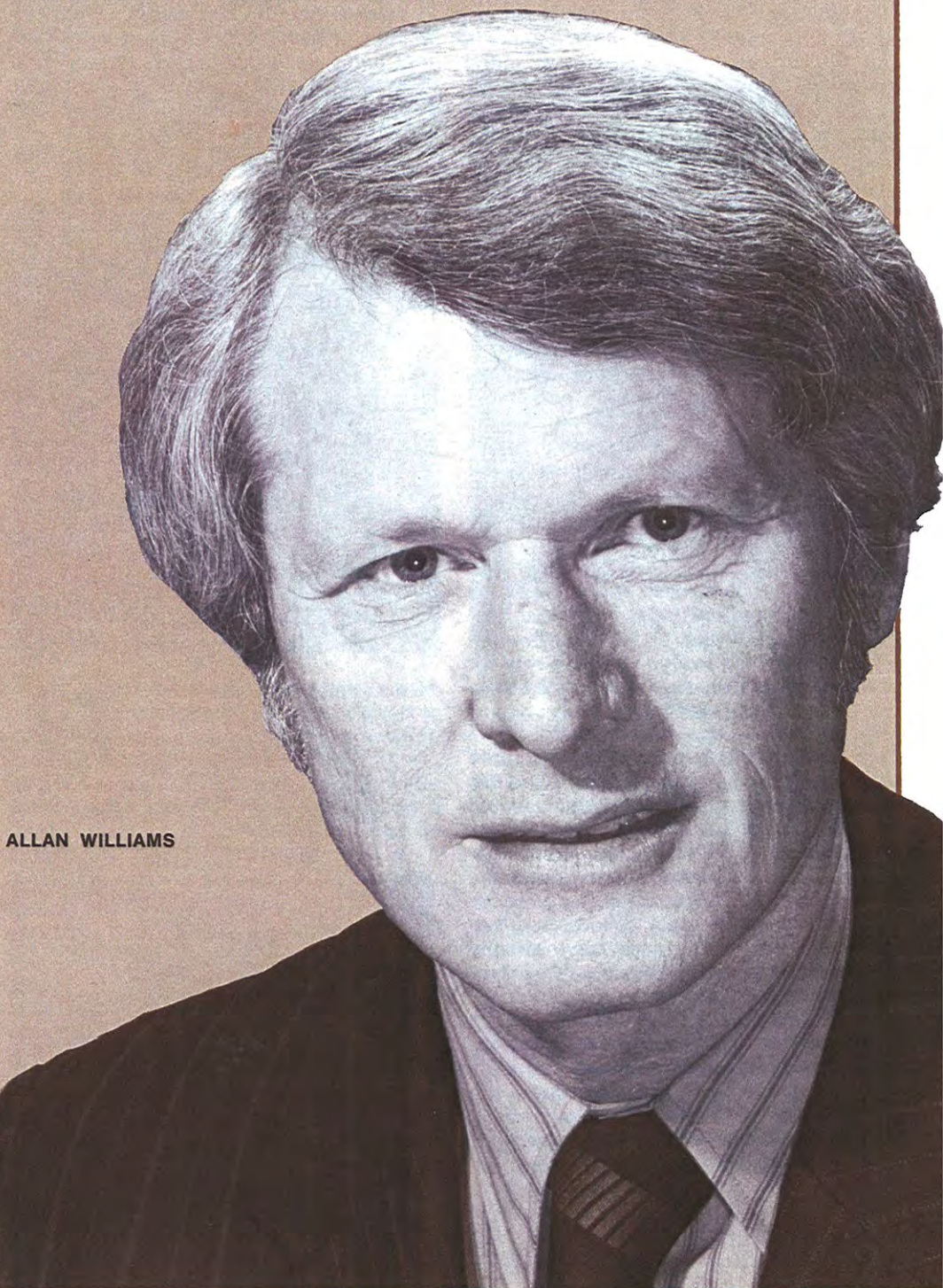
complaints I received were real," the labour minister conceded to *The Guardian*.

"In any case, it doesn't really, in my view, make much difference.

"The regulations . . . are as much designed to prevent improper criticisms of the unions as they are designed to prevent any alleged improper proceedings.

"I would hope that unions will recognize that very important fact, which weighs heavily on my mind.

"The unions should be pleased to have us provide regulations so they are not required to answer allegations of impropriety."



ALLAN WILLIAMS

other unions

Scab bid 'won't break this strike'

A "crucially important" strike by 1,800 Seattle, Washington, Registered Nurses was in "no danger of being broken" by the affected hospitals' decision to permanently replace the strikers, a spokesman for the Washington State Nurses' Association told *The Guardian* at press time.

"This strike is important to the nurses because the real issue at stake is the hospitals' desire to break them," the spokesman said.

"The nurses know that, and that has made the ploy unsuccessful: our morale remains high."

The hospitals, represented by the Seattle Area Hospitals Council, began advertising in late August for replacements for the strikers, circumventing a United States federal law which prohibits the transportation of strike-breakers across state lines by a third party by having the hospitals being struck advertise individually.

The move, the spokesman said, has already raised some eyebrows in Washington, D.C., where a Seattle-area Congressman has already promised to look into changing the legislation to plug the loophole through which the SAHC has wiggled.

Washington State law allows hospitals to replace strikers with new permanent employees; the only obligation on the employer is to give "preferential re-hiring" to strikers when vacancies occur after the strike's end.

The nurses, who have struck 15 of the 18 hospitals represented by the SAHC, walked off the job July 12 to back demands for a three-year contract which would give them pay raises of 15 per cent in the first year and 10 per cent in each of the remaining two years (base rate for nurses in the Seattle hospitals is now \$5.48 an hour, or \$950 a month).

The SAHC's "final offer" was for an 18 per cent pay increase, divided into three increments of six per cent over the life of the three-year contract, which would expire on July 1, 1979.

The three hospitals which remain unaffected by the strike (they include the only two publically-funded hospitals in the SAHC and the only children's orthopedic hospital in the area) have already begun paying their RNs the rates proposed by the Council in its final offer.

The nurses working at those hospitals (about 400 of them) are voluntarily turning over the six per cent pay increase they are receiving to the strike fund, the spokesman said.

The real issues in the strike, however, are not monetary.

At stake is the SAHC's demand that language in the old contract be deleted, allowing member hospitals to terminate nurses without being required to show cause, to eliminate shift differentials and standby pay and to do away with closed shop provisions.

"We'll win this strike," the WSNA spokesman said, "because we have to. The hospitals are starting to hurt financially [Washington State hospitals are self-supporting, most receiving little or no public funding; some of those affected by the strike are run by private individuals for profit], especially the little ones."

"We've got the support of the community, and of the labour movement, and that helps us."

"Strikes are still won on the picket line, though, and that's where we'll win this one . . . on the line."

SEATTLE NURSES ON THE LINE



White flag in New York

While nurses were forced to continue walking the picket line in Seattle, another story across the continent had a happier ending.

On July 23, 40,000 New York City hospital workers ended their 11-day walkout after the 57 hospitals where they were employed agreed to their Union's demand that the recommendations of a federally-appointed mediator be implemented to end a contract dispute.

The mediator had recommended that District 1199 of the National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees and the League of Voluntary Hospitals submit their dispute to binding arbitration, a proposal the Union had reluctantly agreed to and one which the League had rejected out of hand, sparking the strike.

The Union membership endorsed the decision to submit to arbitration by a vote of 21,348 to 1,060.

The arbitrator will consider submissions from both groups before reaching her decision, expected shortly after this issue of *The Guardian* went to press.

The workers in New York, many of whom were arrested during the course of the strike, earned an average of \$160 a week under their old contract.

Most, according to Union spokesmen, are blacks, Puerto Ricans and women; the strike received the support of many American civil liberties groups and spokesmen, including Corretta Scott King, widow of the assassinated founder of the National Association for the Advancement of Coloured People.

The strike was also endorsed by most New York City newspapers in editorials attacking the League for the "irresponsible management attitude" which "recklessly prolonged a dangerous struggle."

District 1199 represents all workers in the New York hospitals except doctors and Registered Nurses.



Not that we don't think a centrefold of Florence Nightingale has merit . . .

Biggest benefit for the public



Some of the people working here are so crippled by arthritis or rheumatism they must wear special support devices to allow them any use of their hands at all.

Yet they are engaged in turning out creative artwork which includes delicate bells covered with fine-line ornamentation worthy of the finest china shops of Europe.

The scene is the workshop of the Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society's crafts centre, on Broadway in Vancouver.

Union member Heather Baker is in charge of the shop, but she admits frankly that her "charges" need little supervision — she is there primarily to do the heavy work they can't manage by themselves, to ensure a constant flow of supplies necessary to the production of the ceramic work and weaving carried out under her supervision and to handle the details of getting the finished work next door, to the retail outlet where the items are offered for sale to a growing, and appreciative, clientele.

At one table, Mrs. Annie Lee bends over her needlework, carefully sewing sequined decorations to felt pears which will — come Christmas — adorn a tree in someone's living room, giving it a touch of old-fashioned nostalgia and bringing back memories of the days when trees were decorated with what a family and its friends could produce themselves.

The delicate work is painstaking, meticulous . . . the finished article can be described only as a work of art.

"We have people," Heather says, "who come back year after year, buying one of these decorations each Christmas and adding it to their stock of tree ornaments."

"To them, the selection of the ornament which will be added that year has become a part of their family's Christmas tradition."

At another table, four women paint delicate patterns on unfired ceramic bells, each with her own specialty: one paints flowers, breathtaking in their simple beauty, another carefully brushes on characters from A. A. Milne's children's classics, the Winnie the Pooh series.

The work is difficult because of the size of the bells being decorated, none of them more than a few inches tall.

Yet the patterns and designs are meticulously done, enchanting in their perfection.

"Most of these we're working on now are for year-round decoration, or for wind chimes," Heather explains.

"Towards the beginning of October, we shift over to Christmas themes and begin to sell bells for use as tree ornaments or home decorations for the Christmas season."

Clockwise from Right: Painting designs on ceramic bells; Julie Stovey silk screens cards; Hand-decorated ornaments ready for sale at CARS shop; Helen Fawkes at her machine, sewing hand bags.



At yet another table, Julie Stovey works a silk screen, adding a second colour to a stack of cards on whose covers perch a family of owls in a tree.

This second painting gives the wide-eyed animals more depth and adds a subtle colour change to the branches on which they sit.

In the front half of the shop, Heather points out the looms where Bill Oin creates exquisite designs in wool (which is carefully ordered, hand-dyed and prepared before it ever sees a shuttle).

Next door, behind the retail shop where the finished work is sold, a busy workshop is the centre of CARS' silkscreen and sewing production.

More cards are being produced here, by Marg Paterson; Nel Vanstaaldvinen and Richard Paterson use a silkscreen to transfer delicate patterns to cloth pieces

which Helen Fawkes will sew into aprons, shopping bags or pillows.

All this activity has a twofold purpose, Heather explains: it allows the workers, all crippled to some degree by arthritis or rheumatism, to perform creative work, an opportunity which would likely be denied them elsewhere; and it gives the public a chance to see for itself that those afflicted with the crippling diseases are not helpless but people capable of producing great beauty.

Though Heather doesn't mention it, a third purpose is served: through the retail outlet, the public is offered a wide selection of handcrafted items, both durable and beautiful, none of which could be found at any price elsewhere.

For those who don't need the CARS workshop, that third benefit may well be the most important of all.

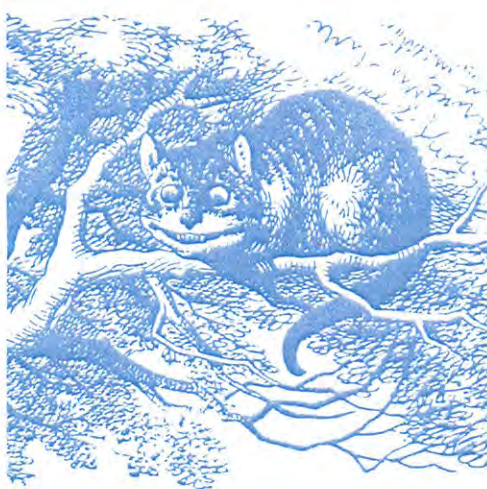
roundup

By the time this issue of *The Guardian* is in their hands, almost all Union members should have their Dental Plan cards, or at least their group and individual identity numbers.

The Plan, a part of the imposed collective agreement, provides coverage for Union members and their spouses and children, provided they are not covered by other similar pre-paid dental plans.

The employer pays the total premium for this Plan, provided through CU&C, which covers 80 per cent of the total cost of basic dental work (diagnostic, preventive, surgical, endodontic, periodontic, restorative, major restorative and prosthetic repair services and relines) and 50 per cent of the total cost of some more advanced dental work (including crowns, bridges and removable prosthetics).

The employee is responsible for the remainder of the costs, which most den-



tists will bill their patients for, in the same way they have been billing them all along.

The plan went into effect July 1 . . . Union members who had work performed after that date—but before they got their group numbers and/or individual identity numbers—should get an itemized statement of the work performed and a receipt for any money paid to their dentist. CU&C will reimburse the applicable portions of the bills paid to the Union members who laid out the cash.

Now there's just no reason not to emulate the Cheshire Cat.

Lockouts are usually something employers do to their workers . . . but 70 Thai women, workers in a Bangkok garment factory, reversed that recently by locking their bosses out of the factory where they are employed.

The employees, who were protesting poor pay and working conditions, continued to produce jeans and hats, selling them to support their five-month sit-in.

The work done by Union members is usually more than just a job to them: it's part of a commitment to helping patients get well.

An example of the concern shown by Union members for others was the recent formation of a British Columbia chapter of the **Huntington Society of Canada**, a group dedicated to research, education and assistance for the families of victims of Huntington's Disease, which weakens



Huntington Society of Canada

arbitration

At Cranbrook: adjustment ordered

Eleanor Waldie, a Practical Nurse who works in the operating room at Cranbrook and District Hospital, was awarded a pay rate adjustment which has left her grinning from ear to ear since June.

The award, made by Arbitrator Ray Herbert, saw Waldie reclassified and given, retroactive to January 1, 1975, the same rate of pay enjoyed by some other Practical Nurses working in other hospital operating rooms.

The award, which covered not only Waldie but any other PNs at the hospital who are assigned to work in the operating room, saw salaries adjusted from between \$814.75-\$843.75 a month up to \$867-\$948; increases of between \$52.25 and \$104.25.

Operating engineers at Cranbrook were also given pay rate adjustments by Herbert's award, of between \$98.50 and \$102 a month.

The award, which gives operating engineers at Cranbrook parity with engineers belonging to another union and working in some British Columbia hospitals, raises pay scales for engineers from \$1,026-\$1,045.50 to \$1,125-\$1,147.50.

Nursing service aides working as activity aides at the Cranbrook Hospital were also given pay rate adjustments in the Herbert award, though the Union was unsuccessful in its attempt to get adjustments for aides working as physiotherapy aides in the same hospital.

The activity aides received adjustments of between \$26 and \$31.75 a month, with the pay rates rising from \$733-\$747 to \$759-\$778.75, the rate already paid the physiotherapy aides.

BSW bid fails

Physiotherapist helpers at Kimberley and District Hospital fared better than their Cranbrook counterparts in another

arbitration award handed down by Herbert.

Pay rate adjustments of between \$26 and \$31.75 a month were awarded to the helpers in Herbert's second decision, which saw pay scales raised from \$733-\$747 a month to \$759-\$778.75.

Herbert failed to award other pay rate adjustments at the Kimberley Hospital in his decision, rejecting the Union's bid for re-classification of housekeeping aides at the hospital into the building service worker structure recommended by D. R. (Bert) Blair in several other arbitration decisions and already implemented at some British Columbia hospitals.



He doesn't make house calls! He wants you to stop in and see him when you're feeling better.



when you are a
RED CROSS
Blood Donor

the body and produces gradual deterioration of the mind.

Two Union members — **Doris Bersa**, an 18-year veteran at Vancouver General Hospital, and **Louise MacDonald**, a medical transcriber at Surrey Memorial Hospital — both of whom lost their husbands to the disease, were responsible for the formation of the provincial chapter of the Society.

The two report they are interested in contacting families throughout the province which are affected by Huntington's Chorea, to provide assistance (financial and psychological) for them.

MacDonald can be reached at 19060-80th Avenue, Surrey (phone 574-7138); Bersa at No. 103, 1676 West Eleventh Avenue, Vancouver (733-7609).

★ ★ ★

The 11 employees of the **Student Society of Simon Fraser University** in Burnaby have negotiated a contract benefit which is believed to be unique in North America: five days off with pay in the event of a marriage breakdown.

The employees argued, successfully, the benefit is logical because their contract also gives them five days off with pay to get married (a benefit Union mem-



Well, dear, you know what they say about accidents always coming in threes."

bers also receive under the Special Leave clause of the new collective agreement).

The SFU contract also provides for a no-loss-of-pay provision for female employees on maternity leave: the Student Society agreed to make up the difference between Unemployment Compensation benefits and normal earnings for up to 15 weeks.

Other benefits included clauses allow-

ing two weeks' paternity leave and two weeks' leave-with-pay for employees adopting children.

★ ★ ★

Boycotts called by other trade unions, which Union members are asked to support:

All **Seagrams'** products (see box story, page 12).

California non-union table grapes, to support the **United Farm Workers**.

Firestone Tire and Rubber Company products, to support striking members of Local 635, **United Rubber, Cork, Linoleum and Plastic Workers of America** at Calgary.

Sandman Inn hotels and motels in British Columbia, as a violently anti-union company which utilizes scab labour to build, maintain and service its outlets.

Tilden Car Rentals, the only major car rental agency to resist organization by the **Office and Technical Employees' Union**.

All **Sunmaid Raisin** products and all **Diamond-Sunsweet** products, to support the **United Farm Workers**.

All **Time-life Incorporated** publications, including *TIME* magazine, *People* magazine, *Sports Illustrated* magazine and all *TIME-LIFE Books*, to support **The Newspaper Guild** in its efforts to get a first contract. (The subscription departments will suspend subscriptions to Time-Life magazines "until an agreement has been reached with The Newspaper Guild" upon written request. The subscription will pick up when settlement is reached.)

money

Bills keep coming

New donations to the Union's Strike Fund have boosted the total in the coffers to \$20,943.19, Financial Secretary John Darby told *The Guardian* just before this issue went to press.



Which is nice, but not nice enough to pay the \$182,257.84 the Union still owes for strike-related expenses.

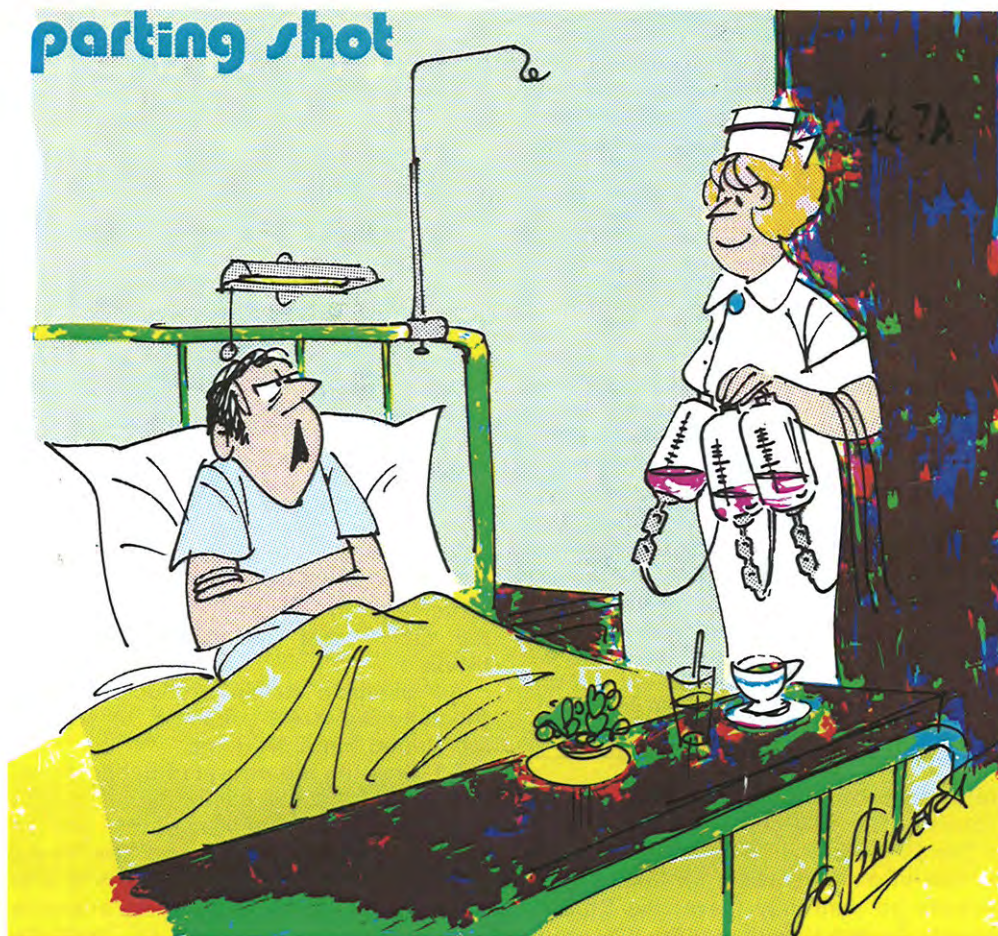
The one-day's-wages assessments authorized by the Provincial Executive during the strike will bring in about \$300,000, Darby said, but expenses for the Tenth Biennial Convention and Fifth Wage Policy Conference, as well as the day-to-day costs of running the Union, mean more donations "would be more than welcome."

The Units which have contributed to the Strike Fund since the last edition of *The Guardian*:

Royal Jubilee, \$1,000; Penticton, \$250; Matsqui-Sumas-Abbotsford, \$200; Prince George, \$1,500; Shaughnessy, \$1,000; Port Alberni, \$150; Merritt, \$250; Surrey, \$1,000; Glengarry, \$50; Fort St. John, \$400; Red Cross, \$100.

Individual donations to the Strike Fund were made by the Union's former financial secretary, Alex Paterson (\$40) and by Maple Ridge Unit member Blanche Pearsall (\$50).

parting shot



"What, leftovers again?"

visitors Busman's holiday

Elsa Brattli is a sweet, charming little old grandmother, white-haired, with sparkling blue eyes and a manner which suggests she's about to hand around sugar cookies to all good boys and girls within reach.

Elsa Brattli is also a tough, uncompromising negotiator, a woman who firmly believes she can go half the distance she wants to travel by handing out sugar cookies, who believes she can go the rest of the way by hardheaded stubbornness and a firm insistence that she will settle for nothing less than what is right.

The combination can be devastating to those who accept her at face value as the charming grandmother, only to discover shortly thereafter that she has a keen wit, boundless intelligence and the ability to get those she bargains with to "give" her what she wants.

This ability to get what she wants has earned her the presidency of the **Norsk Sykepleier Forbund** (Norwegian Practical Nurses' Association) and the respect of her adversaries in that country.

"The Minister of Health is a great admirer of hers," her daughter-in-law/interpreter explained in Vancouver recently, when Brattli — on a busman's holiday to visit practical nurses in this province — visited British Columbia Licensed Practical Nurses' Association president Bernice Gehring (*Guardian*, July-August, 1976) at the Union's Vancouver offices.

"So, grudgingly, are those she bargains with."

Brattli's Canadian visit followed a 10-day sojourn to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, where she spent her time . . . talking to practical nurses.

boycotts

In February, 1975, the **Seagram Company** closed its British Columbia bottling operations in a bid to avoid bargaining with Local 604 of the **Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union**.

The B.C. Labour Relations Board has ruled the company's action constitutes an illegal lockout, a ruling since upheld by the Supreme Court, which ordered Seagram to re-open its plant and commence bargaining with the Union.

The company has refused to do so, prompting the Union to seek contempt of court citations against it.

In the meantime, trade unionists are asked to boycott the following Seagram products, both in liquor outlets and in lounges, restaurants or dining rooms:

RYE

Seagrams 5 Star
Seagrams V.O.
Seagrams "83"
Seagrams Crown Royal
Thomas Adams Gold Stripe
Thomas Adams 4 Roses
Thomas Adams Private
Stock

Thomas Adams Antique
Thomas Adams Homestead
Hudsons Bay Fine Old
Hudsons Bay F.O.B.
Hudsons Bay Royal Charter
Canadian Double Distilled
Canada House
Canadian Lord Calvert
B.C. Double Distilled

GINS

Seagrams Extra Dry
Seagrams King Arthur
Gordons
Hudsons Bay

GINS (Continued)

Brunett's White Satin
Brunett's Lemon Collins
Vicker's
Boodles
Adams Silver Fizz
Adams Monogram

SCOTCH

Seagrams 100 Pipers
Passport
Chivas Regal
White House Horse
Hudsons Bay

IRISH

Old Bushmills

RUMS

Captain Morgan Rums
Woods
Myers
Whistler

RUMS (Continued)

Ron Rico
Hudsons Bay

VODKA

Bolshoi
Gordons
Hudsons Bay
Nikolai
Prince Igor
Crown Russe

LIQUEURS

All Leroux products
All Sabra products

WINES

All Paul Masson wines
All Brollo Italian wines
All Mumm's champagnes
All Barton & Guestier wines
All Ricasoli wines
All Christian Brothers wines



BRATTLI AND GEHRING