

Wage control program a cruel hoax

Picking the pockets of public sector workers

The general opinion around the province is that the HEU/HLRA master agreement is the most significant case yet to come under the jurisdiction of the Compensation Stabilization Program.

And, although Ed Peck, commissioner of the program, has made a ruling on the first guideline year, the case is still far from settled.

Thus far, Peck has applied only CSP guidelines which are neither enforceable nor binding as are the more rigid CSP regulations. As reported in both the Guardian Newsletter and the Facts, Peck determined that the compensation increase for guideline year one (January 1, 1982 to December 31, 1982) should be reduced from 6.9 per cent to 5 per cent. He deferred his decision on guideline year two (January 1, 1983 to December 31, 1983) until after hospital budgets have been finalized. And he ruled that the reduced work week, effective January 1, 1983, was outside the jurisdiction of the present Compensation Stabilization Program.

Having applied the guidelines, Peck then referred the matter back to the parties for renegotiation. If HEU and HLRA fail to reach an agreement which is within the guidelines, then, and only then, is Peck in a position to impose a settlement.

The HEU position on the D. R. Munroe award and the Compensation Stabilization Program has been clear. The union maintains that its master agreement, as awarded by Munroe, is within the guidelines set out in the CSP and therefore outside its jurisdiction.

HEU singled out

In actual fact, the Munroe award has been costed at 6.9 per cent for the first year and 4.89 per cent for the second, well within the limits established under the Compensation Stabilization Program. Surely, this cannot be the same "excessive" wage increase to which Premier Bennett referred during the election campaign. After all, it was the Premier himself who termed the BCGEU settlement of 6.8 per cent as a "model of restraint." It would seem unfair in the extreme to single out hospital workers for harsher treatment.

And yet this is precisely what appears to be happening. Peck's ruling that the first year of the HEU master agreement should be rolled back to 5 per cent could well mean that HEU members would have to dig into their pockets to pay back some of the money already received. It means that the 8 per cent increase paid to members since August 1, 1982 is under the threat of rollback, as is the yet unpaid \$70 per month retroactive payments for January through July, 1982.

The second year of the agreement seems even more in jeopardy. Peck deferred his decision on the 5 per cent April 1, 1983 increase until the



1983/84 hospital budgets have been finalized in Victoria. In essence, he ruled HLRA could not prove its case of "inability to pay" because it did not know what the budgets would be. Instead, he invited both parties to make further submissions on the "ability to pay" question once the budgets are in place.

Employment not guaranteed

This raises some interesting questions. With salaries accounting for some 85 per cent of hospital budgets, what safeguards are there to prevent Victoria from freezing budgets as a method of ensuring zero per cent wage settlements on hospital workers? And how, for instance, is the commissioner to distinguish between the hospitals' so-called "inability to pay" and their "unwillingness to pay"?

Furthermore, as the Guardian was going to press, the Social Credit government was expected to announce a new restraint program which will freeze the wages of public sector workers for several years. This new program will most certainly affect the third, and possibly even the second, year of the HEU master agreement.

The extent of public sympathy for an extended public sector wage control program is questionable at

best. Much of the support seems due to lack of understanding.

For instance, it is commonly held by many people that the present restraint program guarantees public sector workers increases of 6 per cent. Nothing, of course, could be further from the truth. The thousands of workers who have been forced to accept increases of zero, 2 or 3 per cent are obvious testimony.

So, it's necessary to look behind the rhetoric of the program and examine its true purpose. It is there primarily to reduce the wages of public sector employees and at the same time allow the government to eliminate thousands of public sector jobs.

The recent experience of HEU bears out this hypothesis. Last year, our members made a significant contribution to "restraint" by accepting a 3.4 per cent wage increase. In spite of that, some 2,000 members

were still laid off. The painful truth is that accepting substandard wage increases is no guarantee of employment.

If the ministry of health feels it can run our province's hospitals with 5,000 less workers next year, it will do so, regardless of whether HEU members get zero per cent, 8 per cent, or anything in between.

Interestingly enough, the government's public justification for the restraint program was founded on precisely the opposite theory. It argued that public sector workers had "job security," something which private sector workers did not. Therefore, it was only fair that public sector workers bear some burden of the recession by limiting wage demands.

The reality, of course, is quite different as thousands of public sector employees face the double jeopardy of poor wages on the job and the constant threat of layoffs.

The arbitrary limits of public sector wages will also play havoc with the historical relationships between workers. It is only in the past few years that public sector wages have caught up to the private sector. This parity will quickly diminish under a continued restraint program.

Of particular concern to HEU is the effect CSP has on the arbitration process. Since 1944, HEU has developed a reputation for settlement of contract disputes through negotiation and arbitration. The only strike in its 39-year history occurred in 1976 when the hospitals refused to apply the recommendations of a government-appointed industrial inquiry commission. That strike also occurred when federal wage controls were imposed to interfere with free collective bargaining.

HLRA appeals award

Once again controls have been imposed, this time by the province. Once again an arbitrator's decision has been made, by D. R. Munroe, after a full hearing of both sides. Once again HLRA tries to avoid applying a "final and binding" arbitration award by appealing to governmental controls.

Arbitration is no longer an impartial process. CSP has created a clever loophole for employers who wish to change the terms of an arbitration award. Faced with this reality, working people will have no choice but to choose strike action should collective bargaining fail.

The continuation of the Compensation Stabilization Program will poison the climate of public service labor relations for many years.

For its part, HEU has no desire to return to the primitive system of labor relations where the parties face each other as enemies on opposite sides of an unbreachable wall.

However, the imposition of unjust settlements on HEU, or any other public sector union, is an invitation to industrial relations chaos.

HEU members to vote on CSP offer

The Health Labour Relations Association has tabled its final position on the master agreement.

The HLRA proposal is an attempt to roll back the terms of the agreement. It was made after Compensation Stabilization Commissioner Ed Peck ruled the agreement was "excessive" and referred it back to the parties for review. Peck ordered mediator Vince Ready into the dispute but his intervention proved unsuccessful.

As a result of the HLRA attempted rollback, special HEU membership meetings will be called around the province, details of the HLRA offer will be reported, and secret-ballot votes will be taken. The ballots will be counted August 11.

The HEU provincial executive has stated that the union will not agree to a rollback of the 8 per cent, August 1, 1982 increase. The union also stands by its demand that the retroactivity must be maintained.

HEU has also decided that it will make an application to Peck for reconsideration of his ruling under Section 24 of the Compensation Stabilization Act. Primarily, the union will argue that the compensation increase for the first year of the master agreement should have been costed on a time-weighted basis since the increase was not awarded until August 1, 1982, more than half way through the year.

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

The Hospital Guardian

Editor: Lecia Stewart

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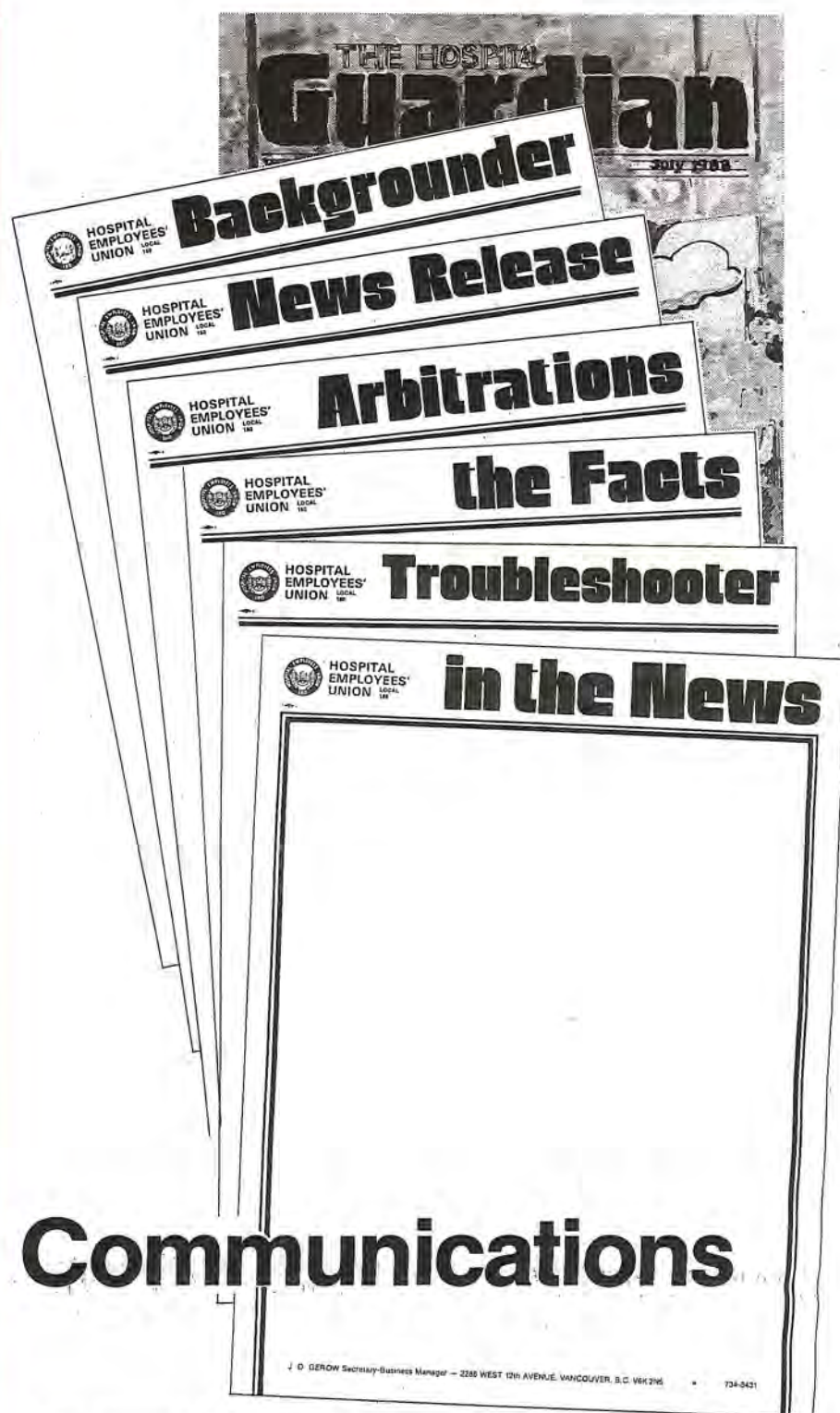
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180



Communications

The Hospital Employees' Union wants to keep its membership . . . better informed!

So, in an effort to answer the call from members for better and faster coverage of union affairs, the HEU has restructured its membership communications program.

The first step of this process took place last December when HEU cancelled the monthly publication of the Guardian Newspaper. This was done in response to members' complaints that the publication was full of old news by the time it reached the hospitals. Members said they were frustrated with learning about union matters through the mass media; they wanted to hear it from the union first.

It was decided therefore to publish weekly Guardian Newsletters to post on hospital bulletin boards. These Newsletters can be produced at the HEU office in just a few hours and help to ensure that members are kept abreast of important developments in their union.

In addition to the Newsletters, and the already familiar Troubleshooter Reports, three other publications have been added to the HEU information network. They include:

- "The Facts" — a publication which presents timely issues in a question and answer format.
- "In the News" — a weekly publication which carries a selection of pertinent news articles clipped from newspapers. It helps to keep all HEU units aware of what's happening in the labor movement around the province.
- "Arbitrations" — this is a specific publication to report on the re-

sults of important arbitration awards.

None of these news bulletins, however, preclude the need for a major HEU publication. Another vehicle is required for in-depth discussions of issues, and to explore the new challenges which face the union.

For this reason, HEU will continue to produce the Guardian on a quarterly basis.

The HEU provincial executive is also considering a move to change the format of the Guardian from a tabloid newspaper to a magazine.

There are a number of factors which make the magazine format a possibility. The primary one is cost. As a result of new computerized equipment in the printing industry, it is now possible to produce a magazine for HEU for about the same price as a newspaper. Special photo scanning equipment and high speed web presses have helped to substantially reduce the costs of producing a magazine.

Another consideration is readership appeal. People are much more likely to read, and then take home, a well-presented magazine. A newspaper, on the other hand, is likely to be discarded the same day it arrives. And if our goal is to deliver thought-provoking and timely information to our members, then a throw-away publication may be doing us a disservice.

As soon as a final decision is made, members will be notified. In any event, all of these proposals are designed with one thing in mind — keeping you, the membership, fully informed. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

What does "Right to Work" really mean?

The right to collective bargaining and the freedom of working people to form trade unions has been recognized and guaranteed by law in every province in Canada. These rights have been won over the years through the hard struggles of many ordinary Canadians and have resulted in our nation having one of the highest standards of living in the world. Yet right now, in British Columbia, a carefully-orchestrated campaign is being conducted by some employers to weaken the trade union movement, destroy collective bargaining, and lower the province's overall standard of living. Naturally the people organizing this anti-worker campaign have not owned up to their real goals. In fact, it's a tribute to the good sense of British Columbians that they find it necessary to hide their true purpose. But the campaign has begun — under the deceptive and insidious slogan of "Right to Work."

The purpose of this article is to expose the big lie behind the fanciful slogan of "Right to Work," to present its true nature and intent, and to explain in a straight-forward fashion why the trade union movement opposes this proposal.

Question: What does the term "Right to Work" really mean?

Answer: The term is deceptive because it implies the right of every worker to a job. However, "Right to Work" laws have nothing to do with guaranteeing each worker employment. Instead, their purpose is to prohibit employers and their employees from agreeing to a "union shop" clause in their collective agreements. Briefly, union shop clauses require that all workers hired by the employer must join the union within a specified period of time. So-called "Right to Work" laws prohibit union shop agreements and would be more accurately called "Anti-Union Shop" laws.

Question: "Right to Workers" say it is unfair and undemocratic to compel someone to belong to a union. Is that true?

Answer: No, it is not true. The first point to remember is that a union only comes about in the first place if a clear majority of employees democratically indicate that they wish to be represented by a union. It then follows, by law, that the union must fully and equally represent every worker, including those who may have opposed the union. Now, while this concept of majority rule does mean that some workers who oppose the union must accept union representation if the union wins a representation vote, it also means that workers who may desire union representation might have it denied to them if the union loses the representation vote. So the principle of majority rule is applied equally to union supporters and opponents alike. Whichever side wins, the other side must accept the views of the majority. In both cases, if a person disagrees with the majority decision they are always free to seek employment elsewhere.

A second point to consider is that when an employer and a union agree in collective bargaining that a union shop would aid industrial relationships, they are in effect laying down a regulation for the common good of their industrial community. When a worker accepts employment in that plant or operation, she/he is no longer a detached individual, but is



instead a member of the community and governed by the rules made by the majority in that community. Again, if a person does not accept the majority view, they are free to seek employment elsewhere.

Question: Then why do people campaign for so-called "Right to Work" laws?

Answer: The motives behind these laws are to weaken the trade union movement and destroy collective bargaining. The reasoning is that weaker unions will be forced to

accept lower wage settlements and fewer fringe benefits — and that as a result of this situation company profits will improve in the short run.

Question: How do these laws weaken the trade union movement?

Answer: "Right to Workers" create a situation where a pool of experienced employees exist who are prime candidates for crossing picket lines or breaking strikes. Faced with the threat that employer lock-outs might be won or that strikes might be broken by "Right to Workers," a

Right to Work a "misnomer"

by Paul Weiler

Former Chairman of the Labour Relations Board of British Columbia. From his book "Reconcilable Differences."

The battle about union security versus the individual's right to work is a perennial one in North American labor relations. It is blossoming once more, and in a particularly virulent fashion in British Columbia.

From personal experience and public discussion of this issue, I am quite aware of the initial popular reaction. How can one possibly be against the right to work? Is that not a fundamental individual right? Surely only people with incipient totalitarian impulses could defend union security against this personal freedom.

I have always found that the only antidote to that attitude is to make it clear that "right to work" is a complete misnomer in this debate. No one has the right to work. The one million Canadians who are out of work are a walking testimonial to that fact of economic life. The government does not guarantee anyone work; it does not promise to be an employer of last resort. Employers do not guarantee anyone work. They do not hesitate to layoff even long-service employees if they do not need them. More to the point, if an employer does not consider an employee suitable, if it feels that he has been guilty of conduct inconsistent with their continuing relationship, the employer can and does dismiss that employee.

I do not mean to challenge these features of our market economy and world of employment. But I do insist that we recognize the limited nature of the "right to work" which is at issue here. The proposal is not a right to work as against the employer, who will remain free to fire an employee for any conduct that he believes inimical to his interests. It is only a right as against his fellow employees and the union which represents them, who will be forbidden from touching an employee's job for his conduct which they believe is inimical to their interests. When one appreciates that fact, it should come as no surprise that it is employers, not workers, who are most prominent in the right to work campaign.

union's bargaining position is substantially eroded. The result is that union members are forced to accept poorer contracts.

In the longer run, employers can adopt policies of only hiring employees who will refuse to join the union, which can result in destroying the union entirely, costing long-time employees the benefits and security they have built up over the years.

"Right to Workers," by refusing to join the union, are getting a free ride on the backs of those who do belong to the union. While "Right to Workers" enjoy the wages and fringe benefits won by the union members, and also have union grievance procedures available to them, they pay no union dues. They enjoy all the benefits but share none of the responsibility of funding and supporting the union!

Question: Do these laws exist anywhere at present?

Answer: Anti-union shop laws do not exist in Canada, but they do exist in some American states. On the average, employers in the states with anti-union shop laws pay wages and fringe benefits at levels substantially lower than the U.S. average. In addition, the overall economies and the standards of living in the anti-union shop states are also significantly poorer than those in the non-anti-union shop states. Furthermore, there are examples of workers being forced to take reduced wages and benefits in states where anti-union laws are newly enacted! Corporate profits, on the other hand, are significantly higher than the U.S. national average in the anti-union shop states.

Question: What would be the effect of introducing anti-union shop laws in British Columbia?

Answer: The results would be two-fold. First, the imposition of anti-union shop laws would create a chaotic and hostile industrial relations climate. The trade union movement has clearly stated that any attempt to impose such laws will be vigorously resisted. Employers hiring anti-union shop employees would find substantial resentment from their union employees. This would probably lead to confrontation, strikes and lock-outs, and lower productivity — all of which would be bad for the province's economy and unhealthy for employees and employers alike.

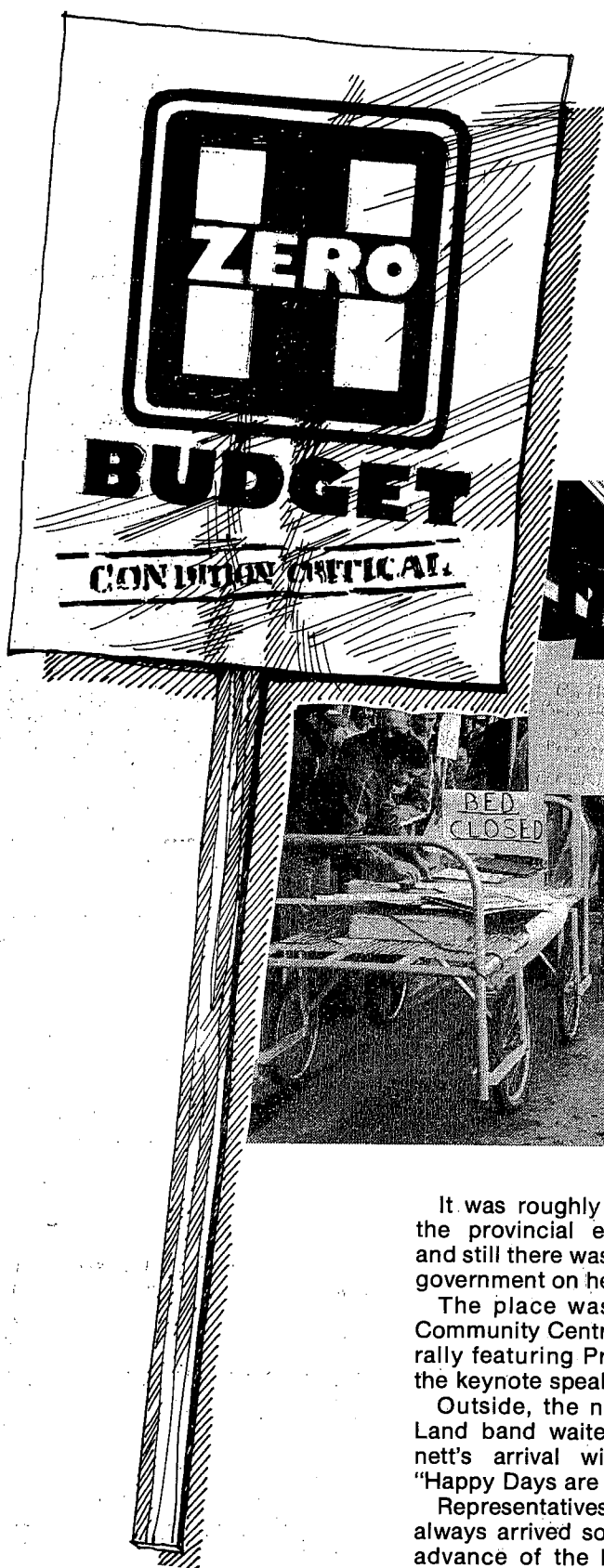
Second, the long term effects of anti-union shop laws would be wage settlements and collective agreements that fall behind those in other provinces without such laws. B.C.'s overall standard of living in comparison to the rest of the country would drop!

Question: Who is organizing the campaign for anti-union shop laws in B.C.?

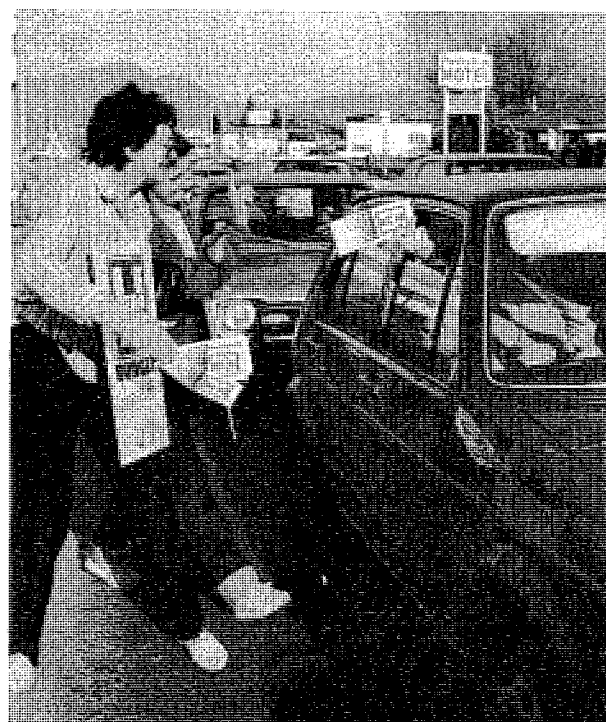
Answer: It is interesting to note that the pressure for such legislation does not ordinarily arise from workers seeking their so-called "Right to Work." Proponents of these measures are uniformly employers' organizations and related groups. In this province, the main group calling for anti-union shop laws is the Independent Contractors and Businessmen's Association of British Columbia — a group of extremely right-wing employers whose only aim is to create a pool of cheap labor.

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The Hospital Guardian, Summer Quarter, 1983/3



ZERO



It was roughly half way through the provincial election campaign and still there was no word from the government on health care funding.

The place was the Revelstoke Community Centre, site of a Socred rally featuring Premier Bennett as the keynote speaker.

Outside, the now familiar Dixie Land band waited to herald Bennett's arrival with a version of "Happy Days are Here Again."

Representatives of the media, who always arrived some 10 minutes in advance of the Premier, lingered around the doorway, hoping, waiting, and anticipating some tidbit of news to file to anxious editors.

On this night, April 20, they were not disappointed.

Out of the crowd emerged Jack Gerow, secretary-business manager of HEU.

He pushed his way past the Bennett bodyguards and finally reached the Premier. The band played on.

"Mr. Premier," said Gerow, "in light of recent reports from the B.C. Medical Association about the critical conditions in our hospitals right now, are you prepared to reconsider your zero budget option for hospitals and tell the people of British Columbia exactly what you have in mind for health care funding over the next four years?"

"Well Jack," the Premier answered, "I think you'll be very pleased with the budget we hand down after May 5."

"Is that a yes or no?," asked Gerow.

Bennett simply repeated his answer and broke through the crowd to enter the community centre.

There was a somewhat stunned reaction from those who witnessed the encounter. What exactly did the Premier mean? The Vancouver Sun

and BCTV reported that Bennett "hinted at increased health care funding."

HEU, on the other hand, maintained that, in essence, the Premier had said vote for me now, and I'll tell you later what my policies are.

Either way, it is long past May 5 and still we wait for some word on the future of health care funding.

But, while Bennett was able to successfully muddy the waters with his reply, some observers feel the health care issue was a thorny one for the Socreds throughout the 29-day election campaign.

In fact, HEU waged such an aggressive and high profile campaign on the health care issue that one prominent B.C. trade union leader claimed, "if it hadn't been for HEU, one would wonder whether we even had a trade union movement in British Columbia."

The "prominent" leader, who



BUDGET



asked to remain unnamed, was referring to the vast majority of unions that waged a quiet or, in most cases, non-existent campaign during the election.

HEU, in contrast, took what is generally accepted as the "high road" with a large scale public campaign focusing on the disastrous health care policies of the Socreds.

The first of these public rallies was in Prince George on April 8, just one day after the election writ was dropped. There, HEU members joined together with other trade unionists to protest the Social Credit policies on health care and unemployment. Chanting demonstrators dined at a soup-line outside the Prince George Holiday Inn while Premier Bennett addressed a \$100-a-plate group of supporters inside.

Bennett declined to come out and meet with the estimated 250 demonstrators saying he was too busy "on the phone running the government."

The next HEU "Zero Budget" event took place in Cranbrook where members set up an information booth at a local shopping mall to collect signatures on a petition which called for a restoration of health care funding.

Public response was overwhelming and within just a few hours more than 500 Cranbrook area residents had signed the petition.

From there, HEU organizers of the "Zero Budget" campaign moved on to Revelstoke to confront Bennett with his threat of a budget freeze on B.C. hospitals.

Similar demonstrations, or petition drives, were held in Kelowna, Vernon, Kamloops, Dewdney, Surrey, Vancouver, Victoria, and Duncan, to name just a few.



At no time during the campaign did HEU endorse any political party. Rather, the union's aim was to get all politicians running for office to declare publicly what they would do about the critical conditions facing B.C.'s hospitals.

And it was hoped that voters would consider these policies on voting day.

"We felt then, as we do now, that our credibility would have been severely reduced if we had become politically partisan," said Gerow in a review of the campaign.

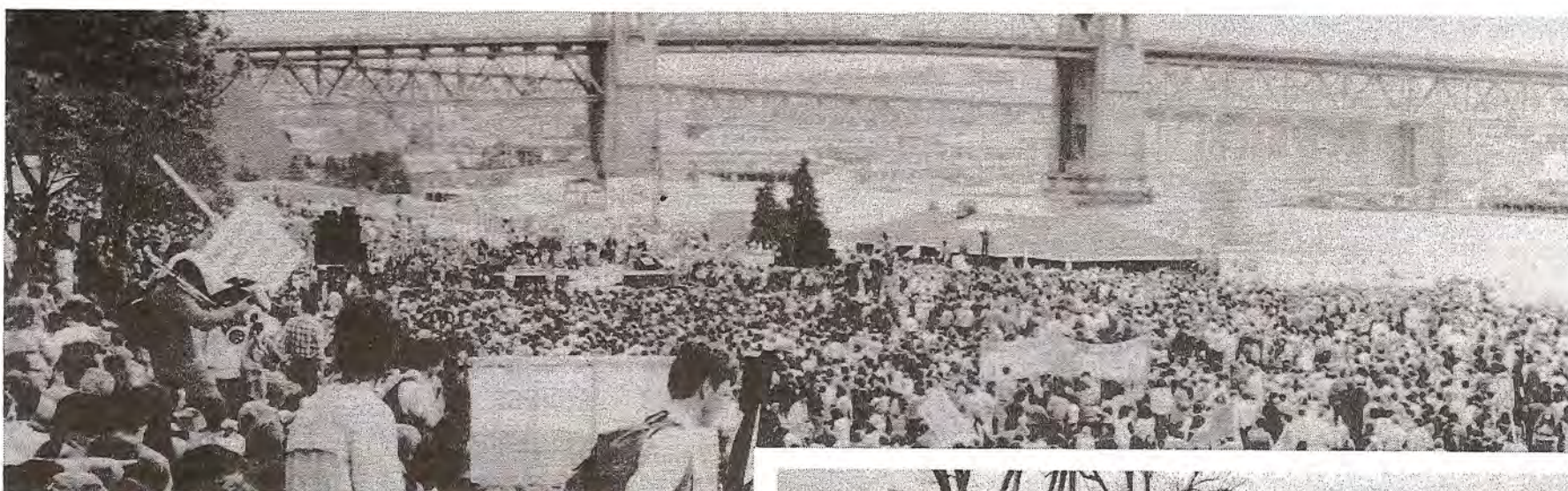
"Unquestionably, HEU was able to play a significant role during the campaign."

Gerow said Social Credit aides have admitted privately that their election strategy was thrown off course three times because of growing public concern about health care funding. As a result, the government was forced to put more than \$121 million into health care during the 29-day campaign.

Unfortunately, 90 per cent of that money was for capital construction projects and represents no new commitment to reopening closed beds or rehiring laid off workers.

Gerow said HEU will therefore continue its role as a vocal critic of government cutback policies. The union has asked for a meeting with the Premier to present the "Zero Budget" petitions and discuss the future of health care funding.





Unions have a roll to play

PEACE

They came in wheelchairs, on bicycles, rollerskates, crutches, and skateboards, wearing cowboy boots, runners, sandals, and Gucci shoes. They came as singles, couples, families, and friends. But, most of all, they came by the thousands.

Vancouver streets literally thronged with life April 23 when an estimated 80,000 British Columbians from every conceivable sector of society joined together to Walk for Peace.

It was the largest peace demonstration in Canadian history and its significance is still being felt and analysed across the country.

According to Frank Kennedy, president of the End the Arms Race Committee that organized the Walk for Peace, the event proved British Columbians are more concerned than ever about the escalating arms race.

Kennedy, who is also president of the Vancouver and District Labor Council, said the possibility of cruise missile testing in Canada has heightened the awareness and concern of Canadians.

"In addition to the insanity of our doomsday arsenals, I think that more people are beginning to see the social lunacy of billion-dollar arms budgets against a backdrop of mounting unemployment and human misery."

The Hospital Employees' Union endorsed the Walk for Peace and flew its own banner. Although membership attendance was not overwhelming, the entire provincial executive did participate in the three mile walk.

The decision to endorse the walk was made following the thirteenth biennial convention where delegates passed several resolutions in support of nuclear disarmament and in opposition to cruise missile testing in Canada.

Kennedy believes the trade union movement has an especially important role to play in the peace movement.

"Without question, the conversion of defense spending into other forms of public spending would go a long way towards eliminating much of the unemployment problem in Canada," said Kennedy.

"Between now and 1989 the U.S. will spend \$2 trillion on armaments. You can't take that kind of money out of the economy and expect to maintain full employment and social services."

In an effort to heighten the consciousness of all working people, many British Columbian trade



HEU members walk for peace in Prince George.



unions have joined together to form the Trade Union Peace Committee. Kennedy will be the chairman of the committee. Among its members are the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, the International Woodworkers of America, the Building Trades, the B.C. Teachers' Federation, the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees' Union, the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the Canadian Union of Postal Workers, and many others.

"You know, we can go out and negotiate good collective agreements for the membership," says Kennedy, "we can try and raise their standard of living, get better medical coverage for their families, and yet all of these efforts will be for naught if we end up in a nuclear holocaust."

And so, the first task of the Trade Union Peace Committee will be to expose the economic effects of the arms race.

Statistics show that the arms race is creating havoc on the economies of all countries. Defense spending does not, as is widely believed, act as an economic stimulus. In fact, war production creates far fewer jobs than equivalent expenditures on public services.

According to statistics from the U.S. Bureau of Labor, 76,000 jobs were created both directly and indirectly for each \$1 billion of military spending in 1979. It is estimated that the same \$1 billion provided 139,000 jobs in health services and 187,000 jobs in education.

A recent CUPE publication of "The Facts" pointed out that in Canada, most of our military hard-



ware is imported and the workers employed to build the arms are in the U.S. or abroad. Thus, the same expenditure in Canada provides significantly fewer jobs.

If we assume that the direct and indirect job loss is 50,000 for every \$1 billion in expenditures (a very modest estimate) then the \$7 billion Canada spent on defence in 1982-83 will amount to a loss of almost 350,000 jobs. It is not accidental that Japan, which has the lowest military budget per capita of the major industrial nations, also has the lowest unemployment rate.*

Yet the arms race continues at a faster rate than ever. New destabilizing weapons, such as the air-launched cruise missile, greatly increase the possibility of nuclear war in this century.

Canada is playing a major role in

this escalation of the arms race by planning to test the cruise missile later this year.

It remains questionable, however, whether Canada's participation in the arms race has resulted in the achievement of any progress towards the intangible concept of "security." If anything, it is increasing the very real danger of nuclear war. And, from an economic point of view, the cost of participating in this international competition is excessive.

Canadians have repeatedly signified their opposition to Canada's participation in the arms race. A recent national poll found that a majority of Canadians opposed the testing of the cruise missile in Canada. Furthermore, hundreds of thousands of Canadians registered their opposition in municipal referendums to a continuation of the arms race.

"It must be puzzling to all democratically minded Canadians," said Kennedy, "to watch a federal government pursue policies so directly contrary to the wishes of the electorate."

So it would appear that the solution to the problem will have to come from the ballot box as more and more Canadians vote for those candidates who do support a policy aimed at bringing an end to the arms race.

It was Dwight D. Eisenhower who said, "Some day the demand for disarmament by hundreds and millions of people will become so universal and insistent that no person, no nation, can withstand it."

*Source: The Facts, published by CUPE

The shocking reality of PORNOGRAPHY

By Michael Kieran

It's called porno, smut, girly mags, blue movies.

But there are no affectionate kisses, no warm hugs, no gentle caresses — just fierce contact, studied indifference and an undercurrent of tension.

And now, a disturbing trend toward graphic depictions of violence.

Not the psychological violence, which feminists say causes women to be viewed as objects, not just the so-called sexual violence of rape, but real hitting, kicking, biting, stabbing, whipping, torture and, in some cases, death.

And, as the message conveyed by pornography becomes increasingly violent, it is routinely portraying ever-younger participants, a trend one sociologist describes as "a horrifying breakdown of our species' ability to nurture its young."

Maude Barlow, president of the Canadian Coalition Against Media Violence, said in an interview: "There are two underlying themes in recent pornography: a trend towards using children as sexual partners and a trend toward increasingly horrible violence against women. There's nothing new about violence against women; it's been there all along. But it's never been so prolific or accepted as now."

Child abuse experts told an Ontario social development committee in February that about 10 per cent of the \$1-billion-a-year U.S. pornography industry is dependent on the sexual exploitation of children. The experts produced statistics showing that one in four girls and one in 10 boys are victims of some form of molestation by an adult before the age of 18, although psychologists continue to argue over whether viewing violent pornography incites or inhibits sexual violence.

To many sociologists, and most feminists, these trends are indicative of the real dynamic of pornography, which reflects an underlying physical or psychological domination rather than good, healthy eroticism.

Deep antagonism

They see violent pornography as symptomatic of a deeper malaise in society, a sickness that is robbing the vitality of our civilization by imbuing men, women and children with a deep antagonism for and fear of one another.

"Pornography is a socially isolating phenomenon, so it's no coincidence that it's rampant at a time of economic distress and high unemployment, a time of cultural breakdown," Barlow said.

"It's personally humiliating for a lot of women when the men in their lives use pornography. It's very degrading at a deep personal level."

A sampling of hard-core magazines and videotapes displayed at a recent Toronto City Hall conference on pornography showed how deeply it now permeates our culture.

Many of the participants left pale

and shaken after viewing scenes of bondage, rape, gang rape, incest, bestiality, wounding and genital mutilation.

"But what was particularly shocking," Barlow said, "was that most such material was hidden in plain brown paper wrappers just a few years ago. Now it can be purchased openly at the corner grocery store."

Sergeant Larry Texeira, a member of the joint Metro Toronto Police-Ontario Provincial Police anti-pornography squad, said in an interview that he occasionally finds hard-core pornographic magazines tucked away behind Playboy and Penthouse on the shelves of local variety stores.

More explicit

"Violence in general is beginning to pervade the magazines and videotapes we see. There have been quite a few so-called snuff films around recently, in which someone is actually mutilated or killed on screen."

Stressing that he is not a psychologist, Sgt. Texeira said that after working for a year on Project P, he now believes the reason pornography is becoming ever more explicit in its depiction of violence is that people develop a tolerance to the acts they've already seen.

"There's so much (violent pornography) available right now that, if you want to capture a share of the market, you have to go one step beyond what everyone else is doing. It's a competitive industry, a very big market."

The office from which Sgt. Texeira and three other police officers monitor the flow of smut in Ontario features a collection of videotapes and magazines with such titles as *Bondage Digest*, *Spanking Review*, and the *Encyclopedia of Deviant Sex*.

A particular problem with videotapes, he said, is that "there's no age limit on it. In theory, a 12-year-old child can go into a retail store and rent a tape that couldn't be shown uncut in a theatre."

Having seen everything from girly mags to torture movies, Sgt. Texeira said he agrees with feminists who claim pornography degrades women.

Barlow says: "We used to think that pornography represented an opening up of sexual values, that it was the opposite to sexual repression. Now we see that porn is not the opposite of sexual oppression, it's the completion of it. It's what misogyny is all about. It has nothing to do with sex or love between two people."

The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a recent statement to the Canadian Radio Television and Telecommunications Commission, said pornography is not simply a matter of freedom of choice in entertainment, because "nowhere in a civilized society does freedom include the right to exploit other human beings."

The statement, in response to CRTC plans to allow pay-TV



operators to set voluntary standards for broadcasting sexually explicit films, said: "While pornography diminishes all human beings, its history has been one of victimizing women and children in particular, both as objects of sexual distortion and victims of violence following in pornography's wake."

Profit motive

Barlow said pornography's recent shift toward explicit violence and sexual exploitation of children has been caused in part by the proliferation of video technology and the lure of large profits. "We'll never do away with some people's desire to look at this sort of thing. But when you have it in the local corner store, where little kids go to buy bread and milk, it reflects an underlying despair and brutalization that is evidence of something very wrong with our society."

Helen Laffontaine, a member of the coalition against violence, said in an interview that the traditional feminist view is that anti-female bias in society is a direct consequence of the political, economic and religious institution called patriarchy. But she added that the historical trend toward violence against women must be considered if society is to find a cure for this self-destructive sickness.

"Violence against women has been a consistent feature of human society for at least 5,000 years, and is sanctioned in ancient Sunnarian and Babylonian legal codes. But the expression of it that we see now in the mass media is frighteningly new, as is the shameless exploitation of children's sexuality."

Criminal Code amendments that would have banned kiddie-porn were introduced last year by Jean Chretien, then justice minister, as part of a bill that replaced rape offences with provisions for sexual assault.

The law would have made it illegal to publish or distribute sexually explicit photographs of anyone under 18 or apparently under 18. The onus was on the distributor to prove that the person in the photo was an adult.

The amendments were supported by Most Rev. Henri Legare, president of the Canadian Confer-

ence of Catholic Bishops, who called kiddie-porn "a repugnant assault on the dignity and integrity of the child."

Changes stalled

But the amendments failed to receive approval from the House of Commons justice committee, and died on the order paper when they were separated from the sexual assault amendments.

MP Lynn McDonald (NDP Broadview-Greenwood) said recent research has disproved the commonly held belief that the availability of violent pornography reduces the incidence of sexual offences by providing an outlet for men's aggressive impulses.

Earlier research, especially studies conducted in the 1970s in Scandinavian countries following the liberalization of sexually explicit materials there, dealt only with erotica and not with violent pornography. In an interview, McDonald, a sociologist, said the new research is showing that men who view films and magazines which depict violence against women are more likely to commit such acts than men shown materials that are sexually explicit but not violent.

"Because they are based on sex, rather than on violence, our current obscenity laws are clearly inadequate."

One problem is that the attorneys-general of each of the 10 provinces apply different guidelines in prosecuting possible violations.

Justice Minister Mark MacGuigan said last month he intends "to take steps to reformulate our approach to obscenity, to capture forms of degrading expression which are fundamentally opposed to the values of our society and thereby, I hope, to cure the problems which I perceive in our existing system of censorship."

He did not specify how or when the Criminal Code would be amended.

Chretien's proposed changes drew loud objections from various groups — artists, magazine distributors, book publishers, writers, and librarians — who thought that the child pornography provisions were far too broad.

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The Hospital Guardian, Summer Quarter, 1983/7



We're plunging into a full scale depression

by John Calvert

Since the mid-1970s, the Canadian economy has been going downhill. Unemployment has increased dramatically. Officially, there are now more than 1.5 million workers, or almost 13 per cent of the labor force, out of work.

When we add to this figure the large numbers of discouraged workers no longer "officially" counted, women who have been forced back into the home because there are no jobs, part-time workers who would prefer full-time jobs, and students unable to find employment, the real figure is closer to two million.

Not only are growing numbers of Canadians out of work, but the standard of living of those who have jobs has dropped by between 10 and 20 per cent in the past seven years, depending on the sector of the economy in which they are employed. Moreover, the federal 6 and 5 per cent wage restraint program, along with its provincial counterparts, will reduce real wages by another 10 per cent by 1984.

REAL WAGES
Average Weekly Earnings for all Paid Employees
in Constant (4th Quarter 1976) Dollars
in the 4th Quarter of Each Year

1976	\$237.98	
1977	\$229.62	— 3.5%
1978	\$223.54	— 2.6%
1979	\$219.28	— 1.9%
1980	\$214.92	— 2.0%
1981	\$213.80	— 0.5%

Source: Statistics Canada

The economic crisis has been used as an excuse for major cuts in the social wage in recent years. Government funding for hospitals, schools, universities, municipal works, day care, social agencies and other public services has been sharply curtailed. Cuts in services constitute another major component of the reduction in the living standards of Canadians.

Our manufacturing industry has been devastated by the present crisis. Hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs have been lost since the mid-1970s. Layoffs and plant closures are announced virtually every day. The manufacturing industry is working at only 68 per cent capacity and shows few signs of recovery.

Investment down, too

Investment, too, is down. The growing depression has dried up markets, left firms with unused capacity and, therefore, undermined the justification for new investments. Without the prospect of a market for the goods which would be produced with new machinery and plant facilities, employers are reluctant to expand their productive capacity. Moreover, the investments which are being made are increasingly focussed on cutting labor costs, reducing staff and streamlining operations.

Yet despite the devastation wrought to our industrial structure, inflation remains high, and interest rates, while lower than last summer, are still excessive by any reasonable standards.

The deteriorating economy has also brought with it a crisis in government finance at all levels of the public sector. The costs of programs such as Unemployment Insurance, welfare and social services have skyrocketed as unemployment lineups have lengthened.

Rising unemployment has also contributed to a shortfall in government revenues as the number of taxpayers declines. The combination of falling revenues and rising expenditure obligations has resulted in soaring government deficits and now poses a real threat to the very existence of basic social programs such as medicare and post-secondary education.



Sinking into depression

In short, there can be no doubt that the Canadian economy is sinking into a full-scale depression — a depression comparable to that of the 1930s.

The recurring boom-and-bust cycle of the free enterprise economy has lapsed into its "bust" phase again.

Government measures to control fluctuations in the business cycle, both nationally and internationally, have become less and less effective. In a very real sense, the system is out of control.

In the face of this growing depression, it is clear that action is urgently needed to turn the economy around. Yet, the policies currently being followed by federal and provincial governments are very unlikely to provide the kind of solution that Canadians need.

The Hospital Guardian, Summer Quarter, 1983/8



The policies of depression

It is frequently asserted that federal and provincial governments are mismanaging the economy and do not have any idea of how to deal with the crisis. This is not so.

They do have a clearly defined strategy. This strategy is to try to promote economic recovery by bolstering business confidence and stimulating private investment. It assumes that a more "favorable climate" for business will lead to new investment and the restoration of economic growth.

To implement this strategy, governments have taken a number of measures which assist investors by transferring the full costs of the current crisis to workers. Indeed, many of the economic problems faced by Canadians — rising unemployment, falling living standards, wage controls and declining public services — are actually viewed by governments as part of the "solution" to the crisis!

The reasons are clear. To promote business confidence and provide private investors with the capital for new investment, a major shift in income distribution is being pursued. According to business and government economists, working people must be persuaded — or forced — to sacrifice a significant part of their income so that companies can increase profits. This, in turn, will provide more cash for private sector investors, who are viewed as the key actors in future economic recovery.

Accordingly, governments have adopted regressive social and economic policies designed to improve profitability by lowering Canadians' living standards and job security. Corporate taxes have been reduced and, in some cases, eliminated. Subsidies, grants, forgivable loans, and other financial support for business have been expanded. There are now more than 300 federal government corporate assistance programs. Regulations restricting the anti-social behavior of corporations, such as pollution control and consumer protection, have been relaxed.

Services being slashed

Public and social services are also being ruthlessly cut. This is part of a business-inspired program to trim the size of the public sector and thus provide more room and more resources for private sector expansion.

The savings generated from cutting old age pensions, family allowances, U.I.C. benefits, and other income support programs are seen as necessary to enable governments to reduce business taxes, expand corporate grants and subsidies, and pay for the growing number of corporate bail-outs.

The tax system has also been made much more regressive in recent years. Working Canadians are paying more, while affluent investors are paying significantly less. The November 1981 federal budget reduced the top marginal tax rate on the highest income earners from 62 per cent to 50 per cent. This provided an average tax "saving" of over \$5,600 to those earning over \$100,000 a year. The June 1982 budget gave investors a major tax break by providing for full indexation of capital gains, even though half the money received from capital gains is already exempt from tax.

However, the same budget treated wage-earners very differently. Personal income tax rates were partially de-indexed. This has the result of increasing the effective rate of taxation on wage and salary earners by a substantial amount.

In short, the tax system has been drastically revamped to enable wealthy investors to reduce their taxes while simultaneously forcing those who work for a living to pay more.

The unemployed

Unemployment has also been deliberately increased to assist business in reducing labor costs and restructuring production. This has been done both by cutting government programs and by adhering to tight money and high interest rate policies. High unemployment creates insecurity among those who still have jobs. It tends to undermine the bargaining power of unions, and thus facilitates the wage rollbacks and take-aways which the corporations see as vital to reducing labor costs.

Finally, governments have imposed controls legislation — forcibly — to transfer income from workers to the corporate sector. Despite the rhetoric about reducing inflation, the underlying purpose of controls, both federally and provincially, has been to assist corporations to cut labor costs and weaken unions. This was explicitly admitted by the (then) President of the Treas-

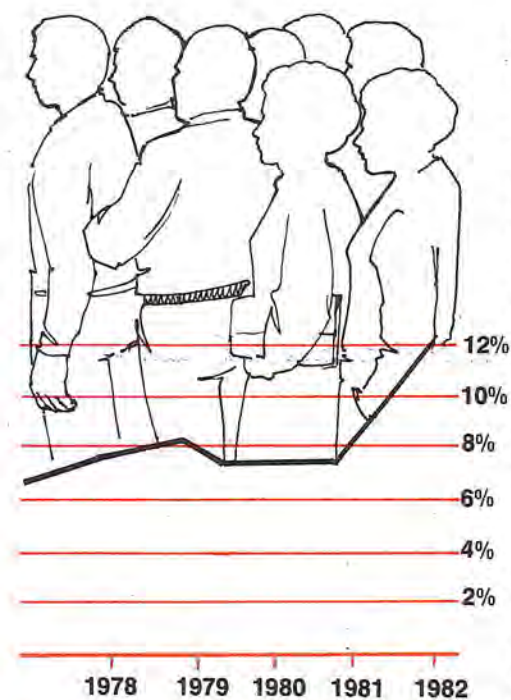
economy crisis



ury Board, Donald Johnston, at a *Financial Post* conference last September:

"Wage controls were imposed in the federal public sector because employers in the private sector said they could not reduce wages unless the federal government set an example that would lead the way."

UNEMPLOYMENT RATE



By creating a climate of fear and insecurity among their employees, the corporations believe they will have a free hand to restructure production on the basis of harsh worker discipline, more speed-ups, and the introduction of new technology.

When viewed in terms of the overall thrust of government policy, the recent controls legislation falls into place as yet another tool used to transfer income from workers to investors. Controls are thus not a stupid, irrational or foolish policy from the viewpoint of corporate investors. Rather, they are designed to shift the full burden of the economic crisis to workers, while at the same time, facilitating corporate restructuring financed by this redistribution of income.

When reduced to its most basic form, the "solution" to our growing depression advocated by the corporate sector is quite simple. Give private corporations a completely free hand to restructure the economy as they see fit. We are being asked to accept a return to the days of unfettered capitalism, when the Robber Barons were free to gouge consumers, exploit workers, and pollute the environment without interference from governments or unions.

Abolition of unions

This solution has a particular significance for unions. For when carried to its logical extreme, the thrust of this solution is to abolish unions entirely. By their very existence, unions pose a threat to the "favorable investment climate" which business wants. Thus the intent of the solution advocated by business is to drastically weaken unions, or to abolish them entirely, so that there will be no impediment to the reorganization of production.

In short, federal and provincial governments have adopted the basic components of Thatcherism and Reaganomics.

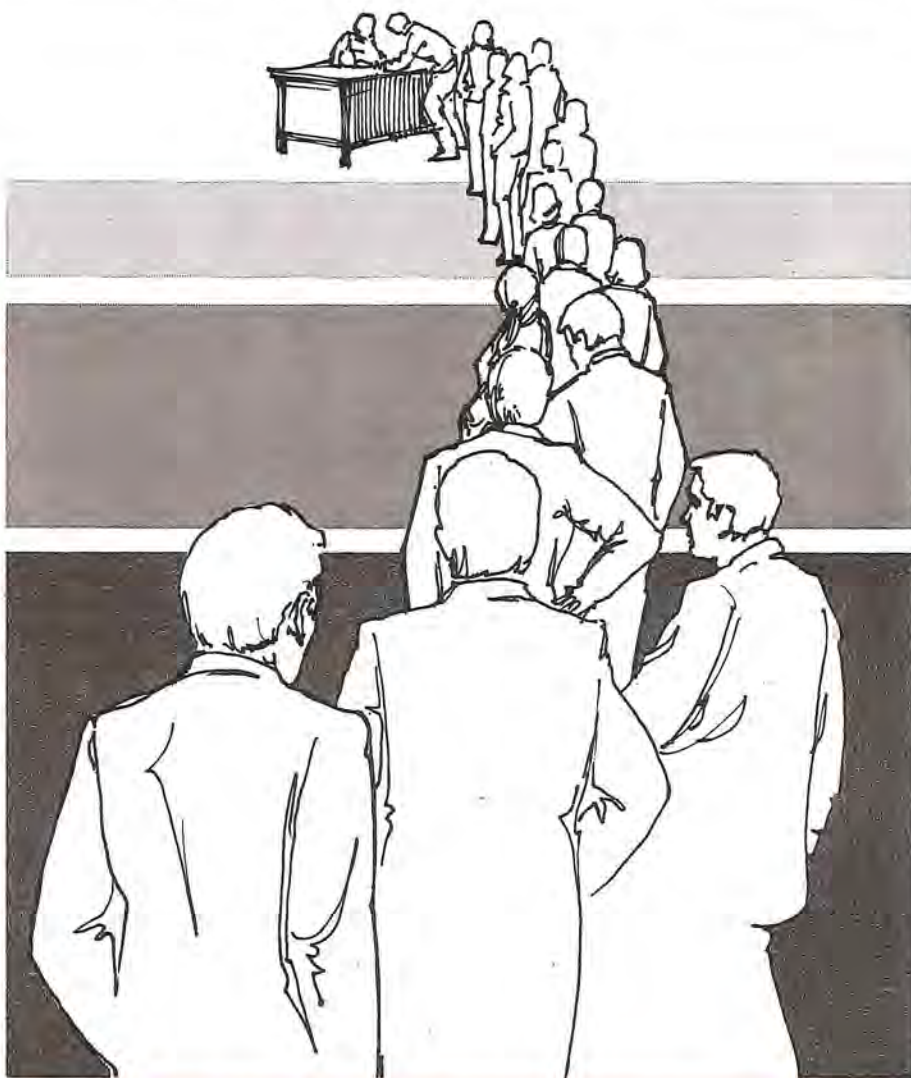
While the preceding policies will undoubtedly assist investors to survive the current depression, they provide absolutely *no guarantee* that wage earners will enjoy improved living standards in the future. In fact, the remedies advocated by business to overcome the crisis — lower living standards, deteriorating public services, wage controls, contract concessions and rising unemployment — are the very same issues which workers define as the problems.

The logic of the corporate solution to the economic crisis is to give even more of society's resources to the same companies who have been responsible for our growing economic malaise. It is a policy which has been followed now for almost a decade. It has failed to bring the recovery promised by business. Quite the contrary, it has pushed our economy even closer to the brink of a full-scale depression.

For the fact is that the corporate solution has no mechanism for ensuring that increased profits will be invested in Canada. Business will invest wherever the rate of return appears most favorable. As companies, like Inco, have too often demonstrated, profits made in Canada are often invested overseas at the expense of Canadian industry and Canadian jobs.

Sudbury, Ontario and Thompson, Manitoba have been turned into economic wastelands because Inco has used the enormous profits of its Canadian operations to open new mines in Indonesia and Guatemala, and to buy a battery company in the United States. At the same time that thousands of layoff notices have been given to Canadian workers, Inco is announcing that it is building a new nickel refinery in Taiwan.

Because so many "Canadian" corporations are foreign-controlled in the first place, additional profits made in Canada will be invested on the basis of the parent corporation's world strategy. They will not be invested according to the needs of working Canadians whose enforced sacrifices have generated the profits in the first place. This is exactly what happened in the late 1970s when the boom in profits led to an enormous outflow of capital abroad.



Distorted economic pattern

Even if the extra profits were reinvested in the Canadian economy, which is doubtful, this would still provide no guarantee that the distorted pattern of economic development which has been created by market (and monopoly) forces in the Canadian economy since the Second World War would be rectified. Indeed, by avoiding the need to carry out basic structural changes in our economy, this approach actually impedes the development of a real solution.

We need investment which will create jobs. We need investment which will rebuild our manufacturing sector and enhance our position in certain high technology areas. We need investment designed to enable us to process our resources in Canada. And we need investment in areas which will satisfy the many unmet social needs of Canadians.

Reliance on private investments has failed to address these problems in the past and will continue to fail in the future. As the record shows, private investment will be channelled into real estate speculation, resource extraction, banking, insurance, foreign currency speculation, overseas investments and other ventures which provide few jobs and fail to address the serious structural problems of our economy. The impact of the world-wide technological revolution in eliminating jobs will greatly compound the adverse effects of allowing private firms free rein to restructure the economy.

Placing more resources in the hands of the private investors who are responsible for the current economic mess provides no answer whatsoever for the growing economic problems faced by working Canadians.

However advantageous the im-

poverishment of workers may be for corporate investors, it is clearly not the kind of solution that is desired by the vast majority of Canadians.

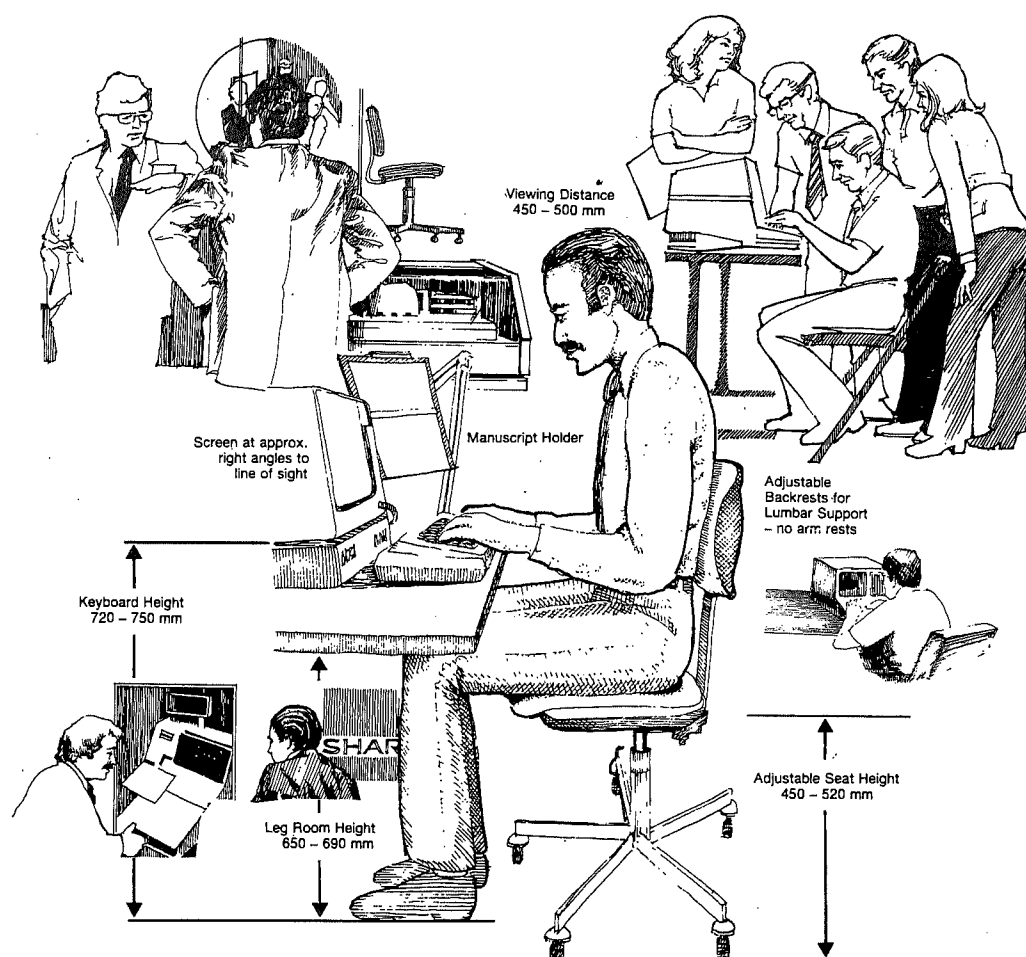
A new economic strategy will have to be more than a series of band-aid proposals designed to patch up some of the most glaring abuses of the present situation. The crisis is too serious, and too far-reaching, to be resolved by such measures. Indeed, to suggest that minor adjustments in government spending and taxation policies will have any impact on the growing depression is to strain the credibility of most Canadians.

What we need is not a grab-bag of ad hoc and temporary measures. Rather, we require a carefully thought-out, comprehensive plan which will address the root causes of our economic problems. In short, we need an *Alternate Economic Strategy*.

This strategy must constitute a clear break with past and present economic policies. It must confront the serious structural and economic problems we face in an honest and creative way. It must state what needs to be done, even if the remedies outlined are not popular at present. And it must challenge, directly, the prevailing argument propounded by business interests that the only way to resolve the crisis is to give private investors a completely free hand to restructure the economy according to *their* priorities.

The next quarterly edition of *The Guardian* will outline a proposed Ten Point Recovery program.

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Technological change playing havoc in the workplace

Workers and their machines

By Suzanne Fournier

Worker's control

Ergonomics is a computer-age word meaning the study of how human beings interact with machines in the workplace. The goal of ergonomics should be to adapt the workplace to suit the worker. But to the employers who greeted the computer age by simply whisking away typewriters and putting video display terminals in their place with little thought to input from workers as to their design and use — ergonomics has too often come to mean the science of forcing workers to adjust to machines.

There can be no replacement for adequate worker input into the timing and nature of technological change. Studies have demonstrated — in line with common sense — that the worker who has control over his or her job and workplace experiences fewer health problems, both psychological and physical. Yet the introduction of the video display terminal was accomplished by employers all over the world — there are more than half a million in use today in Canada alone — with little consultation with workers. There was even less consideration for the strain on workers caused not only by the forced adjustment to new technology but also by employers' widespread lack of attention to workplace design.

Workplace design

In Canada, there is no legislation to govern VDT workplace design. Private members' bills have been introduced in the Ontario and B.C. provincial legislatures (by NDP member Richard Johnston, and in B.C. by MLA Karen Sanford) but met with little success. No B.C. employer is bound by a set of industrial health and safety regulations such as those which apply to most forms of equipment in constant use in the workplace, such as lifting devices, forklifts, scaffolds, saws and electrical

tools. In Vancouver, trade unionists interested in proposing Industrial Health & Safety Regulations for VDTs, to be enforced by the Workers' Compensation Board, have begun to draft a proposed set of regulations to cover VDT workplace design.

The Occupational Environment Branch of the B.C. labor ministry, working closely with a number of unions and employers in Vancouver work sites such as the Pacific Press Building, has produced a booklet on the ergonomics of VDT workplace design, which is reasonably comprehensive. But the OEB has no power to enforce regulations for a workplace design; and, in fact, the union in at least one workplace where the OEB issued a set of recommendations for improvement in VDT workstation design has found the OEB has little or no force in compelling employers to act.

Workers' Compensation Board inspectors will visit a workplace where VDTs are in use in response to a request from a union. Their recommendations customarily are confined to the maintenance of the VDTs. Inspectors from the WCB seldom deal in a satisfactory manner with workers' complaints about possible radiation-related health problems. In Scandinavian and some European jurisdictions, regulations related to ergonomic design of the VDT workplace include reference to the possible emission of ionizing and non-ionizing radiation by VDTs, requiring that the machines be regularly tested by a thorough and non-biased examiner and found to emit no detectable levels of radiation.

Ergonomic hazards

The complaints of workers about VDTs are widespread: Where a poorly-designed VDT is in use, workers report health problems. From the earliest introduction of the machines to the present, workers have reported the following health problems:

- Irritated, heavy, dry, burning

eyes, characterized by redness, itching and general discomfort;

- Neck and back pain, as well as muscular aches in the arms and wrists;
- Headaches, particularly above the eyes, and on other occasions non-localized pain, or tension held in the face, head and shoulders;
- Loss of the ability to focus the eyes, including double vision, seeing blurred images or fuzzy-edged, color-fringed images, and night blindness;
- Dizziness and nausea;
- Changes in eyeglass prescription, requiring eyeglasses for the first time, an inability to wear contact lenses or bifocal lens glasses while at work;
- Stress, irritability and chronic fatigue.

Strain and fatigue

The problems experienced by VDT operators are by no means confined to those people in less-than-peak health conditions. Even workers in good health seem to experience fatigue, even after visual and postural problems have been cleared up. The VDT operators' psychological and physiological fatigue, as well as the general body fatigue experienced by any other worker, may be due to the fact most VDT operators are required to sit in a sustained position, for an entire work day, while straining to see clearly and maintain a static posture. The prolonged attention to visual detail, with little eye movement, in a relatively tiny visual VDT field, produces fatigue and severe eye strain.

The human body is designed for movement, so a fixed posture held in place over an entire work day can be more tiring than a dynamic posture. Similarly, the eyes are not functioning at an optimum level when they are staring at a small field of vision, with little or no auditory stimulation or opportunity to refresh the line of sight.

This can lead to more aggravated health problems. Difficulties in seeing are commonly compensated for

by faulty work postures that then give rise to muscle fatigue. And if your muscles can't hold a fixed posture for you all day, then your eyes have to do extra work, becoming even more strained.

So VDT work is inherently productive of strain and fatigue, quite aside from the VDT workplace anxieties generated by concerns about adverse health effects from radiation, lack of control over one's job, fear of redundancy caused by the machines' introduction, monitoring of work performance and supervision by machines — all of which combine to produce stress. That does not mean that VDT work cannot be controlled to a greater degree by workers, through their unions, to achieve a more comfortable and bearable environment. There are measures employers should be forced to introduce which would greatly alleviate the adverse health effects now suffered by most VDT operators.

What studies show

There have been many studies of VDT ergonomics and workers' complaints. The U.S. National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) reported after a recent case-control study: "Clerical operators show much higher levels of visual, musculo-skeletal and emotional health complaints, as well as higher job-related stress levels, than both control subjects and professionals using VDTs." One of the first and leading VDT researchers, Olov Ostberg of the University of Sweden, presented the results of a Swedish study showing that 75 per cent of VDT operators complain of eye strain, 55 per cent of back and shoulder pain, 35 per cent of head and neck pain, 25 per cent of arm and wrist pain and 15 per cent of leg pain. The length of time spent on a VDT is crucial to the degree of fatigue, eyestrain and musculo-skeletal pain. As the Labour Research Department (LRD), a British trade union-sponsored research group, reported: "After two hours' work, VDT operators become more myopic (nearsighted) for relatively distant objects and more hyperopic (farsighted) for relatively near objects ... After four-hour work periods on VDTs with breaks included, a temporary myopia (nearsightedness) was induced and it took 10 to 15 minutes to gain good vision after the work had finished."

Many VDT-related health problems can be alleviated slightly or considerably with better lighting, improved machine design and adjustability, and better workstation design. However, the importance of limited work periods and frequent rest breaks is crucial, and has been supported in virtually every thorough study. Four hours per day is the recommended time limit suggested by most researchers, who have found that efficiency falls off markedly and eyestrain and fatigue increase dramatically past the four-hour daily time limit on a VDT. The British LRD also recommends limits on the hours that may be worked per week or month, a finding mirrored in many British unions' collective agreements.

The recent federal Task Force on Microelectronics and Employment, headed by Dr. Margaret Fulton, urged that workers be required to work no more than 5 hours per day, as did the Ontario labor ministry task force headed by Dr. G. Stopps. Frequent rest breaks are also important, as much as 15 minutes per hour; and the VDT operator should be encouraged to get up and move around to rest the eyes and muscles in those breaks.

Sitting in poorly-designed seats for long periods, without periods of rest and movement, can cause fatigue of calf, thigh and back muscles. It can also cause pooling of blood in the veins of the upper leg, possibly leading to varicose veins and hemorrhoids. The solution is limited work periods on the VDT, and varied work functions.

Adjustable stations

The key to proper VDT work station design is adjustability. Unfortunately, most contemporary VDTs and office furniture have not been properly designed and it is only recently that manufacturers have begun to respond to unions' demands for worker-centered VDT workplace design. Now, several manufacturers have begun to make VDTs and work stations that are completely adjustable, even to the location of the terminal itself on a swivel stand. The specifications for work stations that are ergonomically-sound are provided to many unions and are becoming a top-priority item in collective bargaining demands and through health and safety committees.

In the surrounding environment in a VDT workplace, backgrounds should have a lot of free movement.

Distracting patterns should be removed. Surfaces should be painted matte pastels or soft gray, to cut down on light reflection, and no sources of light should cross the VDT operator's vision or fall or reflect on his/her VDT screen. Temperature and humidity are also important, since VDTs can emit heat of a degree high enough to demand increased ventilation. Concentration by the VDT operator often leads to a reduction in the eye-blink rate, and a lack of humidity will further dry out the secretions on the surface of the eye, increasing irritation.

Static electricity, from electromagnetic radiation fields generated by the VDT can cause rashes on the operator's face and neck, which can be only partly alleviated through measures such as draft-free ventilation, avoiding overcrowding of VDTs in the workplace, and maintaining a constant relative-humidity level of about 50 to 70 per cent. Grounding of the VDTs reduces some of the electromagnetic field (primarily it is the electric field that can be reduced or eliminated, since there are only less reliably-tested metal alloy shields to reduce the magnetic field). Cleaning of the VDT with anti-static solutions and anti-static floor mats can also help to alleviate the tingling and rashes caused by static electricity.

Remedies for health problems caused by poor work station design include:

- VDTs with adjustable screens, located on a swivel stand;
- VDTs with detachable keyboards;
- Properly designed chairs that provide sufficient back support and may be adjusted to the size and preference of individual operators;
- Adjustable desks, with adequate work space, of a height to accommodate a keyboard height of 720 to 750 mm above the floor; providing minimum leg-room height between 650 and 690 mm; and leg-clearance space between thigh and desk between 170 and 200 mm for easy access in and out of the work place;
- Document holders, adjustable and placed next to the VDT screen at a similar angle, distance and height to the screen to minimize bending and twisting of the head and neck, and to reduce eye adjustments and reflected glare;
- Foot rests, adjustable in height from 0 to 50 mm and inclination, from 10 to 15 degrees;
- Hand rests, so that wrists are in line with the forearm, as cocking the wrists up may lead to wrist problems;
- Correct posture, with arms held horizontally at a 90 degree angle

from the elbow; head slightly inclined forward to follow the natural curve of the spine; spine fairly straight with the backrest supporting the lower back and pelvis; abdomen naturally tucked in with an upright spine; thighs at a 90 degree angle from the pelvis resting horizontally; and feet flat on the floor, not wrapped around each other as this compresses the soft tissue of the thighs and calves, diminishing blood flow.

VDT stress

The severe stress caused by VDT work, due to constant eye strain, headache and muscular aches and pains, can also be alleviated. Worker action through unions is the most effective way to reduce stress and to eliminate the conditions which cause it. Workers should seek these remedies to VDT-related stress:

- Control the visual and physical hazards of VDT work by altering machine design to suit operators. Insist on improvements to office furniture and work station environment and configuration. Introduce rest breaks, and insist on adequate ventilation and humidity and an end to over-crowding. Employer-devised monitoring through machines must also be eliminated.

Practical Nurses under attack

Concern over the elimination of licensed practical nurse positions at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital has prompted the Nanaimo unit to form a "Save the PNs Committee."

After an initial meeting, the PNs kicked off their campaign with a demonstration outside the hospital on May 6 where they wore their "Save the PN" buttons.

At the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital, PN positions are being eliminated and their job functions are being performed by long term care attendants and by registered nurses. It is the feeling of the PNs in Nanaimo that there is room in the health care field for all three nursing levels.

Recent statistics from the B.C. Council of Practical Nurses are also a cause for some concern. These statistics show that the number of PNs in British Columbia has been steadily declining for the past seven years. A large percentage of these nurses were or are members of the Hospital Employees' Union.

Since the May 6 demonstration, PNs at Nanaimo have also taken the following steps to ensure that other health care workers and the public are made aware of the situation:

- the committee presented a brief to the hospital's board of trustees on June 6
 - they are responding to the hospital's comments in the press regarding the May 6 demonstration
 - they are writing letters to the editor of the local newspaper and encouraging others to follow
 - they will be preparing a newsletter for distribution to the public and a petition to be presented to the health ministry
 - they are meeting with management at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital to have their job descriptions updated to reflect the skills taught to the PN
 - they intend to grieve every position which is eliminated until the present situation is reversed.
- The committee says it intends to continue its campaign until PN training is recognized and their skills utilized to the fullest capacity.



PN plight ignored by government

The following is a position statement from the Licensed Practical Nurses Association of B.C. annual meeting in Vernon, B.C., on May 4, 1983.

The attempted demise of the LPN has been in effect since 1976, through attrition and job elimination, and other methods. The Licensed Practical Nurses Association of B.C. has been aware of this problem from the onset. The Association attempted to intercede on behalf of the LPN by compiling statistics, writing to Ministers involved and the Premier informing them of the problem. We feel our plight has been ignored. In June 1982, cut-backs in the provincial government

budget to hospitals had a devastating effect on the health care system and the health care givers.

The LPN has been traditionally the bedside nurse. In the past, registered nurses and practical nurses have complimented each other's skills by working together to the benefit of the most important member of the health care system, the patient.

With the new preoccupation with baccalaureate degrees for all nurses before entering the nursing field, the LPN will become obsolete and the cost of hospital care will escalate.

Specialization will become the norm. Ideals will be the priority and

the patient, for which hospitals were created, will suffer the consequences.

The training and retraining for other occupations will put stress on an already burdened education budget.

Proper utilization of nursing staff has been the main problem with most hospitals. LPNs and RNs are not allowed by certain nursing administrations to utilize the skills for which they were trained. Due to this practice, hospital costs to the public rise as more people are required to handle the jobs which could be completed if staff were utilized properly.

1982 Audited Financial Statement

Balance Sheet

Assets			Liabilities		
CURRENT	1982	1981	CURRENT	1982	1981
Cash	\$ 331,507	\$ 503,148	Accounts payable	\$ 474,849	\$ 347,123
Term deposits	1,200,000	1,200,000	Due to Defence Fund	1,000,000	895,750
Dues and accrued interest receivable	419,202	441,483	Due to Severance Pay Trust Fund	34,646	—
Prepaid expenses	80,810	71,891	Due to Political Education Fund	100,000	97,754
Due from Severance Pay Trust Fund	—	3,960	Due to Building Fund	425,015	—
	<u>2,031,519</u>	<u>2,220,482</u>		<u>2,034,510</u>	<u>1,340,627</u>
Death Benefit Fund, cash	10,000	10,000	Due to Building Fund	—	425,015
Severance Pay Trust Fund (Note 2)	218,612	195,230	Severance Pay Trust Fund (Note 2)	253,258	191,270
Cash, term deposits and accrued interest	34,646	(3,960)	Due to Oneight Holdings Ltd.	116,321	118,321
Due from (to) General Fund	<u>253,258</u>	<u>191,270</u>		<u>2,404,089</u>	<u>2,075,233</u>
Investments, at cost					
Oneight Holdings Ltd., shares	9	9			
Victoria Building Co-operative Union, shares	29,849	29,849			
	<u>29,858</u>	<u>29,858</u>			
Fixed, at cost					
Office furniture, fixtures and equipment	172,662	154,160			
Less: Accumulated depreciation	96,130	82,796			
	<u>76,532</u>	<u>71,364</u>			
Leasehold improvements, less amortization	23,057	28,595			
	<u>99,589</u>	<u>99,959</u>			
	<u>\$2,424,224</u>	<u>\$2,551,569</u>			

Reserve

Retained for the continuation of the Union's activities:		
Appropriated — Death Benefit Fund	10,000	10,000
Unappropriated		
Balance at beginning of year, as previously reported	477,818	643,672
Prior period adjustment for wage settlement (Note 4)	(11,482)	—
Balance at beginning of year, as restated	466,336	643,672
Excess of revenue over expenses (expenses over revenue) for the year	(325,947)	6,002
	<u>140,389</u>	<u>649,674</u>
Less: Contributions to — Political Education Fund	(12,246)	—
— Defence Fund	(118,008)	—
— Building Fund	—	(183,338)
	<u>(130,254)</u>	<u>(183,338)</u>
Balance at end of year	<u>10,135</u>	<u>466,336</u>
	<u>20,135</u>	<u>476,336</u>
	<u>\$2,424,224</u>	<u>\$2,551,569</u>

AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Members,
Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180

We have examined the non-consolidated balance sheets of the Hospital Employees' Union, Local 180 General Fund, Defence Fund, Political Education Fund and Building Fund as at December 31, 1982 and the non-consolidated statements of revenue and expenses and changes in financial position of the General Fund for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and accordingly included such tests and other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, these non-consolidated financial statements present fairly, the financial position of the four funds as at December 31, 1982 and, in the case of the General Fund, the results of its operations and the changes in its financial position for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles except that they are prepared on a non-consolidated basis, as explained in Note 1, applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Vancouver, B.C.
March 31, 1983

TOUCHE ROSS & CO.
Chartered Accountants

General Fund

Statement of Revenue and Expenses for the year ended December 31, 1982

REVENUE	1982	1981
		(Notes 4 & 5)
Dues and initiation fees	\$3,892,480	\$3,545,999
Less: Rebates to units	380,285	333,529
	<u>3,512,195</u>	<u>3,212,470</u>
Interest	205,320	218,361
Management fee	1,000	1,000
	<u>3,718,515</u>	<u>3,431,831</u>
EXPENSES		
Salaries and employee benefits:		
Salaries	1,128,161	955,876
Employee benefits	163,743	118,272
	<u>1,291,904</u>	<u>1,074,148</u>
Office and other expenses (Schedule 1)	932,875	787,638
Regional office expenses (Schedule 2)	597,577	510,046
Contractual negotiations and policy decisions:		
Long-term care program	—	12,331
Negotiations, conciliations, and arbitrations	294,074	259,171
Provincial executive	90,679	79,270
Rights classification	197,625	165,837
Wage policy conference	4,042	147,276
	<u>586,420</u>	<u>663,885</u>
Servicing and organizing	176,886	155,645
Convention and Seminars:		
Convention	280,272	—
Seminars and staff meetings	178,528	234,467
	<u>458,800</u>	<u>234,467</u>
	<u>4,044,462</u>	<u>3,425,829</u>
EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES (EXPENSES OVER REVENUE) FOR THE YEAR	<u>\$ (325,947)</u>	<u>\$ 6,002</u>

Escalating costs unavoidable

It is fair to say that over the past year, the Hospital Employees' Union has faced some of the most difficult challenges in its history. There have been relentless attacks on the rights, wages, and benefits of HEU members by both the employer and the provincial government. And although HEU can be proud of the many battles it has won in defending members' rights, the cost has nonetheless been high.

Legal fees incurred by HEU have doubled in the past year. The fight against bed closures and member layoffs has been costly. Extensive legal services are required to force the Health Labour Relations Association and the employers to complete classification. And in addition, the general state of the economy has prompted increased use of Free Legal Advice by our members.

The cost of rights arbitration continues to escalate due to the employer's uncooperative attitude in dealing with grievances. HEU has also had to involve the Labour Relations Board to a much greater extent in unfair labour practice charges.

All of these pressures imposed by the employer have created a need for more staff to ensure that members' rights are protected.

HEU has no intention of allowing the employer to whittle away at the standard it has achieved for its members. The price may indeed be high, but the price of capitulation is even higher.

Statement of Changes in Financial Position

WORKING CAPITAL DERIVED FROM OPERATIONS	1982	1981 (Note 4)
Excess of revenue over expenses for the year	\$ —	\$ 6,002
Add: Charge not requiring the use of working capital:		
Depreciation and amortization	—	16,617
	—	22,619
Increase in amount due to Building Fund	—	183,338
	—	205,957
WORKING CAPITAL APPLIED TO OPERATIONS		
Excess of expenses over revenue for the year	325,947	—
Less: Charge not requiring the use of working capital:		
Depreciation and amortization	(18,873)	—
	307,074	—
Contributions to Political Education Fund	12,246	—
Contributions to Building Fund	—	183,338
Contributions to Defence Fund	118,008	—
Fixed asset additions	18,503	63,829
Purchase of shares	—	2,164
Decrease in amount due to subsidiary	2,000	11,044
Reclassification of due to Building Fund	425,015	—
	882,846	260,375
DECREASE IN WORKING CAPITAL	(882,846)	(54,418)
WORKING CAPITAL AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	879,855	934,273
WORKING CAPITAL (DEFICIENCY) AT END OF YEAR	\$ (2,991)	\$879,855

Notes to Financial Statements

1. SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICY

(a) Non-Consolidation

These financial statements have been prepared for information purposes in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles except that they have been prepared on a non-consolidated basis. Consolidated financial statements of the Union's general, defence, political education, and building funds and its wholly-owned subsidiary, Oneight Holdings Ltd., have been prepared and reported on by the auditors.

(b) Depreciation and amortization

Depreciation and amortization of fixed assets have been calculated annually on a straight-line basis at the following rates:

Office furniture, fixtures and equipment— 10%

Leasehold improvements — over 5-10 years

2. SEVERANCE PAY TRUST FUND

	1982	1981
Balance at beginning of the year	\$191,270	\$177,726
Add: Provision for the year	45,360	29,799
Interest earned for the year	23,384	15,707
Contributions for the year	3,606	—
	72,350	45,506
	263,620	223,232
Less: Payments out of fund during the year	10,362	31,962
Balance at end of the year	\$253,258	\$191,270

3. RELATED PARTY TRANSACTION

During the year, the Union paid rent of \$50,175 and received management fee of \$1,000 from its wholly-owned subsidiary, Oneight Holdings Ltd. The same amounts were recorded in 1981.

4. PRIOR PERIOD ADJUSTMENT

In accordance with a new employment contract negotiated between the Union and its staff that portion of the retroactive wage settlement applicable to 1981 has been recorded as a prior period adjustment increasing 1981 expense by \$11,482. The 1981 comparative figures have been restated to reflect the adjustment.

5. COMPARATIVE FIGURES

Certain of the prior year's figures have been reclassified for comparative purposes.

Schedule of Office and Other Expenses

	1982	1981
Rent	\$138,634	\$108,471
Stationery and office supplies	114,171	89,319
Legal fees	124,885	67,448
Printing, advertising and subscriptions	123,246	185,398
Occupancy expense	85,652	62,063
Hospital Guardian	108,341	101,008
Telephone and telex	51,654	32,622
Severance pay	48,339	30,337
General	58,984	42,505
Death benefit payments	23,600	19,100
Audit and accounting	15,513	15,772
Union pins	13,477	8,770
Data processing	2,350	1,929
Donations and gifts	2,412	4,069
Bank charges and interest	2,744	2,210
Depreciation and amortization	18,873	16,617
	\$932,875	\$787,638

CU&C opens new health centre



Medical care in British Columbia took one small, but important, turn for the better in April when CU&C opened the doors to its first health clinic.

The new CU&C Mount Pleasant Health Centre, located at 12 East 8th Avenue in Vancouver, is a unique facility designed to provide complete health related services to individuals and families through a team of health professionals. The catch is that there will never be any extra billing at Mount Pleasant.

The clinic was established to counter the threat by many B.C. physicians to extra bill patients.

Although CU&C has considered establishing a health centre for some time, the decision to build the Mount Pleasant facility was made in 1981 when it became apparent that British Columbia doctors were intent on extra billing.

According to David Schreck, general manager of CU&C, the policy of

the CU&C board of directors has been to adamantly oppose the concept of extra billing.

"The Mount Pleasant clinic will always be a place where medical care is available at no extra cost," says Schreck. "And, if it's successful, we will look seriously at building a number of these facilities around B.C."

The opening of the centre is the

culmination of a busy year for CU&C. It took a leading role in the fight against health care cutbacks this past year through a series of radio, newspaper, and television ads. CU&C was also instrumental in organizing the B.C. Health Coalition, an umbrella group of many representatives from the health industry that fought against the erosion of health care.

The new clinic will be staffed by a physician, Dr. Michael Guard, a nurse-administrator, Jean Hunter, and a receptionist, Wendy Ricci. Dr. Guard, originally from England, has spent the past five years as the sole physician in Stewart, B.C. Prior to that, he worked in a West Vancouver practice. The clinic is set up for family practice and is fully equipped for primary diagnostic and treatment services, physiotherapy, and occupational health.

Medical ethics prevent the board of directors of CU&C from advertising the health centre, but it is hoped that patients will be attracted through word of mouth and by the availability of the occupational health facilities to unions and employers.

In other CU&C news, Jack Gerow, HEU secretary-business manager, was re-elected in May as CU&C vice-president for another one year term.

LETTERS

Job sharing

Our local unit, (Williams Lake) feels very strongly that the present Union Policy regarding job sharing should be reviewed and revised. We support and respect the Union Policy to protect and retain all full-time positions.

We also believe that an employee should have the right and the option to decide if they need or want to work on a part-time basis.

For several years now RNs have successfully and to the benefit of all concerned (including another RN employed) shared full-time positions at their request.

To our knowledge, none of these shared positions has ever been changed to a part-time position, during or after the position has been shared. There are many reasons an employee may need or want to work on a part-time basis either short or long term.

Some of the reasons brought forth at our unit are as follows:

The parent (usually mother) of a new baby or young children may find full-time employment too demanding and stressful for herself and her family, but needs some income to survive.

The employee with a chronic type of illness, who finds full-time employment draining their health, but who could cope well with a two or three day work week.

The middle age female employee whose financial situation has eased and may need only part-time wages to augment a spouse's full-time wages.

Other benefits include more people employed. Employees on "shared jobs" tend to use less sick time and we all benefit as tax payers.

We encourage other HEU members and units to voice their opinions on this issue.

If there is an increasing need and interest in "job sharing" it is our hope and aim that the present policy regarding this issue be reviewed and revised at our next policy convention.

HEU Local 180
Williams Lake Unit

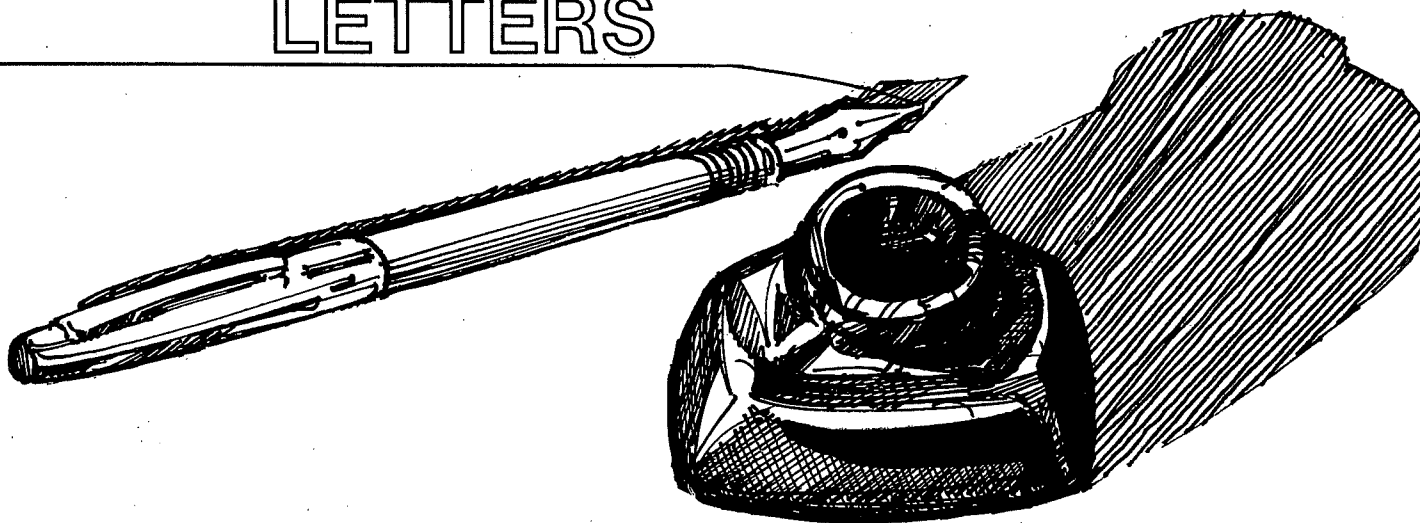
The members at the Royal Columbian Hospital cannot, and will not, support the proposed Job Sharing Policy, which you aim to review and revise at the up-coming Wage Policy Conference.

It is the members' understanding that we would lose a benefit (Article VIII, Section 5) which had been negotiated for, after a long and hard struggle.

If we allow such changes as job sharing, our unit will lose more full-time employees and the employer will change the full-time positions by laying off these employees and make them part-time employees.

This unit has lost more than 125 full-time and part-time employees due to mismanagement of funds by management. Therefore, this unit will oppose any changes to the effect of Job Sharing Policies.

Chairperson
R.C.H. Unit



Health care for profit

As hospital workers, we are extremely concerned about what we see as a frightening trend in the health care industry in this province. Several hospitals in the Lower Mainland have entertained proposals from outside companies to take over the management of departments such as Dietary, Laundry, House-keeping and so on.

We are opposed to the contracting out of hospital services or the management of such services for two interrelated reasons: (a) loss of jobs, and (b) the resultant deterioration of the level of patient care.

The companies making these proposals to the hospitals generally try to sell the proposals on their cost savings. Using their own calculations the companies develop estimates of the savings which the hospitals could expect. These estimates are the bait that the companies use to get their foot in the door of the hospitals. The second tactic the companies use is to promise the hospitals additional savings by way of savings from staff cutbacks and layoffs.

The fact that they fail to consider

is the cost to the patients that a cut in staff will mean. Once the companies have a foothold in the hospitals, generally by installing a manager in one of the departments, the push is on for the hospital to use products marketed by the company. Rather than purchasing the products of their choice, the hospitals are often locked into contracts to purchase products through the company.

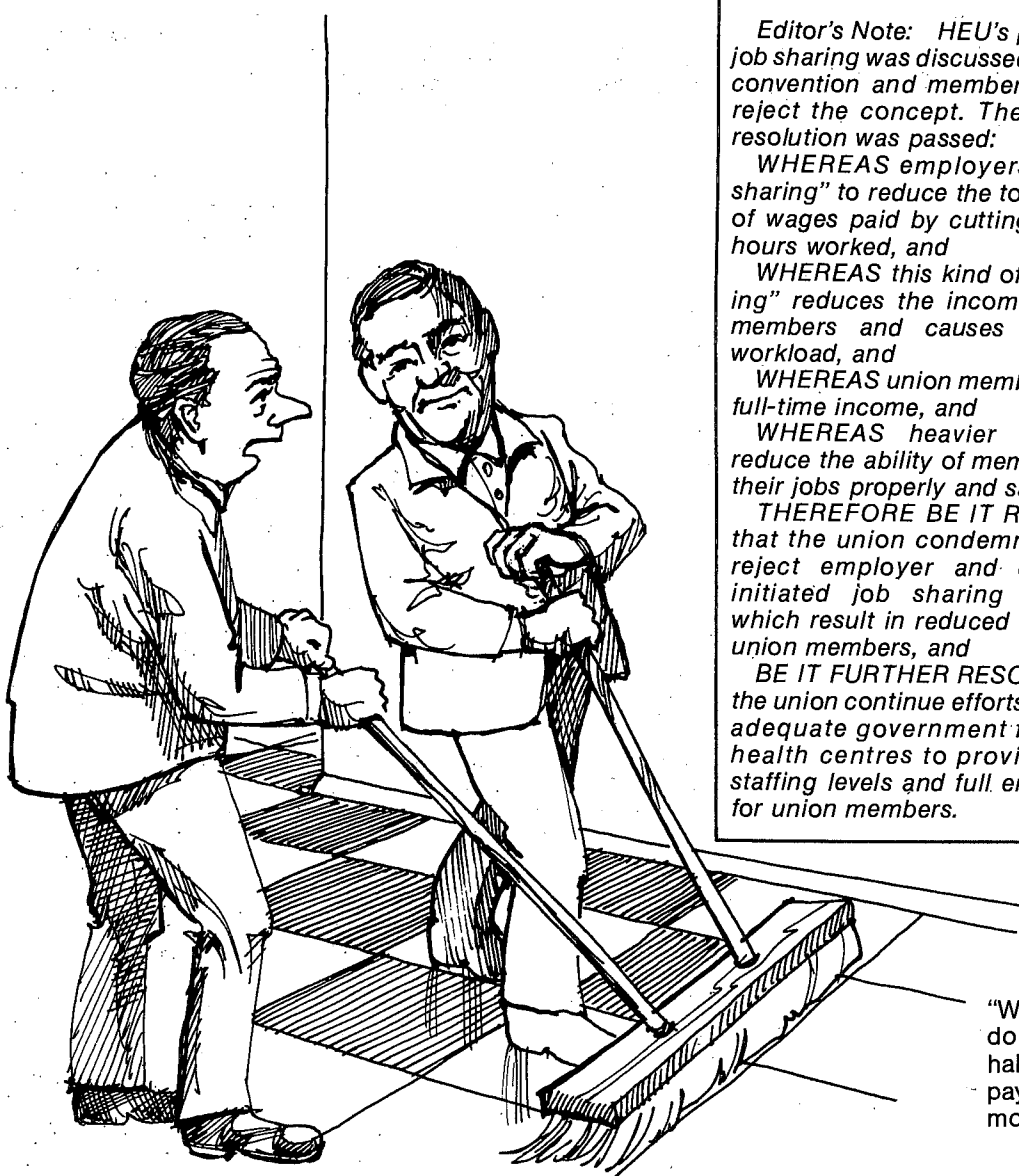
After 'contracting out' takes place, the prime motive in the department becomes the profit motive. This drastic change in attitude has effects throughout the hospital, not just in the department which is contracted out. When cost becomes the main factor in the decisions about the running of a hospital, then decisions will be made based on what is best for the balance sheet not on what is best for the patients.

The whole purpose of hospitals must be remembered: hospitals exist to provide health care for the people in the community, not to make a few companies rich at the expense of the patients.

Who is responsible for the hospitals seeking to contract out services? Who is responsible for the erosion of health care in this province? Who should be responsible to the public for the deterioration of the standard of health care in the province? Both the provincial government and the hospitals themselves have to shoulder the burden for the problem. Both the provincial government and the hospitals have to share the blame for the deterioration of health care. It is not enough for the government to build shiny new facilities throughout the province: they must provide sufficient funding to adequately staff these facilities. Someday, we all may have to use the facilities; let us hope that there are sufficient staff still working to properly care for our needs.

Yours truly,

Marion Barrington, Chairperson
Tony Beliso, Vice-Chairperson
Shirley Petrie, Secretary-Treasurer
H.E.U. Officers
Mt. St. Joseph's Hospital Unit
Vancouver, B.C.



Editor's Note: HEU's position on job sharing was discussed at the last convention and members voted to reject the concept. The following resolution was passed:

WHEREAS employers use "job sharing" to reduce the total amount of wages paid by cutting down on hours worked, and

WHEREAS this kind of "job sharing" reduces the income of union members and causes a heavier workload, and

WHEREAS union members need a full-time income, and

WHEREAS heavier workloads reduce the ability of members to do their jobs properly and safely,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the union condemn and fully reject employer and employee-initiated job sharing proposals which result in reduced income for union members, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the union continue efforts to achieve adequate government funding of health centres to provide proper staffing levels and full employment for union members.

"What did you do with your half of the pay cheque this month?"

Bad news for HEU

As an HEU member, I can only say that our worst fears have materialized. The Social Credit Party is back in power in a majority position.

I suspect that within a short period of time, the humility he (Premier Bennett) has shown during his acceptance speech will turn to smugness, arrogance, and finally vindictiveness.

I feel that it's no longer enough for our union to encourage its members to support candidates and parties who will put health care back to the levels it should be. It has become quite apparent in the last election that HEU itself should **officially** and actively support the candidates and the party who share our union's views on health care issues. In this way, a proper election machinery can be put in place as well it should.

Tony Beliso
Vice-Chairperson
Mount St. Joseph Unit

Smoke-eaters

I also was a first time voting delegate to the thirteenth biennial HEU constitution and by-laws convention. On first reading Brother Wildeman's letter, (published in the last Guardian), I was most irate. After from the land of the "SMOKE-EATERS," where one is literally forced to put up with used smoke, likeable or not, I found it quite humorous. Now being the considerate person I am, I decided to accept the proposed challenge.

Believe it or not — Smoking is ADDICTIVE," so if you're one of the smarter NONs, don't knock it. As Brother Wildeman may have observed the convention committee did try to accommodate the NONs by designated areas. This, unfortunately, does not always work.

Contrary to my Brother's possible belief, but alas true, many strong dedicated members belong to the smoking majority or minority. Being a considerate person myself, as I'm sure most of my smoking contemporaries are, we do try to limit our "fix."

As our Brother surely noticed, there are many tense and frustrating moments. Due to the heavy agenda, it would be very disruptive and certainly defeat our objective, if smokers were pushed into "mini" breaks throughout the sessions.

For those Brothers and Sisters who don't smoke, please be a little lenient towards those of us who "NEED" our daily bread, and we will continue to be more considerate of those who are less fortunate.

"Smoker's rights versus non-smoker's rights." Who has the greater need?

Gen Goldade
Trail Unit

Letter of warning

(The following letter was originally printed in good faith, in a Machinists' local union newspaper. It is reprinted here in the same good faith, since we believe its message is timely and very serious. Please read it thoroughly.)

Dear Former Brother and Sister Union Members:

I am writing to you to hopefully warn you to avoid what has happened to me and my other Machinist brothers and sisters in this plant.

We were once members of the International Machinists' Union with the usual gripes about union dues, slow grievance procedures, seniority disputes, incentives, overtime arguments, etc. We thought of our stewards and union officers as free-loaders with jobs that commanded no respect and that the company would treat us just as good with or without them, and were in agreement when someone said, "The union is selling us out," never the company.

Well, this was in 1978 and now we no longer have these old problems, for in October 1978, we voted to decertify and break away from the International Union. We are now non-union and no more union dues! We no longer have seniority disputes because we are placed by ability, which means whoever is the boss's pet.

And the same with overtime. Our grievance is no longer slow, it is non-existent. We don't have an absentee problem; if you miss one day, you must have a doctor's slip, so most absentee problems were fired long ago with nobody to represent them. Our incentives now are: Do more work or you will be disciplined for refusal to work.

All this for less money, smaller hospitalization benefits, and fewer holidays. Our ex-stewards and union officers are no longer a problem; most of them have been discharged on one technicality or another, or set up in a discharge situation.

How did this happen? Well, one night at a local tavern a supervisor I know got drunk and was laughing and bragging to a friend of his about how they got rid of the union. This is what I overheard from my booth in the tavern. The supervisor said the company hired a union-busting firm out of Chicago at \$700 an hour to come in and train their supervisors and foremen in the skill of union-busting, with the threat that any foreman disclosing this would be fired.

He explained that there are a lot of companies in the business (of union-busting) now because they think the time is right with inflation, plant closings, conservative Republicans and Democrats being elected, and a general fear of a job loss in a lot of plants. He said they held a lot of management classes and were taught the following ten rules (he held a piece of paper that he read them from — I tried to jot them down).

1. Try to confuse the seniority system of layoffs, move-ups and overtime to get employees jealous of one another. Then when employees complain, send them to the union, thereby, shifting the blame, even if you have to use racial or sexual

disputes. Most important, create fear and mistrust.

2. Draw out grievances as long as possible.

3. Threaten employees if they file grievances or safety complaints.

4. Increase discipline for even minor offenses to cause an overload for the union, slowing down their effectiveness and timeliness.

5. Make sure employees get all benefit books or letters on insurance benefits, pensions, etc. that the company gives — not union negotiated.

6. Increase management trainees or substitute foremen.

7. Get your stool pigeon — big mouth employees, every area has them, to criticize union officials and union dues. (You know who these are.)

8. Hold department meetings with employees to convince them that you agree with their problems, but that the union has to do something. (Deliberately scheduling improperly is a very good example to use in this step.)

9. Convince them that you are on their side about job class increase or

incentives on the job, but that your hands are tied and it's up to the union.

10. Last, but not least, the company must become the Big Brother, the good guy, and the union the enemy by distorting the truth on Agreement. By the time the truth is known they won't trust the union anyway.

When I heard this I realized they followed the game plan perfectly. All of these things happened to us and they were laughing at us the whole time. So I felt I had to write this letter to warn you how easily we were led down this road to disaster. I only hope in some little way this will help you avoid what happened to us. Don't go back 40 years in time like we have. Are any of these things going on in your company? They may be training your management now. Beware!

I cannot sign this letter, in fear of my job and family. Hopefully some day I will be back with you, without fear. It's a terrible lesson to learn.

Respectfully,
Ex-Union Brother

BOYCOTT

The following products are now on the B.C. Federation of Labour's official boycott list.

1. Proctor and Gamble soap products

- Ivory, Joy, Dawn liquid detergents
- Zest, Camay, Ivory soap
- Tide, Cheer, Oxydol, Bold

2. Kimberley-Clark products

- Kleenex
- Hi-Dri towels
- Delsey bathroom tissue
- Kotex feminine napkins

Other items on the boycott list:

- Michelin Tire (CLC boycott)
- Lettuce (Red Coach, Danny, Big Fred, SAS, Big A, Bobby and Andrews)
- Husky Oil (IWA boycott) ... includes restaurants, service stations, and briquettes.

MILESTONES

• Brother Aden Eely, a member of the housekeeping staff at G. F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre in Vancouver, retired on April 22, 1983. Brother Eely was a devoted union member who held many unit offices and will be particularly remembered as an outstanding shop steward. In his retirement, he intends to continue as the caretaker of an apartment building.

• Sister Roberta F. Dennett, a member of the central supply department at Richmond General Hospital, retired on March 31, 1983.

• Sister Bertha Murrell, a member of the nursing department at Lillooet District Hospital, retired on February 28, 1983. An active union member, she has served as secretary-treasurer of the Lillooet unit. Sister Murrell, who enjoys gardening, knitting, and crocheting, plans to do some travelling with her husband.

• Sister Betty Srigly, who worked for 10 years in the housekeeping department at the MSA Manor long term care unit in Abbotsford, retired on April 11, 1983.

FRONTLINES

Contracting out at Queen's Park Hospital

The B.C. Labour Relations Board ruled on March 31 that HEU members at Queen's Park Hospital who refuse to handle laundry contracted out to a non-union firm would be engaging in a work stoppage contrary to the Labour Code of British Columbia.

Since its opening, Queen's Park Hospital had contracted out its laundry service to the Royal Columbian Hospital, whose employees are also members of HEU.

However, in order to save money, the hospital recently decided to contract out this work to H & M Laundry, a non-union firm. At the time this decision was made, HEU clearly indicated that its members

would refuse to handle any laundry delivered from this firm. It was the union's contention that the hospital should continue to contract out to Royal Columbian Hospital or to Tilbury Laundry, another HEU-represented facility.

As a result of the Labour Relations Board decision, the hospital commenced contracting out to H & M Laundry. Subsequently, 17 HEU members in the laundry department at the Royal Columbian Hospital have been laid off. Jack Gerow, HEU secretary-business manager has stated that the union will continue to oppose any management decisions which affect the employment of our membership.

Prince Rupert sit-in

It took a two day sit-in, and a successful strike vote, but HEU members of the main unit at Prince Rupert Regional Hospital have finally reached an agreement with the Health Labour Relations Association to bring them under the master agreement.

The 90 members of the unit had been without a contract since April, 1981. They staged a sit-in on March 23 and 24 to protest HLRA's refusal to bring them under the master agreement. None of these HEU members had received a wage

increase since July, 1981; and, in fact, most were earning between \$200 and \$300 per month less than HEU members doing the same job at other hospitals in the province.

The Prince Rupert Unit wants to extend special thanks to the Brothers and Sisters from the following groups for donating food for the sit-in: B.C. Nurses' Union, United Fishermen and Allied Workers' Union, Prince Rupert and District Labour Council, and the HEU Clerical Unit at Prince Rupert Regional Hospital.

Electric hospital beds present possible hazard

HEU has recently received a Medical Alert from the Federal Department of Health and Welfare regarding the death of a six year old boy who was crushed between the stationary and moving frames of an electric bed.

This is not the first accident of its kind reported in Canada and elsewhere, and the department is recommending corrective actions to the manufacturers.

Pending compliance with these recommendations, the department suggests that all electric beds be labelled conspicuously with operating instructions for hospital personnel, and a warning that the bed is not to be used in any areas where patient behavior may lead to hazardous situations. The department also urges that hospitals establish procedures to instruct patients in the proper operation of these beds.

Hospital Employees' Union continues to organize

The Hospital Employees' Union is continuing to organize the unorganized in all areas of the province, despite increased employer and government pressure to discredit the trade union movement, according to Jack Gerow, HEU secretary-business manager.

Gerow said the union feels a responsibility to the hundreds of health care workers who remain without the protection of a union.

"In addition to the substandard wages and benefits paid by non-union facilities, we are finding that these employers frequently violate such basic worker rights as set out in the Employment Standards Act," he said.

Gerow also noted there is seldom any adherence to the fundamental

principles of seniority and fair treatment in non-union facilities.

HEU is organizing in both the profit and non-profit sectors of the health care industry. In North Vancouver, a vote has been ordered at the North Shore Private Hospital. At the Trillium Lodge in Parksville, HEU has submitted an application for certification. Two other long term care facilities, Pioneer Villa in Creston and Hardy View Lodge in Grand Forks have just received confirmation of their new certifications.

Since 1974, HEU's membership has increased by 10,000 largely through the union's long-standing policy of organizing the unorganized.

Table officers meet provincial executive

Thirty table officers from HEU units in Okanagan South met with members of the provincial executive in Kelowna June 22.

Lee Whyte, HEU assistant secretary-business manager, delivered a report to the table officers on the Larson award on casuals, the resulting job action at five Lower Mainland hospitals, the Compensation Stabilization Program hearings, outstanding arbitrations, classification, the education program, and communications.

Executive members in attendance were Bill Macdonald, Alberta Dorval, and Bob Shortland.

The 15 units which sent representatives to the conference were Armstrong, Crossroads, Enderby, Kelowna, Moberly Park, Noric House, Park View Place, Penticton Retirement Service, Penticton, Princeton, Revelstoke, Salmon Arm, Oliver, Summerland, and Vernon. An officer from each unit delivered a report to the conference. And although many issues were discussed, the primary

concerns voiced by the delegates were:

- the delays in settling the master agreement and,
- the continuing problems generated by classification.

Whyte said that the union executive is also frustrated with the delays in concluding the master agreement but pointed out that the lack of progress is largely caused by the provincial government's wage control program.

The next table officers conference will be held September 28 in Victoria.

35-hour work week rejected

The Fort Nelson General Hospital board of trustees has come out in opposition to the 35-hour work week awarded to HEU members by Arbitrator Donald Munroe. The 35-hour work week is to become effective January 1, 1984.

In a letter to Social Credit MLA Tony Brummet, the trustees claimed the reduced work week will "have the negative impact of decreasing productivity." The trustees said they would not be able to afford the increased costs associated with this.

Misuse of public facilities

Recent actions by the Prince George Regional Hospital have prompted HEU to request that the minister of health investigate the use of public facilities by private enterprise.

During the week of February 28, Northern Linen Supply had a fire and, as a result, the hospital allowed the firm to use hospital laundry facilities.

John Hurren, representative in charge of the northern regional office, said that this action resulted in the use of public facilities for commercial purposes. He expressed concern that if Northern Linen Supply is charged for the use of hospital facilities, then the hospital would have a taxable income which

would jeopardize its license as a non-profit society. And if the hospital does not charge them, then it is liable for misuse of public funds under the Financial Administration Act.

HEU intends to pursue the matter until it receives a satisfactory reply from the ministry of health.

Workers to get retraining money

HEU has recently received an arbitration award concerning an employee's entitlement to injury-on-duty leave with pay if he/she is receiving vocational retraining for hospital employment under the auspices of the Workers' Compensation Board.

In its decision, the arbitration board concluded that if an employee is eligible for wage loss benefits from the Workers' Compensation Board during all or part of the period of retraining, then the employee should receive injury-on-duty leave with pay during the training period.

It was the board's feeling that if the Workers' Compensation Board decides to place an employee on a rehabilitation program, or if an employee voluntarily undergoes vocational retraining, he/she should not be punished financially because of that decision.

Did you know ...

Under the WCB Industrial Health and Safety Regulations:

"8.24 No person shall carry out or cause to be carried out any work process or operate or cause to be operated any tool, appliance or equipment when that person has reasonable cause to believe that to do so would create an undue hazard to the health or safety of any person."

If, on the job, you encounter any situation you feel creates an unsafe, or a potentially unsafe situation, it is **your** responsibility to report the condition to your employer. And, if the employer fails to correct the problem to your satisfaction, you can then ask that the matter be further investigated by either a union representative or an officer of the Workers' Compensation Board.