

The Hospital

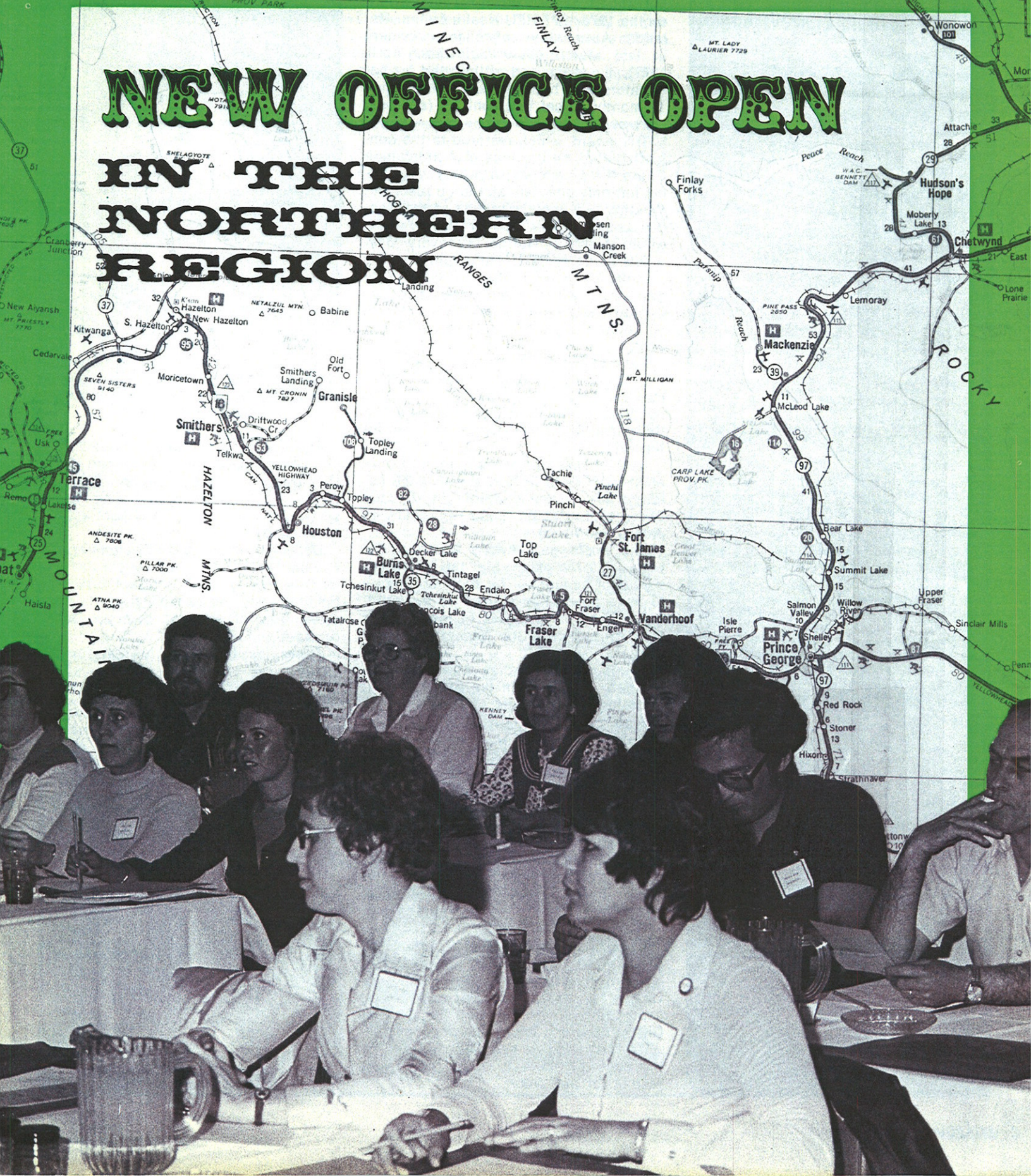
Guardian



HOSPITAL
EMPLOYEES'
UNION LOCAL
180

NEW OFFICE OPEN

IN THE NORTHERN REGION



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

The Hospital Guardian

Published by

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**HOSPITAL
EMPLOYEES'
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180

STEPHEN BREWER

Editor

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Unfair Labour Practice charges are levied against the International Union of Operating Engineers, which is trying to raid HEU private hospital units, while a settlement is reached at North Vancouver's Kiwanis Lynn Manor.

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The ballots are in at Kamloops' Overlander Extended Care Hospital — and HEU has a new Unit. In Delta, meanwhile, the push for certification goes on.

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Gutted contract finalized—almost

When Special Mediator Judge D. E. McTaggart handed down his final award on the 1976-1977 HEU-Health Labour Relations Association collective agreement in late March (*Guardian*, March-April, 1977), it was the end of the road for negotiators who had battled for more than 19 months to get that contract (see box, next page).

The award, which restored to the contract gutted by the federal Anti-Inflation Board three benefits previously suspended, left only one item still to be resolved: Whether the implementation of the Special Leave clause, set for July 1, 1977, would result in further recovery payments being made to the employers.

Implementation of the clause, McTaggart ruled, would mean wage increases for 1977 — previously set at 6 per cent — would have to be reduced by 0.3 per cent.

Federal AIB Administrator Donald Tansley must now decide whether Union members will have to pay back to their hospitals a sum equal to 0.3 per cent of the wages they have already received for the year.

(In that case, the McTaggart Award — and the HEU-HLRA agreement which followed it — provides for the Special Leave clause to be made retroactive to January 1, 1977.)

The McTaggart Award finalized the contract to an extent that the Union felt confident enough — for the first time — to have production started on the printing of the bound copies of the contract for distribution to the general Membership.

Those contract copies, now being distributed, should be in the hands of Unit Secretaries by the end of June.

Also being distributed to the local Units at press time were copies of the Attachments and Variations to the Master Agreement (provisions whereby superior benefits, wages or allowances are maintained in each hospital).

What the contract still contains — in relation to what was fought so hard for and what was ultimately legislated as law by the provincial government before the AIB rollback (*Guardian*, July-August, September-October, 1976; March-April, 1977) — is remarkable.

Most of the new benefits won on the picket lines have been included in the collective agreement, including provisions for such items as Special Leave, improved Injury on Duty benefits, On-Call Differentials and improved vacations.

As frustrating as negotiations were for the contract, there is to be only slight respite for the Union:



JUDGE McTAGGART

The contract has been finalized only six months before the 1977 Wage Policy Conference — to be held in Kelowna's Capri Hotel September 17 and 18 — when demands for the next contract will be finalized.

Between now and September, of course, Units will have to begin the task of determining their contract concerns for next year and to undertake the massive labour of reducing them to written proposals.

There is, it seems, no rest for the weary.



There's nothing wrong with his kidneys . . . maybe his water bed leaks.

SIMS MAKES AWARD FOR STAFF CONTRACT

In late April, Arbitrator Ed Sims handed down an award which provides for a one-year agreement between HEU and its staff union, the Hospital Employees' Staff Union.

The award calls for a contract which will see salaries for staff increase by six per cent, retroactive to January 1, 1977, two Cost-of-Living Adjustments and a \$30 a month across-the-board pay increase in lieu of a Job Evaluation Program.

It also provides that Servicing Representatives will pay for an increased portion of the cost of their leased vehicles.

**SHARE + YOUR
GOOD HEALTH!
BE A + BLOOD DONOR**

And, in this corner, fighting for the Union...

It was perhaps the longest and hardest battle ever fought by contract negotiators for the HEU, bargaining talks which covered more than 19 months of work, which included not only talks, and more talks, with the Health Labour Relations Association, but discussions, hearings and arbitrations with no fewer than seven third parties.

Before the imposed collective agreement was finalized, Union negotiators had met with, talked to, or argued before:

Industrial Inquiry Commissioner D. R. (Bert) Blair, whose recommendations formed the basis for the contract (before the federal Anti-Inflation Board rolled it back);

Labour Minister Allan Williams, with whom the Union met several times during the course of, and following, the strike;

Judge D. E. McTaggart, who was named Special Mediator, who endorsed the Blair Report, and who ruled on which items were to be left in the contract for 1976;

The federal Anti-Inflation Board, which rolled back the government-imposed contract after it was asked to do so by the provincial finance minister;

Donald Tansley, AIB Administrator, who heard the Union's appeal of the Board's rollback;

Hugh Ladner, who was named by the provincial government to deter-

mine what Union members were to get in contract improvements for 1977;

Morley Fox, the man charged with chairing pay rate adjustment requests in hearings called under provisions of the contract.

The people who fought for the Union, for so long and so hard:

PAUL URMSON, Shaughnessy Unit: Served on both the 1976 and the 1977 Bargaining Committees. A Shop Steward at his hospital, he was elected First Provincial Vice-President at the Tenth Biennial Convention in October, 1976.

JUNE BRADBURY, Trail Unit: Served, for the fourth time, on the 1976 Bargaining Committee. Chairperson of her Unit, she was First Provincial Vice-President in 1975-76.

GORDON MEAGHER, Vancouver General Unit: Served on both the 1976 and 1977 Bargaining Committees, after being picked for the job for the first time at the 1975 Wage Policy Conference. Chairperson of the VGH Unit, Meagher is also Second Provincial Vice-President.

PEGGIE HEINZE, Prince George Unit: Served on the 1977 Bargaining Committee. A former Regional Vice-President, she is chairperson of her Unit.

GORDON MacPHERSON, Victoria General Unit: Served on the 1977 Bargaining Committee. Now a Provincial Trustee and Unit chairperson, he has

also served in various other capacities at the Unit level.

MARION PERRY, Kelowna Unit: Served on the 1976 Committee. Chairperson of her Unit for more than 12 years, she joined the full-time staff of the Union, working out of the Okanagan / Kootenay Regional Office, in March, 1976. She was a member of the Provincial Executive for six years, and served on two Bargaining Committees.

PETE ENDRES, Victoria General Unit: Served on the 1976 Bargaining Committee. Third Provincial Vice-President, he has also served in various capacities at the Unit level (he is now Unit Secretary-Treasurer). Has been a member of the Provincial Bargaining Committee four times.

DENNIS JEFFERY, Penticton Unit: Served on the 1977 Committee. Regional Vice-President for the Okanagan Region, he is also Unit vice-chairperson.



MEAGHER



HEINZE



MacPHERSON



PERRY



ENDRES



JEFFERY



URMSON



BRADBURY

PRIVATE HOSPITALS

ENGINEERS AIDED IN RAID BID

When HEU Members at Kensington Private Hospital heard the announcement — over the Vancouver hospital's public address system — that a Union meeting was to be held that afternoon, they were understandably confused.

They had heard nothing from the Union about a meeting, and found it strange that the hospital's administration would allow them to attend a Unit meeting on hospital time.

When they got to the "union meeting", everything was explained: They were not there on HEU business, but to hear Paul Peregoodoff, a representative of Local 882 of the International Union of Operating Engineers, tell them why they should quit Local 180 and join his union.

(Among the things Peregoodoff is reported to have said was that HEU could never get the workers a contract; strange words from a man who knew that Union had just been awarded a first contract for the employees in the form of the McColl Award (*Guardian*, January-February, 1977).)

No sooner had Peregoodoff finished his hospital-sponsored harangue than

one of the Unit Members was on the telephone to HEU's Provincial Office, protesting the entire affair.

HEU lost no time in filing a charge of an Unfair Labour Practice against Kensington, charging it had violated Section 3(2)c of the British Columbia Labour Code by "seeking to induce employees to refrain from continuing to be Members of the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180".

Not content with his attempted raid on the HEU Kensington Unit, Peregoodoff went on to try to lure HEU Members away from King George Private Hospital in Surrey.

Administrator Ellen Fraser told Unit Chairperson Jean Bieker she had invited Peregoodoff to King George, then advised employees they were to attend a "union meeting" on hospital time.

And, again, HEU filed a charge of an Unfair Labour Practice against the hospital.

Both charges were being investigated by the Labour Relations Board at press time.

McColl basis for Manor agreement

About 50 employees at North Vancouver's Kiwanis Lynn Manor senior citizens' care facility have ratified a first agreement with their employer, Kiwanis Senior Citizens' Homes, Limited.

The contract, which was hammered out after seven months of intensive bargaining, will give the workers the same basic conditions and wages as those enjoyed by the 350 employees at six other Lower Mainland private hospitals.

Basis for the Kiwanis agreement was the award handed down by Vancouver lawyer Bruce McColl for workers at Como Lake Hospital (Coquitlam), Kensington Private Hospital (Vancouver), Willingdon Private Hospital (Burnaby), Ladner Private Hospital (Delta), Altamont Private Hospital and Inglewood Hospital and Lodge (both in West Vancouver) last December (*Guardian*, January-February, 1977).

Settlement of the Kiwanis dispute came before Mediator Ed Sims, after HEU received a 97 per cent strike mandate at the Manor to back up contract demands.

The new agreement, while it does not bring the Kiwanis employees to the level of employees covered by the Union's provincial master agreement, does provide them with substantially improved working conditions, wages and benefits.

It expires December 31, 1977.

MEDIATOR ED SIMS



BLACK AT VGH MEETING

On the road...

Back in October, Delegates to the HEU's Tenth Biennial Convention decided it was time the Union had a full-time Provincial President (*Guardian*, September-October, 1976).

They also decided to elect W. D. (Bill) Black to the position, after he had served for eight years as an unpaid Provincial President.

Black took leave of absence from his Royal Columbian Hospital job in New Westminster on January 1, and moved behind a desk at the Union's Provincial Offices three days later.

But he hasn't been behind that desk much since then . . . he's been on the road, visiting more than 18 Units in all parts of the province, speaking to Unit meetings and answering questions from the floor.

It has been, for many of the smaller Units — which may only see members of the Provincial Executive on an irregular basis — a rare opportunity to get information from their Union's chief executive.

"My idea is to remind the Members that this is their Union," Black said, "to put across the point that the Union is there for one purpose only: for them."

"I believe we have succeeded in making that point at every Unit I have visited so far."

Black also said he hopes to visit every Unit in the Union at least once before his present term of office expires in 1978.



Home sought for new Regional Office

The Union has opened its third Regional Office — in name if not yet in fact.

Members of the Provincial Executive, in a ceremony held May 11 at Prince George's Inn of the North, officially opened HEU's Northern Regional Office in that city, though the Union has so far been unsuccessful in its attempts to actually find space in which to locate the office.

It was believed, before the ceremony, that space had been found, above a Prince George pizza parlour; the agent through which the Union was working had even handed over a set of keys to the offices to the Provincial Executive.

But, as some of the Northern Unit delegates and Provincial Executive members were discussing placement of the sign, the owner of the building arrived to announce there had been a terrible mistake: Without letting the agent know, he had already leased the offices to another group . . . he wanted, and got, his keys back.

The search for new quarters means Servicing Representative Bernice Gehring, assigned to fill the position of Northern Regional Servicing Representative, will have to operate her new "office" from the trunk of her car until something suitable can be found.

But that prospect didn't keep her, or the Northern Unit delegates (each Unit was invited to send two), or the Provincial Executive from having a good time at the banquet and dance held to mark the occasion that evening.

★ ★ ★

Among the members of the Provincial Executive at the Prince George meeting — held May 12 and 13 — was Ken Black, who recently moved from his position of First Provincial Alternate to assume the duties of Fifth Provincial Vice-President Ed Ashmore.

The Prince George meeting was the first at which Black joined the Provincial Executive as a voting member.

He replaced Ashmore when the latter became Fourth Provincial Vice-President after Gaynelle Wallbank, elected to the post at the Tenth Biennial Convention, resigned her position.

★ ★ ★

Among the items of business dealt with by the Provincial Executive was approval of a finalized rebates structure, which will see Union rebates to Units formalized according to the recommendations of a committee struck at the instruction of the Tenth Biennial Convention.

Details of the new rebate structure have been mailed to each Unit's Secretary.

★ ★ ★

The Provincial Executive also formulated its suggestions for contract demands for the 1978 bargaining sessions with the HLRA.

The proposals, which include a call for a one-year contract with a \$1 an hour

general wage increase, parity adjustment with outside industry, a COLA clause, a 36-hour work week, improved job security benefits and better provisions for leave of absence, have been circulated to all Units.

The proposals, of course, represent only the recommendations of the Provincial Executive to the Sixth Provincial Wage Policy Conference.

Delegates to the September Conference will make the ultimate decisions concerning bargaining demands for the next collective agreement.



EXECUTIVE MEMBERS AT PRINCE GEORGE MEETING

AWARDS

Board ruling protects HEU strength

A rash of representation disputes between HEU and the Health Science Association has prompted the provincial Labour Relations Board to establish new boundaries between the two groups' jurisdictions.

In setting the new guidelines, LRB Vice-Chairman Don Munroe said a distinction must be made between technical employees, who belong in HEU, and professional employees, who belong in HSA.

He said that where a large industrial bargaining unit and a smaller, special unit exist side by side, the boundaries of the smaller should be defined with a "relatively restrictive frame of mind."

"There are at least two reasons for adopting that approach," Munroe said: "First, to give sanction to a more expansionist view in favour of the smaller unit would be to further dilute the general policy in favour of single industrial units."

"Second, the relatively restrictive state of mind will, in many cases, be necessary to avoid denuding the industrial or service unit of a significant element of its viability and bargaining strength."

Munroe noted that small special units are created to meet particular circumstances and "not to give the trade union a beachhead from which it can make further inroads into the larger unit and the overriding policy."

He said if the LRB did not favour large industrial units, it would be difficult to resist future attempts by tradesmen trying to create their own craft unions within the hospitals.

He added that allowing HSA to expand as it wanted to could damage the bargaining strength of the HEU, because it would deprive the larger Union of members possessing the skills in perhaps all medical technologies.

CONTRACT

Hospitals to get student workers

Scores of college, university and high school students will be on the payrolls of British Columbia hospitals this summer, as a result of an agreement worked out in late April between the HEU and the Health Labour Relation Association.

The agreement provides hospitals may take part in the provincial government's \$25 million Youth Employment Program, which will see \$500,000 set aside for hospital boards to use in employing students between May 2 and August 31.

The agreement — and the program regulations — make it clear that the jobs made available to students must be in addition to "the hospital board's regular number of full-time, part-time, piece-work and seasonal employees," as well as forbidding the dismissal, layoff or reduction in hours of any regular employee.

While the students, at least 25 per cent of whom must be high school students, will become members of the HEU, the

Union-HLRA agreement specifically excludes them from the remaining benefits of the collective agreement.

Descriptions of the jobs being performed by the students will be provided to the Union by the hospitals, who will pay the youths \$4 per hour, plus vacation pay equal to four per cent of their gross pay.

The government will reimburse the hospitals for 75 per cent of the students' salaries, to a maximum of \$22.50 a day (7.5 hours).

All jobs created must last for either 88 days (from May 2 to August 31) or for 47 days (June 27 to August 31), which means the students will earn either \$2,640 (plus \$105.60 worth of holiday pay) or \$1,410 (plus \$56.40) for their summer labours.

In order to qualify for the summer employment program, applicants must be students who have attended an accredited school for at least one semester



YOUTH EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM

since September, 1976, and must be unemployed persons between the ages of 15 and 24.

There is a one-year provincial residency requirement, and participants are prohibited from holding any other job in addition to their hospital position.

Nor may the hired students be direct relatives of the hospital's — or its board's — administrators, directors, governing board or council.

The students are prohibited from working in any department where a direct relative (which includes sons, daughters, husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, mothers or fathers) is also employed, and cannot hold their jobs while they are attending school (including summer school).

Wilkinson is chairman of Job Evaluation Committee

After "the many delays and disappointments" which have postponed it, the Job Evaluation Program is now ready to begin



HUGH WILKINSON

its mammoth task, the newly-appointed chairman of the Joint Committee created to administer it said recently.

In a letter to Union Secretary-Business Manager Jack Gerow, Hugh Wilkinson asked the Union to move as quickly as possible in the selection of two job analysts to assist the Committee in its work, adding he hoped HEU would "continue to give [the matter] the high priority which your selection of appointees would indicate you give it now."

Showing that the Union does, indeed, give the JEP top priority, Gerow and the Provincial Executive moved within a matter of days to find the analysts, making job postings for the analysts' positions in all Units and placing advertisements in major newspapers asking for applications.

The Committee Wilkinson heads, created at the order of Kelowna lawyer Hugh G. Ladner — who was named by the provincial government as the arbitrator responsible for settling details of the 1977 HEU-HLRA contract — is empowered to start the JEP moving and to keep it moving.

Ladner, in his February award (*Guardian*, March-April, 1977), gave the Committee — whose membership includes

HEU appointee Ray McCready and HLRA representative Bill Rolfe—wide-sweeping powers to resolve any disputes which might arise in the process of setting up and running the program.

When its task is finished, something Gerow warned was not going to happen "overnight", the JEP will have established standard wage rates, job descriptions and titles for hospitals across the province.

While Wilkinson and his Committee prepared to begin their herculean task, the Union was pressing ahead with a series of pay-rate adjustment requests, before the Pay Rate Adjustment Committee chaired by Morley Fox (*Guardian*, March-April, 1977).

Despite objections from the HLRA that the Committee was not properly constituted and that its usefulness was called into question by the moves being made to set up the JEP, the Union went ahead in the presentation of more than 100 requests for pay rate adjustments for its Members.

No decision had been handed down by the Committee at press time, though several cases had been resolved by agreement between the two parties outside the Committee meeting rooms.

HOSPITALS FACING FUNDING CRISIS

The problem of finding funds to operate is not one confined to a handful of hospitals in British Columbia in 1977.

It is a problem facing virtually every hospital in the province, where boards and administrators are faced with the task of trimming their budgets to stay within the guidelines laid down last year by Bob McClelland, the province's minister of health.

The stories of two British Columbia hospitals, though, can be considered fairly typical of what is happening throughout the province:

*In Kamloops, **Royal Inland Hospital** faces what one doctor there has called a "crisis" because the provincial government won't come through with the money needed to complete two new operating rooms, already roughed in;*

*In Burnaby, budget restrictions at **George Derby Hospital** have resulted in staff cutbacks, which are now beginning to affect both the remaining staff and the patients.*

Both stories are symptomatic of the malaise which is now crippling the delivery of health care in one of Canada's richest provinces, a province with a budget larger than that of many countries.

Like many other British Columbia hospitals, the George Derby Wing of Shaughnessy Hospital — a sprawling complex of pavilions housing elderly patients who once served in the Canadian Armed Forces — is "saving" money in 1977 by cutting back on its staff.

Since the beginning of the year, the hospital has either laid off or reduced the hours of work of 10 full-time employees, representing about 10 per cent of the facility's total HEU work force.

Their departure has left the hospital's kitchen critically understaffed and has meant cleaning and maintenance of the pavilions housing the patients has suffered.

It has meant, in short, that the patients — veterans who were promised, when they offered their lives in two World Wars and a "police action" in Korea, that they would always be cared for — are suffering.

The kitchen cutbacks, one patient told **The Guardian**, have meant that "many patients' diets and meal choices are being ignored."

That situation has become so bad, an employee said, that patients are threatening to stage a



PATIENT AT BURNABY'S George Derby Hospital makes solitary rounds.

hunger strike "if conditions don't improve drastically and immediately."

The kitchen staff knows the problems:

Some of the remaining dietary aides have been required to work 12-hour shifts since the layoffs began, shifts which have left them too tired to do their work really well.

"No amount of overtime pay can give a person the stamina to stand up to that kind of work load for long," one said.

"In the end, it begins to tell . . . and the people who suffer, of course, are the patients."

The quality of food offered has gone down as the number of cooks has decreased, to the point where, most days, there are only two cooks to prepare meals for the entire hospital.

(On at least one memorable occasion, only one cook was assigned to duty; rather than getting compliments on having coped with the tremendous workload, he was officially criticised for making an unacceptable pudding.)

The food, on some occasions, is cold by the time the remaining workers can get it to the patients, some of whom are so restricted that they must await delivery of their meals to their rooms, since they are unable to make the walk to the dining room.

If the problems stopped there, the rapidly-deteriorating situation at George Derby would be bad enough; unfortunately, they don't.

Not only kitchen workers have been laid off: Employees in the housekeeping department have also been eliminated from the payrolls.

"The pavilions," a patient said, "are beginning to look filthy and the exterminators are being kept busy."

"Bedbugs and silverfish are [now] only two of the added attractions at this hospital."

In the days before staff cutbacks, it was routine that each pavilion had at least one cleaner, an employee who quickly got to know the patients living in his area, their idiosyncracies and habits.

Now, one cleaner is expected to cover as many as three pavilions.

Even if that cleaner is dedicated, as all are, s/he no longer has the time to help the patients, or even to do a thorough cleaning job in any of the pavilions to which s/he is assigned.

"Things just don't get done that used to get done," a patient said, "or they don't get done as well."

That probably summarizes the situation at George Derby—and at countless other British Columbia hospitals — as well as is

humanly possible:

Things which should be getting done just aren't.

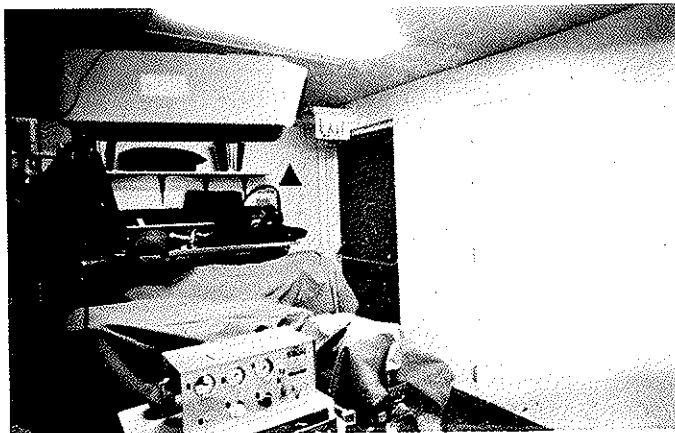
And that's almost criminal.

More noticeable than the gradual deterioration of George Derby is the problem at Kamloops' Royal Inland Hospital.

There, the provincial government has refused to come up with the \$250,000 needed to finish work already begun, work which would see the addition of two new operating rooms in the hospital.

In Kamloops, the issue is a volatile one, with

★
*'Bedbugs and silverfish
are only two of the
added attractions'*
★



rare consensus of doctors, nurses and Union members.

The HEU Kamloops Unit brought the matter — which until then had been largely unpublicized — to the attention of the interior city's citizens, when it passed a resolution calling for the government to release the funds necessary to complete the two operating rooms, already roughed-in by contractors.

The move followed a talk with the Union by Dr. Gautam Parghi, a surgeon who described the present situation at RIH as "critical".

The two new operating rooms would bring to six the number of facilities available for surgery at RIH, four less than the North American standards for hospitals serving a population centre the size of Kamloops, and two less than called for in the initial plans for the hospital 11 years ago.

Dr. Parghi—and the HEU Unit—dismissed as "a poor excuse" the "closet" which now serves as RIH's "fifth operating room".

Only one of the existing operating rooms meets minimum size requirements under North American hospital standards.

The lack of storage space in the existing operating rooms has forced the hospital to store equipment — including emergency resuscitators — in the hallways, leaving less than three inches leeway in the passage through which to manoeuvre a stretcher.

There seems little doubt that RIH could keep the two new ORs busy: Over the last two years, the number of operations at RIH has levelled off at about 9,000 per year.

That's not because the number of people requiring surgery has levelled off (there is a waiting list of about 700 persons needing surgery), but simply because there is no space available to perform the operations.

This is the situation, created by a government which — in the words of Kamloops Unit Chairman Henry Theobald — seems more interested in "spending \$250 million on a second highway to the coast" than in improving conditions at RIH.

There should have been a happy footnote to the story of RIH's struggle to get the money it needs to finish its expansion; it should have been possible to record that the government, upon learning of the situation through the Kamloops Unit's letter to Health Minister McClelland, came through with the cash.

It didn't work out that way.

In his reply to the Unit, McClelland mentioned the "five operating rooms" already in service at RIH, then made it clear he didn't think he could release funds to complete the

two ORs which had been started.

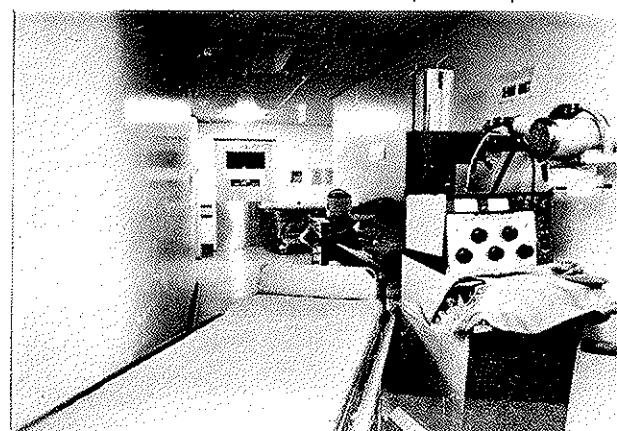
It was an answer becoming familiar to many British Columbia hospitals faced with no funds to complete desperately-needed expansion programs.

Around the province, the government's "Sorry" is becoming a more and more familiar refrain.

Maybe we can't afford hospitals any longer, as the government seems to be trying to suggest . . . but the thought is one which staggers the imagination.

*In the crowded halls,
less than three inches
leeway for stretchers*

HALLWAY STORAGE at Kamloops' Royal Inland Hospital
Kamloops Sentinel photos



TRAVELS

Don't like the boss? Fire him!

HEU Servicing Representative Sharon Yandle recently returned from a two-week trip to Cuba. While there, she spoke extensively with the Cuban workers with whom she came into contact. Her report:

The Cuban economy is based on the central theme that a job is a fundamental, inalienable human right, a concept which has resulted in full employment of the Cuban work force.

The system which has been developed to meet the goal of full employment really begins at age 16, when a Cuban is considered to have reached adulthood; by that time, s/he will have received a general education in the arts, sciences and humanities.

At about 16, a Cuban youth is given a series of aptitude and ability tests, and is interviewed by a job counsellor, who assists in placing the youth in a training program.

The training does not cost the student anything; in fact, they receive salaries for their academic or technical schooling.

Upon completion of the training, the graduate joins the work force . . . and there is always a job waiting for the

graduate — that's guaranteed by the Cuban government.

There is no obligation for a person to spend any set length of time working at any job for which they have been trained, though it is expected they will stay at a job for at least three years before deciding to go back for training in another field.

That expectation, however, is seen as a social obligation . . . it is not a rule or regulation, and people do, on occasion, opt to quit before that period and return to a training program to learn some other skill.

On the job, every member of the work force belongs to a trade union, though the structure of Cuban unions is somewhat different from the institutions which would be familiar to most British Columbians.

To begin with, there is no "management", or at least no management or supervisory structure which would be recognizable as such to most Canadians.

"Managers" and "supervisors" work like everyone else on a job site, but have been elected to lead the work force by their fellow workers.

If a worker feels s/he has a legitimate complaint against a supervisor, s/he lodges a protest with the union committee of grievance, which is required by law to call a meeting of all workers on the job site within 72 hours of receiving such a complaint.

At the meeting, the workers state his/her complaint, the supervisor is given the opportunity to respond, then the general membership discusses the contentious issue and attempts to effect a compromise.

If no compromise can be reached, a sort of "vote of confidence" on the supervisor's performance is taken, by secret ballot; if the polling shows most workers feel the supervisor was in error, that supervisor loses his/her position as an overseer and is returned to the general ranks of the workers.

Another secret ballot then determines who is to replace the former supervisor in his/her leadership position.

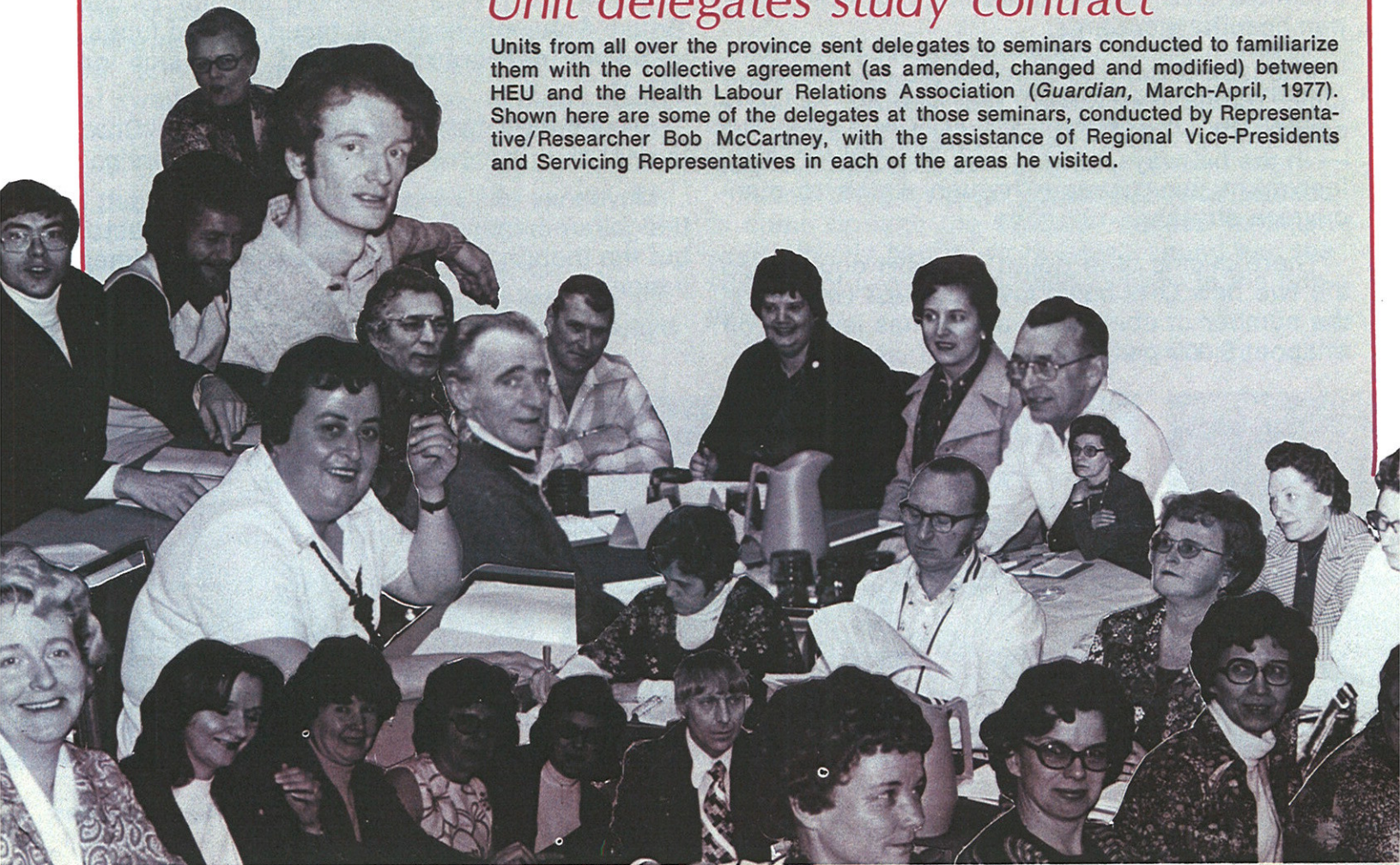
The system works in reverse, too; if a supervisor, or other workers, are unhappy with a worker's performance, they may report that fact to the committee of grievance, which will contact the worker — usually at home — to determine what the problem is.

Once the problem has been identified, the committee works with the worker to solve it. If it cannot, the worker is removed from his/her job and given another.

UNITS

Unit delegates study contract

Units from all over the province sent delegates to seminars conducted to familiarize them with the collective agreement (as amended, changed and modified) between HEU and the Health Labour Relations Association (*Guardian*, March-April, 1977). Shown here are some of the delegates at those seminars, conducted by Representative/Researcher Bob McCartney, with the assistance of Regional Vice-Presidents and Servicing Representatives in each of the areas he visited.



CUBAN PUBLIC HEALTH CARE REVOLUTIONIZED



Dr. JOSE GUITIERREZ-MUNIZ

VGH photo

During a recent visit to Vancouver, Cuba's Minister of Health — Dr. Jose Guitierrez-Muniz — spoke at length with members of Vancouver General Hospital's board.

He allowed The Guardian to attend that meeting, and to report on it (we were the only Canadian publication allowed to question the Minister during his Canadian visit).

Those talks, and questions answered by the Minister during a subsequent tour of the hospital, form the basis of this interview.

He was questioned first by W. M. (Bill) Black, HEU's Secretary-Business Manager for more than 30 years prior to his retirement in 1968 and now a member of the VGH board.



"With the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, we had a situation in which virtually the entire field of medicine was in the hands of private practitioners.

"The State did nothing, or almost nothing, in the way of public health . . . all aspects of what we know as public health, in fact, had been completely neglected for years.

"All that was available to the general population were some medicines to treat a very small number of diseases, and nothing at all was being done in the way of preventive medicine.

"We had to start from absolute zero [in our attempts to build up a public health system] . . . and were further hampered by imperialistic aggression, which took more than half our doctors from the country immediately following the Revolution.

"But since then [1959], we have developed a public health system which blankets the entire country. For the first time, every member of the population has access to medical care, no matter how remote their [home or village].

"We have seen polio, malaria and diphtheria eradicated, and we have drastically

reduced the incidence of, for example, tuberculosis.

"When the Revolution was won, there were 4,000 bed-ridden tuberculosis patients in Cuba; that number has been reduced to less than 300.

"We have seen infant and child mortality rates drop dramatically, and we have seen control programs aimed at eradication of most major 'community' diseases bring them under sharp control, if not completely eradicated.

"It is interesting to note this is not the case in most other Latin American countries . . . where the proportion of the population which has access to public health care is very, very small . . . probably substantially less than 5 per cent of the population has access to such a program in Mexico, for example.

LETTERS

No longer robots, thanks to Union

The Provincial Executive:

We of the George Derby Wing of Shaughnessy Hospital would like to express our salute of gratitude for your efforts in the negotiations of past, present and future.

Without your endless pressures and negotiations, we, the Members of Local 180, would still be back in the dark ages.

With your aid, we now enjoy benefits that at one time were for elected politicians only. Now we can also enjoy some of the freedom we were unable to talk about, less we were dismissed.

From mechanical work robots, Local 180 has helped us to be able to grieve management's unjust decisions, without fear of dismissal, thus making us feel like human beings with rights.

Your tasks are a great burden that most of us realize you face on our behalf.

It is regrettable that you get little to no help from a government that shows such little loyalty to the people who put their hopes and faith for a better future into its hands, but you may rest assured that [the] Members here are behind you in your fight 100 per cent, whatever it may be.

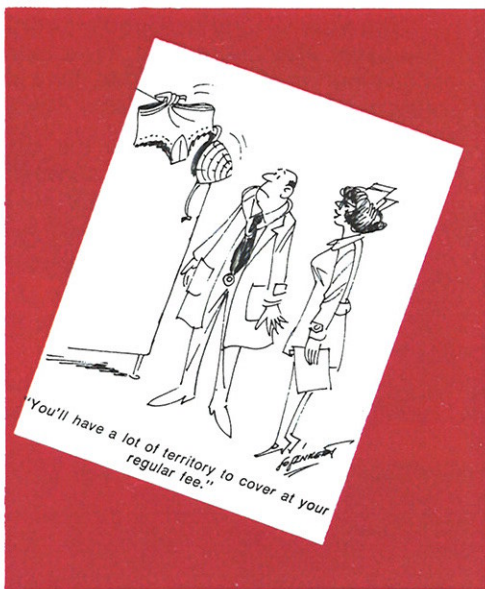
Once again, negotiations are being battered about; hopefully, this letter will

give you a little brightness for your endless task.

Thanks to all of you.

Members of the
George Derby Unit

Objection!



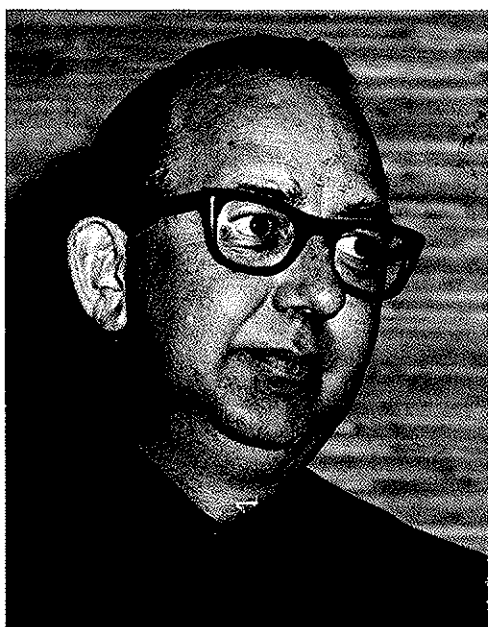
Editor, The Guardian:

[The above cartoon is] STUPID! SEXIST! OFFENSIVE!

I am sending a copy to Ms. magazine!

KAREN LANE, Nanaimo Unit

Editor's Note: The cartoon appeared in the March-April, 1977, Guardian.



ARBITRATION BOARD REDUCES SUSPENSION

Lions Gate Unit Chairperson Bill Third had a 10-day suspension reduced to two days following an arbitration board hearing into what the board called "the cafeteria incident".

Third received the original suspension for what Lions Gate Director of Plant Services Donald Tiegen called "insubordination" during the incident, which occurred in the hospital cafeteria on February 15.

The three-man board — chaired by W. M. (Bill) Black and including HEU Director of Membership Services Ray McCready and the Health Labour Relations Association's Bill Rolfe as members — ruled that the 10-day suspension and official disciplinary report meted out for Third's part in the disagreement was not

appropriate to the circumstances of the case, reducing it to two days and removing the disciplinary report from Third's employment record.

The incident which led to the case came as the culmination of a series of events which began on February 10.

On that day, two inspectors from the provincial Workers' Compensation Board arrived at the hospital to conduct a tour and asked the management to arrange to have an employee representative accompany them on their inspection.

The hospital management decided to assign Third to the tour, and subsequently relieved him of his duties that day to allow him to make the inspection.

The inspection was not finished on February 10, and the WCB inspectors

ORGANIZING

Kamloops' Overlander workers vote 88% to join HEU

On April 5, the HEU consisted of more than 18,500 hospital employees, working at 113 hospitals scattered all over British Columbia.

On April 6, the Union added about 60 employees, and hospital number 114, to its ranks, with the addition of the 100-bed Overlander Extended Care Hospital's workers.

The Kamloops employees voted 88 per cent in favour of affiliation with the HEU in a Labour Relations Board-conducted vote on that day.

The vote — and subsequent certification of the Union — came after more than three months of an organizing campaign in the Interior city, by a team headed by Kamloops' Unit Chairperson Henry Theobald.

Theobald was helped in his drive by Kelowna Unit Chairperson Ethel McSorley and by Okanagan/Kootenays Servicing Representatives Owen Adams and Marion Perry.

An application for certification at Overlander was filed on January 24, but charges of Unfair Labour Practices — laid before the LRB by both the Union and the hospital — prevented the certification vote from taking place until early April.

Now that the vote has been held, and certification granted, the Union has asked the Health Labour Relations

Association to vary the Master Agreement by bringing Overlander under its coverage, thereby giving the employees its protection and benefit.

While the Kamloops workers have now joined the ranks of British Columbia's largest hospital employees' union, things were going more slowly at Delta's new Centennial Hospital.

There, Richmond Unit Chairperson Walter Ross was still trying to organize an estimated 85 workers at the hospital, which opened January 28.

Ross began his organizing drive at Delta in mid-January, and has, to date, signed up more than 25 workers.

He has held meetings with employees, circulated leaflets and has been on hand to answer questions on a personal one-to-one basis.

Centennial already offers its employees wage rates and benefits comparable to those obtained by the Union for its Members, though — of course — it cannot offer them portability of benefits, job protection, or a grievance procedure equal to the one negotiated by HEU.

Despite the handicaps, Ross reported he was still convinced the employees would ultimately recognize the benefits of HEU Membership and vote to certify the Union as their bargaining agent.



said they would return to the hospital in five days.

Third advised his supervisor that he would be away from his duties on February 15, to allow him to complete the tour.

On February 15, Third reported to the hospital lobby to join the tour party, only to be told he was not supposed to accompany it that day.

After a brief encounter in the lobby, Third and the rest of the party went to the cafeteria, where Tiegen and several other administration members were having coffee.

Tiegen advised Third he was not to go on the tour, at which point Third lost his temper and condemned the lack of communication in the hospital.

Subsequently, it was determined that — although it had been decided that Third was not to make the second part of the safety inspection — no one had bothered to tell him of that decision.

In its decision, the arbitration board noted it deplored the use of profane language in labour relations at the North Vancouver hospital, but added it was unfair to unduly discipline Third for its use, as evidence showed such language was commonly used by both management and Union spokesmen.

Visits allowed

A three-man arbitration board has ruled hospitals have no right to attempt to keep the Union's Secretary-Business Manager — or his designated representatives — out of their buildings.

The decision, made after the Union grieved a refusal to allow a representative to meet with employees in Vancouver General Hospital, held that language contained in the HEU's collective agreement with the Health Labour Relations Association guaranteed the right of the Union to "visit the employer's place of

business", provided the administration is told of an impending visit and advised of the nature of the business the representative wishes to conduct.

"There are no limitations as to who [the representative] can visit," the board held.

"[He has] the right to interview or talk to Members of the Union who are employees of the hospital.

"Since Section 5(a) [of the agreement] prohibits employees from leaving their employment without obtaining the permission of the employee's immediate supervisor, we can infer that such meetings must take place on the employee's own time, such as in a coffee break or a lunch period, unless permission is given otherwise."



Dismissals upheld

Hospital Industry Troubleshooter R. Neil Monroe has upheld the dismissals of two employees from Prince George Regional Hospital (*Guardian*, March-April, 1977).

One of the workers was fired for continually disruptive behaviour, while the other was terminated because of unsatisfactory work habits and attitude, sub-standard work and dereliction of duties.

OTHER UNIONS

Nurses get AIB maximum after strike threat

Nurses employed directly by the provincial government have ratified a 1976-1977 collective agreement which will see them get a total of 14 per cent worth of increases in wages, benefits and cash payments.

The 96 per cent ratification vote came after the British Columbia Government Employee Relations Bureau was forced to resume the negotiations it broke off in December by an 86 per cent strike vote in late February.

Ratification of the contract — which provides the nurses with the allowable increases set out by the federal anti-inflation guidelines — marked the end of 18 months of on-and-off negotiations.

The 2,700 nurses had been without a contract since October 31, 1975.

The new agreement covers about 1,600 registered psychiatric nurses and 1,100 registered nurses working in provincial government psychiatric facilities and public health units throughout the province.

FLASHBACK



TO OCTOBER 14, 1976, IN FT. ST. JOHN

When the HEU called on its membership — through a resolution passed by Delegates to the Tenth Biennial Convention (*Guardian*, September-October, 1976) — to support the October 14 National Day of Protest against federal wage controls, Union members at the Ft. St. John Unit responded in the requested fashion.

ROUNDUP

We have been suspicious of elevators ever since we discovered that the Vancouver offices of the Otis Elevator Company are located in a one-storey building which covers an entire block.

Those suspicions were confirmed during the visit of Cuba's Minister of Health to **Vancouver General Hospital**.

The minister and his entourage made the mistake of climbing into one of the creaky old cages in Willow Pavilion and were rewarded with a 15-minute delay in their tightly-paced schedule.

The door to the elevator wouldn't open when it reached the floor the minister and his party wanted . . . it wouldn't open when security personnel tried to pry it open . . . it wouldn't open when the assembled brass pleaded with it.

It did open, in seconds, when HEU elevator mechanic **Ray Clarke** showed up and used his knowledge of its mechanism to accomplish what the others had failed to do.

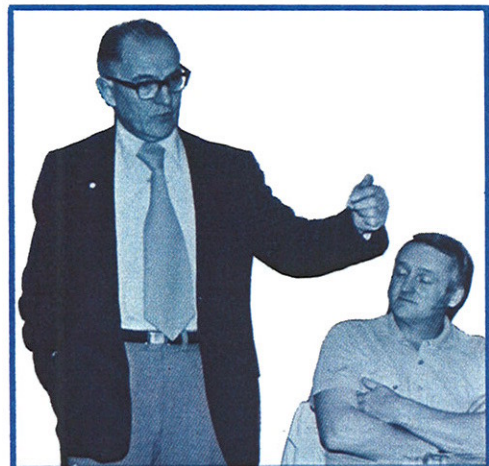
Which just goes to show, once again, that when it comes to keeping a hospital running, it's not who you are, but what you know.

★ ★ ★

Almost all union members are familiar with slogans and songs which urge them to work together for the common good.

But many never really stop to think what it means to belong to an organization like HEU, or how they personally benefit when they join together for mutual benefit.

We heard a story the other day which



HEU Financial Secretary **John Darby** made his annual report to the Peace Arch District Hospital in White Rock in April, including in his talk a discussion of the rumours spread by a critical letter-writer whose unsigned work began appearing on Union bulletin boards early this year. (And no, Committee Chairman Rod McKenzie [right] is not asleep.)

we think is a good illustration of how hanging together helps everyone:

In the days when the stage coach was the only means of getting from one place to another in British Columbia, the driver of one of the coaches became involved in a conversation with one of his passengers at a way station.

During the course of their talk, the driver began bragging about his skill with his long rawhide whip, which he carried coiled over his shoulder.

The passenger was openly skeptical of some of the driver's louder claims, and finally — pointing to a leaf on a tree about five yards away — said: "If you're so good, let's see you clip that leaf off at the stem."

With a quick flick, the driver neatly trimmed the leaf from the branch, without even disturbing the other leaves on it.

The passenger then challenged the driver to hit a fly on a mule's ear, from a distance of about 10 yards, without disturbing the mule; the driver did it.



The by-now astonished passenger then pointed mutely to a hornet's nest on a tree limb, about 15 yards from where the pair stood.

The driver shook his head firmly and turned to walk away.

"Can't do it?" the passenger taunted. "Son," the driver replied, "I **could** . . . but a leaf is just a leaf, and a fly is just a fly. A hornet's nest, now, *that's* an organization."

★ ★ ★

What is sworn to be a true story, concerning an HEU servicing representative (who shall remain nameless).

Sighting his ferry about 10 feet from the dock, he ran frantically down the ramp and leaped for the deck.

"Well," he gasped, "I'm sure glad I made it."

A puzzled deck hand said, "Me, too . . . we'll be docking in about three minutes."

★ ★ ★

The Parting Shot in the July-August, 1976, *Guardian* was a photograph of the 17-bed **Michel-Natal District Hospital** in Sparwood, a converted wooden boarding house built in the early 1930s.

The hospital building is one of the oldest structures in the Elk Valley, and has long needed replacement.

The replacement is now in the process of being built.

A new 27-bed hospital has been started and is expected to be complete by next Spring.

The hospital now employs about 25 HEU Members.



MICHEL-NATAL HOSPITAL

★ ★ ★

Secretary-Business Manager **Jack Gerow** told the recent 58th Annual Convention of the **Alberta Hospital Association** he felt hospital boards might be stripped of the last vestiges of local autonomy if they couldn't find ways to settle disputes with the unions representing their employees peacefully.

Gerow warned the assembled Alberta trustees that the next decade will likely see an increasing number of disputes between the unions and the hospital boards, adding he felt public-service unions would be among the most militant labour bodies in the 1980s.

★ ★ ★

It came as a surprise to the **Economic Council of Canada**, but not to most British Columbia workers:

In a report issued in late April, the ECC said it had "discovered" that British



Do these capsules release their energy on Standard Time or on Daylight Savings Time?

Columbians might earn the second highest incomes in Canada, but — in terms of what they can buy with that money — they're not as well off as workers in Ontario, Quebec or Alberta.

With higher housing costs, a higher cost of living, more unemployment and stiffer taxes, British Columbians suffer more on the marketplace than their counterparts in most other provinces, the ECC noted.

With the average Canadian income set at 100, B.C. workers earn 109, behind only Ontario workers, who get 120.

Alberta's rate is set at 100, Manitoba 92; Quebec, 88; Newfoundland, at 55, is lowest.

But when these incomes were adjusted to the cost of living and computed on a family basis, B.C. dropped to a fourth place tie with Manitoba.

In terms of what their dollars buy, Ontario workers still topped the list, at 106, followed by Quebec, 102, and Alberta, 101. British Columbians dropped to 97, below the national average.

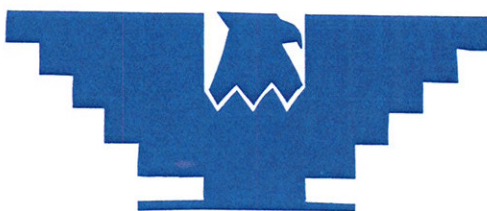
Too bad the federal cabinet didn't ask for that study *before* it brought in wage controls which limit B.C. workers to the same percentage increases the workers in Ontario, Quebec and Alberta get.



Let me put it this way: You're sick, but not as sick as the economy.

A ray of hope for grape lovers, who have been unable to get **United Farm Workers'** grapes at British Columbia supermarkets:

A new jurisdictional agreement between the UFW and the **California Teamsters** should result in California grapes coming onto the market once again.



But a **B.C. Federation of Labour** spokesman said the availability of UFW grapes does *NOT* mean the boycott of non-union grapes has ended, and asked trade unionists to continue refusing to buy grapes from boxes which don't carry the Farm Workers' familiar eagle.

Other boycotts include a total boycott against all products from **Chile**, a boycott of **Tilden Rent-A-Car** (the only major car rental firm to successfully resist unionization) and of all **Sandman Inns**.

Boycotts of the **Irly Bird Retail Lumber Yards**, **Diamond-Sunsweet** products and **Firestone Tire and Rubber** products have all ended, with the unions which had

called them all reaching agreement with the companies.

A curling rink skipped by HEU Grand Forks Unit Chairperson **Angus MacKay** walked off with the Sandner Trophy in a recent bonspiel in that city.

Good news for **Rossland Unit** Members came in the form of recall notices for employees laid off during renovations at the **Mater Misericordiae Hospital's** extended care unit.

The unit re-opened in early April.

We knew it all along . . . the Executive Director of the federal Anti-Inflation Board, **Robert Johnstone**, has finally made it public.

Interviewed by the *Financial Times News Service*, Johnstone admitted that, of all the groups affected by the federal anti-inflation program, organized labour got the worst deal.

Said the AIB official:

"A businessman has more forms to fill out, but he still goes on doing what he has always done [making money].

"It's different for labour. The important thing for labour leaders is bargaining for improved benefits for employees. Controls impinge directly on their chief task."

This is news?

Look as hard as you want . . .



HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION

FREE LEGAL ADVICE

The terms of benefits and conditions that members of the H.E.U. are entitled to are set out in the H.E.U. Constitution and Bylaws.

This advice will be restricted to an initial interview or correspondence relating to domestic matters such as:

- Separation Agreements • Divorce • Wills • Child Maintenance Problems
- Landlord and Tenant Problems • Buying and Selling of Real Estate
- Buying and Selling of Shares (e.g. Bonds, Stocks, Cdn.)

The Free Legal Service will not include:

- Litigation or appearances before Courts
- Arbitration Boards or other Tribunals
- Conveyancing or Drafting Documents

Except for emergencies, advice will normally be given in the Office of Legal Counsel. To ensure that only Members in good standing receive this Union-sponsored service, personal appointments will be handled through the Provincial Office or Vancouver by the provision of an Authorization Form to be turned over to Legal Counsel at the time of the appointment.

Special "Confidential" envelopes have been provided to Secretaries-Treasurers to facilitate correspondence between Legal Counsel and Union Members.

If you wish to correspond with Legal Counsel, ask your Secretary-Treasurer for the special "Legal Advice" envelopes.

REMEMBER: This is a Confidential Free Legal Advice Programme available only to Members of the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 156.

... there are no loopholes in THIS offer!

When HEU offers its members something, there are no hidden clauses, no fine print to confuse the issue. That's our policy.

And that policy is carried through in the Union's long-standing offer of free legal advice to any HEU member in good standing.

The lawyers who handle all the rest of the Union's legal affairs are the people to whom YOUR confidential request will be forwarded, unopened, for assistance.

Your shop steward has all details, as well as the special envelopes used for requests.

S/he will be glad to fill you in . . . and our lawyers will be glad to help.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE RICH TO SEND YOUR KID TO COLLEGE



WE'LL HELP!

Each year, several Units and the Provincial Executive offer a total of eight bursaries, of up to \$500 each, to sons and daughters of Union Members who are leaving Grade 12 and who are continuing their education at any British Columbia regional college, at most of the province's universities, or - for those seeking a Diploma in Technology - at the B.C. Institute of Technology.

To qualify for most of the bursaries, the student need only be the son or daughter of an Active HEU Member, or of a Member superannuated since January 1, 1977.*

Applications for the bursaries are available from:

University Awards Committee
University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia V6T 1W5

They must be returned to the Committee - which selects the bursary winners - before July 15, 1977.

*The Marion Perry Bursary, offered by the Kelowna Unit, is available ONLY to the sons or daughters of Members in the Okanagan Region, or to Members in the same Region.

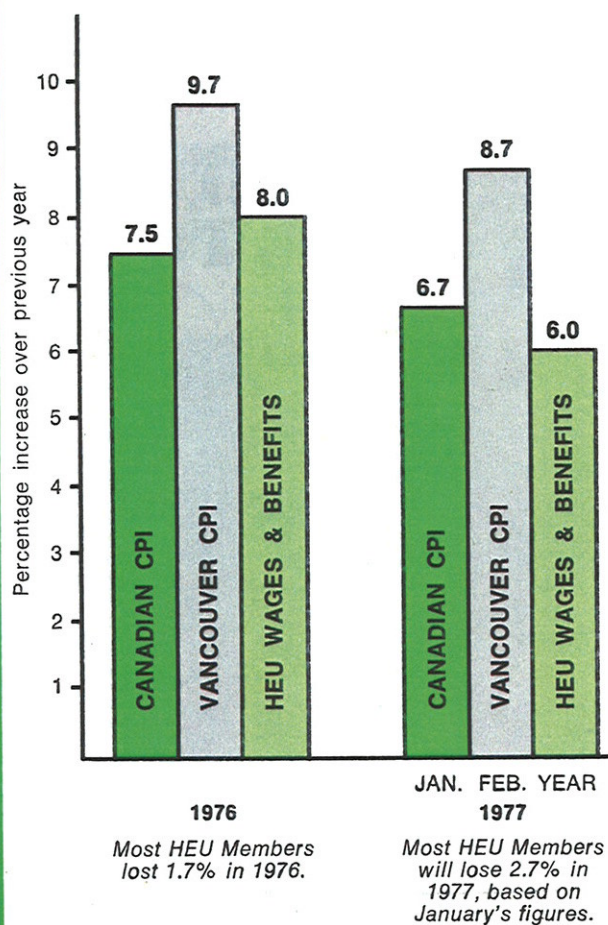
PARTING SHOT



AH, SPRING! A young man's fancy may turn lightly to thoughts of love, but for this elderly patient at Burnaby's George Derby Hospital, it means a chance to kick back and enjoy a well-earned rest. The sign taped above his head, by the way, announces that "Collin T. [is] temporarily excused from exercise."

MONEY

MOST HEU MEMBERS LOSE



When the federal government decided to regulate wages, it announced that it would allow salaries and benefits to go up at a rate which allowed workers to keep up with inflation.

The government measures inflation by the Canadian Consumer Price Index, an average of the costs of certain essential items across the country.

The problem with the formula, of course, is that it is a national average, not a local one.

The result? British Columbians lost a part of their buying power, falling steadily behind in the battle to keep up with inflation, because British Columbia almost always comes very close to the top of the list when it comes to price hikes.

As the chart shows, the government's policy cost HEU Members 1.7 per cent of their buying power last year.

This year looks even worse.

SUPERANNUATION

Behind the times

In response to two questions put by the Royal Columbian Unit:

Q. WHY IS THE ESTIMATED CANADA PENSION PLAN ADJUSTMENT SUBTRACTED ON THE ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICES?

A: According to the Municipal Superannuation Branch in Victoria, this adjustment is subtracted because, if it were not, the employers would be paying premiums for each employee into both the Canada Pension Fund and the Municipal Superannuation Fund.

"The two Plans are integrated," the Branch spokesman said, "which means employers need only pay one of the premiums."

★ ★ ★

Q. WHY IS THE SUM OF \$132.90 USED [in the Old Age Pension section of the annual Statement] WHEN THIS NUMBER IS BEHIND THE TIMES?

A: It may be behind the times, but it's used because that's what a single person retiring tomorrow would get in Old Age Pension benefits from the government.

The figure will vary from time to time, as the amount of benefits fluctuates, but will be standard; that is, the same figure will be used on all the annual Statements.

★ ★ ★

A word of advice to members retiring in a year prior to conclusion of the collective agreement:

When you apply for Superannuation Allowance, if you wish to have your pension adjusted for retroactive salaries which you may get, you should:

(a) Complete all the forms and return them to the Superannuation Branch office.

(b) Include in the same envelope notice that you wish payment of your pensions delayed until salary negotiations are completed.

(c) Advise your pay office to take Superannuation payments from your retroactive pay and have the pay office advise the Branch of the amount of retroactive pay and contributions.

When the Branch gets this information, your pension will be finalized and payment will be made from the effective date.

If you would face a severe financial hardship as a result of the delay this would cause, ask the Branch for an interim pension during the negotiation period.

You might not get it . . . but then you might.

Got a question about the Superannuation Plan? Write the Guardian — we'll try to get you an answer.