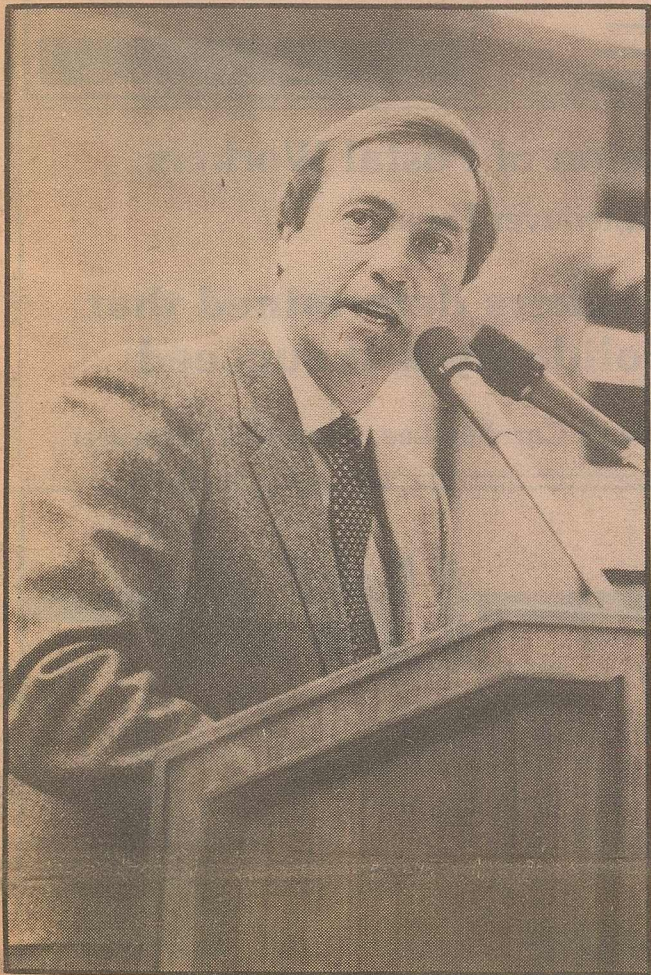


SOLIDARITY COALITION MARCHES TODAY

Solidarity Times^{50¢}

GCIU 48

VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1, OCTOBER 15, 1983

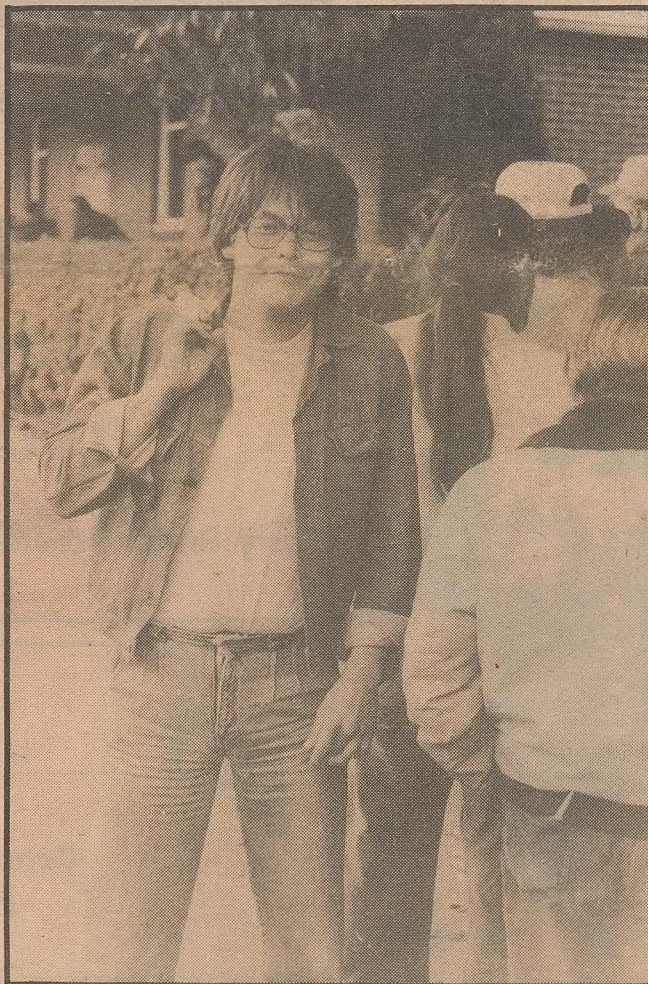


The Legislature: It's No Way To Run A Railroad

(See pages 3 and 5)

Kids On The Skids

It's Not Just Old Timers
On The Breadlines.
Debbie Wilson Reports
(Page 9)



Teachers: Class Warfare?

They're Drawing the Line,
And Not Just On
Blackboards (Pages 8, 13)

**Margaret Randall • David Boswell
The Birth Of Solidarity • Tee Vee!
The Blasters • Events Calendar
Labour Negotiations •**

Brief on bills previewed

It couldn't wait for the premier.

By the time Bill Bennett's Oct. 19 meeting with the Solidarity Coalition, most of the legislation concerning the coalition might be passed into law.

So the coalition gave their 23-page brief to the press Oct. 12.

The brief detailed the impact of the assorted bills before the legislature on specific groups in society.

It warned Bennett that unless a process of consultation is established with the groups affected by the legislation, his government is "embarking on the road to disruption and confrontation."

But they did not propose specific changes to the legislation, which premier Bill Bennett asked the coalition to provide to individual cabinet ministers, as a condition for the Oct. 19 meeting.

"We were asked to bring specific amendments and we want to talk about philosophy," said coalition co-chairperson Renate Shearer. She said objections to the legislation were objections in principle, and could not be resolved with minor changes.

"This brief will make it very clear what Solidarity groups stand for and what they believe in."

They had asked for a meeting with the premier and the provincial cabinet during the October 8 weekend to present the brief. The premier was to receive the brief later Wednesday.

"We will wait and see what the response is," said Shearer.

Valley teachers promised a fair shake

Special to The Times

Teachers are seeking, and in some cases winning, assurances from school boards that new powers to fire employees will not be used.

School boards in Surrey, Coquitlam and Victoria have adopted "fair employer" policies which amount to promises they not use powers to dismiss teachers without cause and out of the order of seniority.

In addition, boards at Douglas and Kwantlen colleges have stated "employees will be dealt with as fairly as possible" and terms of collective agreements with non-teaching workers would not be violated.

But British Columbia Teachers' Federation president Larry Kuehn says the "fair employer" route to job

security and peace of mind for teachers is no substitute for fair legislation.

He noted the three school districts involved in the pact represent only 3,600 of more than 20,000 BCTF members in the province.

And school boards may not have the luxury of putting their wishes into action.

"For example, if the government directs that budgets be cut by x amount of dollars and the board refused to fire under terms of this legislation, they could be fined," Kuehn said.

Defiance of the policies contained in Socred buget measures can earn a politician a \$2,000 fine.

Kuehn claims the government's commitment to education will drop by 25 per cent, after inflation, by 1988.

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Solidarity Times

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By JOHN MACKIE

By day, the legislative buildings in Victoria are majestic, rising grey and sombre up from the long green lawns of the capital. By night, they're something else again.

Thousands of strategically-placed lightbulbs illuminate its contours, much like one of those portable signs ringed with bulbs suburban businesses roll out to advertise their latest specials. Depending on your point of view, the legislative buildings are thusly transformed into either Disneyland North (beautiful and wondrous), or an aesthetic nightmare (tacky to the max).

Inside, our elected representatives debate the goings-on of government. Lately, they've been staying up all night sashaying insults and points of order back and forth like two gangs of little kids hurling acorns in the fall. And, again depending on your point of view, the result has either been the tried and true parliamentary process, albeit a little extraordinary, or a near-lunatic bastardization of democracy.

At 4:30 a.m. on Oct. 6, former Premier Dave Barrett was ordered ejected from the legislature by acting speaker John Parks (Mallairdville-Coquitlam), a rookie MLA. At first, the two sergeant-at-arms officers tried to pick up Barrett while he was seated in his chair but Barrett folded his arms like a civil rights protestor in the position of passive resistance, and tumbled out onto the floor. The two officers then picked up Barrett's 200 pounds and dragged him out head first.

One eyewitness said he came out of the door like a battering ram. Said another: "They dragged him along the ground like a sow."

Television cameras were right there, ready to shoot what someone called "the shot of a lifetime" — when speaker Walter Davidson, who had earlier barred all television cameras from the corridor into which Barrett was dumped, stood in front of them, ready to eject them from the building if they shot any film.

Strange times, even for a strange legislature.

When the Social Credit government decided to dump 26 highly controversial bills on the legislature at the end of June, they were probably thinking that the sheer number of them would serve to obscure their content, which in any normal time would have resulted in a barrage of front page headlines.

The extraordinary scope of the legislation, however, resulted in the welling-up of opposition, including extra-parliamentary protest in the form of Operation Solidarity.

The NDP's job in the legislature is to forestall the legislation, in the hope that public outcry will cause the Socreds to change some of the bills. Through July and August, the government wasn't able to get any of the 26 bills through, so they started all-night sittings. When things still weren't going fast enough for them, they started using closure to end debate.

Closure.

The word brings to mind visions of a dramatic gesture, of a shot in a Hollywood movie where a camera is angled up towards a speaker's gavel, which thunders downward, blacking out the screen to the tone of a dramatic chord.

In practice, it isn't so exciting. What happens is, after the NDP have debated the merits of a bill or point of order on a bill for what the Socreds deem long enough, a government member stands up and asks to put the question, which cuts off debate and brings matters to a vote. Normally, the speaker lets the Opposition speak for as long as they want to on a bill, then the question is called. As of this writing, closure has been called 20 times.

As with closure, the actual goings-on of Parliament aren't quite what one would expect, given the screaming



Let's spend the night together

headlines and the ex-Premier being given the old heave-ho. What we read in the papers is five minutes' condensation of twenty-four hours of dull debate. Parliament is like theatre, or a bad TV sit-com. Fake laughter resounds through the house when some honourable member cracks a funny: the jowls jiggle as their cadres do the Ed McMahon, ho-ho-hoing in their deepest chortle. Sometimes, though, there is a laugh or two to be gleaned from Hansard. Here's an exchange from the night of Wednesday, Sept. 21:

MR. ROSE (NDP): Mr. Speaker, I apologize for speaking while the Minister of Environment was attempting to interrupt me.

HON. MR. BRUMMET (SC): He's polluting the air; I'm going to check on it.

MR. ROSE: The minister of noise pollution has just come up with his latest profound utterance. One of the things that bothers me about this whole debate is that it's not a debate on a particularly high level.

HON. MR. BRUMMET: Well, you're doing the debating.

MR. ROSE: Well, I was just . . .

MR. REE (SC): On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, it's been a long-standing custom of the house that members are honourable, and therefore we refer to hon. members by their appropriate ministry, title, or constituency. I suggest that possibly the member for Coquitlam-Moody (Rose) should refer to the minister of Environment, and Lands, Parks and Housing, by his appropriate title to show his appropriate responsibilities.

MR. ROSE: I would certainly like to thank the honourable member for North Vancouver-Capilano for his advice and ammunition — or is it admonition? Perhaps I made a mistake in calling it ammunition. I'm sorry; I thought he was a big shot, or a man of large calibre, or perhaps a big bore. (Laughter)

MR. PARKS: Where did you get

your speaking notes from? They're excellent — not the least bit relevant, but they're pretty funny. The gallery loves it.

MR. ROSE: I think the gallery's entitled to something. After all, the citizens of this province are getting hosed left and right by politicians; they might as well get some fun out of it.

The NDP have divided up into three teams (A, B and C) and take turns sitting in the legislative chamber. They do all the talking, trying to hold off passage of bills, and the Socreds heckle or interrupt them constantly with

various procedural points, attempting to destroy their concentration. In the three weeks ending Oct. 7, the house had sat for close to 200 hours, which were essentially 200 hours of non-stop talking by NDP members. Seven researchers have been working round the clock to keep the NDP supplied with arguments: one of the procedural rules the Socreds are constantly bringing up is the rule against tedious and repetitive debate, so they have to have fresh ones.

Because they don't want to be caught on the short-end of a vote, the Socred caucus has to always ensure that there are sufficient members for them to win, which means at least 23. This has backfired a bit because the Socreds themselves are becoming frazzled by the long hours. The speculation is that the reason Parks got into the procedural hassle with Barrett that led to Barrett's eviction was because he didn't want to wake up Premier Bill Bennett for a vote. An unspoken agreement had previously allowed the NDP to force a vote every four hours: as NDP researcher John McGinnis says, "If they're going to keep us here all night long we're not going to let them sleep all night long." When Barrett was thrown out, there hadn't been a vote for five hours.

The NDP had introduced a motion proposing to 'hoist' (delay debate for six months) Bill 2, the Public Service Labour Relations Amendment Act, which gives the government the power to interfere with contract provisions regarding staffing levels, job duties and work schedules. They then moved to adjourn debate, and acting speaker Parks refused to accept the motion. Barrett challenged his ruling, and Parks refused to put the challenge to a vote.

They argued back and forth for about 45 minutes, and then, with the words "sergeant-at-arms, remove the honourable Leader of the Opposition from this chamber," and cries of "Shame!", Barrett was hoisted himself, out into the hall. Speaker Davidson then came back in and, citing an incident in British Parliament in 1931, hoofed Barrett for the remainder of the session.

Now even the Socreds have concluded expulsion wasn't exactly great (p. 17), and are searching for ways to get Barrett back in without getting egg on their collective face.

Stay tuned. It might get even better.

Status of Socred Legislation as of Noon, Oct. 13

Bill 2, Public Service Labor Relations Amendment Act: gives the government the power to interfere with contract provisions regarding staffing levels, job duties, and work schedules. Second reading.

Bill 3, Public Sector Restraint Act: permits the government to fire civil servants without regard to seniority. Passed.

Bill 4, Income Tax Amendment Act: repeals the personal income tax credit and the renter tax credit. Second reading.

Bill 5, Residential Tenancy Act: abolishes the Rentalsman (Sept., 1984), repeals rent review (June, 1984) and eliminates rent control. First reading.

Bill 6, Education (Interim) Finance Amendment Act: gives the government the power to set individual school district budgets. Second reading.

Bill 7, Property Tax Reform Act (No. 1): establishes property tax based on actual value rather than assessed value. Third reading.

Bill 8, Alcohol and Drug Commission Repeal Act: dissolves the alcohol and drug commission. Second reading.

Bill 9, Municipal Amendment Act: abolishes official regional district plans. Second reading.

Bill 11, Compensation Stabilization Amendment Act: extends the restraint program and wage increase guidelines for public sector workers. Second reading.

Bill 12, Property Tax Reform Act (No. 2): introduces a variable tax rate system for all tax bases other than the general municipal base. Third reading.

Bill 13, Tobacco Tax Amendment Act: increases the rate of tax on tobacco products. Passed.

Bill 14, Gasoline (Coloured) Tax Amendment Act.

Bill 15, Social Service Tax Amendment Act: increases general sales tax by one per cent to a total of seven per cent; imposes a seven per cent tax on restaurant meals and long distance phone calls. Second reading.

Bill 16, Employment Development Act: establishes a \$415 million job creation fund. Second reading.

Bill 17, Miscellaneous Statutes (Finance Measures) Act: includes an increase in the minimum property tax payable under the homeowner grant formula. Passed.

Bill 18, Pension (Public Service) Amendment Act: abolishes terminal funding of pensions and increases employer contributions. Passed.

Bill 19, Institute of Technology Amendment Act: gives the government greater power over appointment of board of governors and over curriculum. Third reading.

Bill 20, College and Institute Amendment Act: gives government more power over academics and management, and eliminates occupational training. Passed.

Bill 21, Crown Corporation Reporting Repeal Act: eliminates the staff of the legislature's crown corporations watchdog committee. First reading.

Bill 22, Assessment Amendment Act: provides for assessments every two years instead of every year. Second reading.

Bill 23, Motor Vehicle Amendment Act: abolished government-run vehicle testing stations. First reading.

Bill 24, Medical Services Act: gives the government the power to restrict the number of doctors and to establish varying payment rates for different doctors. First reading.

Bill 25, Harbor Board Repeal Act: dissolves the B.C. Harbors Board and transfers its assets to the B.C. Development Corp. and B.C. Rail. Passed.

Bill 26, Employment Standards Amendment Act: abolishes the employment standards board, provides that collective agreements can be voided during negotiating periods and allows agreements to be undermined by minimum labor standards. First reading.

Bill 27, Human Rights Act: eliminates the human rights commission and branch, and replaces them with a government-appointed council with reduced powers. First reading.

Bill 28, Provincial Treasury Financing Amendment Act: centralizes control over governmental and crown corporation borrowing in the ministry of finance. Second reading.

Keith Bennett, president of Forest Industrial Relations and chief negotiator for the timber tycoons, ominously muttered, "Lockout is one of the options . . ."

Woodworkers' leader Jack Munro called Bennett's bluff. Industry officials "haven't got the guts to lock us out," said the regional president of the 42,000-member International Woodworkers of America.

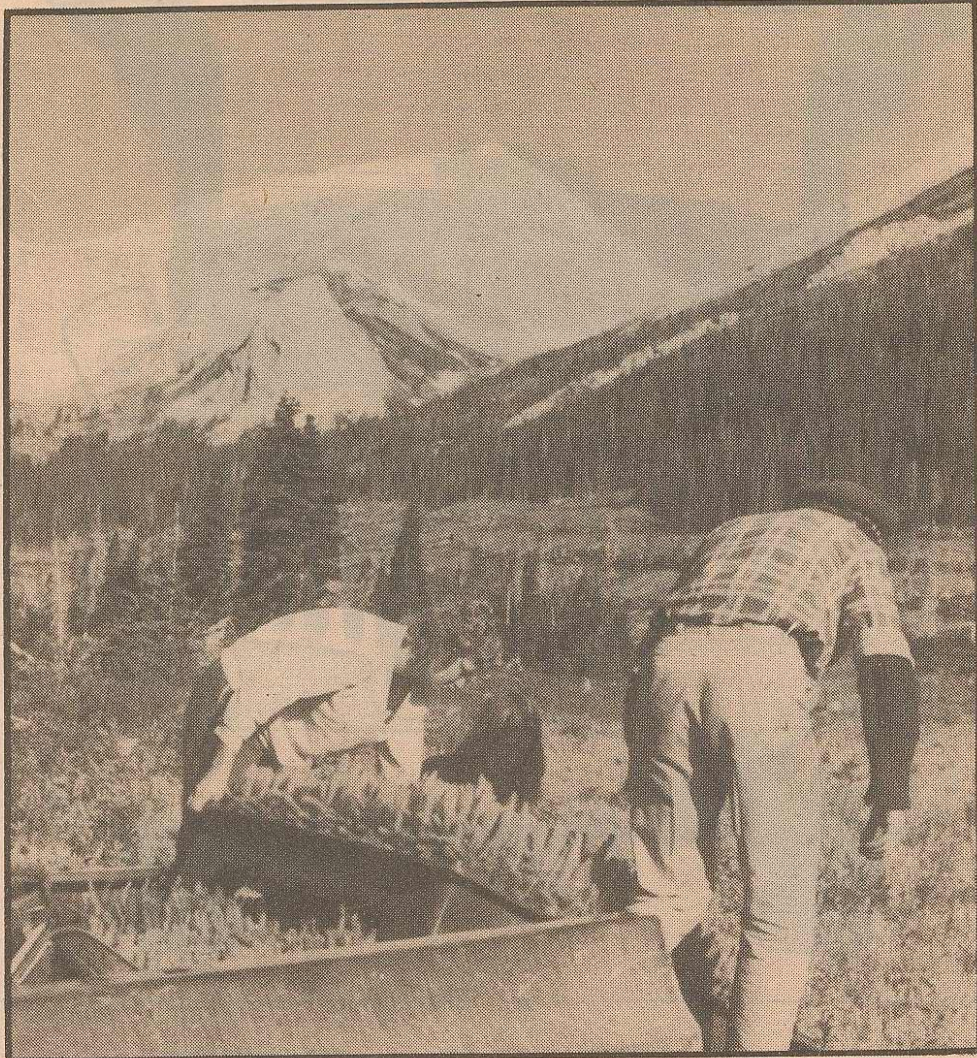
And for a tense few days the week before last, British Columbia's forest industry (it generates \$90 million a week in exports) teetered on the brink of a shutdown.

The owners and the workers had been negotiating for five months without much visible progress. The IWA and the province's two pulp unions — the 9,000-strong Canadian Paperworkers Union and the 5,500-member Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada — have been without a contract since June 30. Deadlocked talks broke off more than a month ago.

At issue is the companies' insistence on sizeable concessions from its employees: a wage freeze, increased management rights to contract-out work, and a three-year airtight agreement to ensure profit stability. As far back as late August the IWA expressed a willingness to forego a pay increase for one year. But it didn't satisfy the forest bosses. "It's not enough," said FIR's Bennett. That's when talks stalled.

The logjam, according to IWA president Munro, is the "employers' intransigent attitude towards its employees." Nor are matters improved by the Social Credit government's current legislative package. "We feel the forest industry is using the extreme right-wing tactics of the government to destroy effective negotiations, and both the industry and the government are making a god-damned mistake," Munro said a few days before talks bogged down in early September. He added, "If the government continues on this short-sighted road, then they could well have a problem with a general strike. There's no doubt our people are talking a lot more seriously these days about a general strike in support of Operation Solidarity."

Talks remained mired for the next three weeks, but on September 22, 500 loggers at the Woss Lake camp of Canadian Forest Products in the Nimpkish Valley on northern Vancouver Island walked out over a



Can't see the forest without a contract

contracting-out move, one of the central issues in the current negotiations.

It's easy to see why contracting-out is a core issue for woodworkers. The B.C. government tree farm licences that allow companies to cut timber requires that 50 per cent of the wood harvesting be done by individual contractors. What's at stake now is the other 50 per cent of the work. A 1970 letter of agreement between the IWA and the companies pledged that "contractors and subcontractors will not be used to replace regular company employees." But arbitration decision

last May permitted B.C. Timber to exclusively contract out its logging in B.C.'s southern interior. FIR quickly jumped at the opportunity to bring in non-union contractors, putting unions on notice that the letter of agreement would be scrapped during this year's negotiations. When Canfor tried to make good on the threat, the Woss Lake loggers walked.

Two days later the B.C. Labor Relations Board ordered them back to the job. The loggers refused. At a crowded community hall meeting in Woss Lake on September 29, a week into the

walkout, the loggers told the industry to go to hell. "We know there's legal action coming down, but screw it, we're going to fight," said Woss Lake loggers' spokesman Rick Bobo.

CanFor filed the LRB back-to-work order in the B.C. Supreme Court to give it teeth. The IWA responded with 72-hour strike notice that would make the walkout legal. That's when Bennett and FIR chairman Don Saunders issued lockout warnings, and Munro questioned the state of their stomachs.

Although the IWA complied with the law and tried to persuade the loggers to go back to work, the union nonetheless backed its frustrated Woss Lake members. "In my opinion," Munro told *Solidarity Times*, "CanFor provoked the guys." Rank and file woodworkers were also reported as backing the wildcat. "We have to support them — they belong to the union," 63-year-old sawmill worker Cliff Vandekeere told the media as he came off shift at MacMillan Bloedel's White Pine sawmill in south Vancouver.

By Monday, October 3, the Woss Lake strike was legal, and within days similar but unrelated labor brushfires had broken out at Gold River, Youbou, and Prince Rupert. However, the business media and the boys in other corporate backrooms urged calm. Said *The Province*, "The forest companies would be wise not to call a province-wide lockout," warning that it could trigger a general strike, given the controversy over the government's legislative program.

The next day, the companies backed away from their lockout threat and suggested that a "high profile" mediator be brought in to help break the deadlock in contract talks. After two days of discussions among an IWA-CPU-PPWC common front, the woodworking unions agreed last weekend to accept an informal mediator. "Whoever is going to do this is going to have to be able to beat them (employers) over the head to get them off this concessions nonsense," said Munro, announcing approval for the mediation proposal.

At the same time, the Nimpkish Valley loggers agreed to end their strike when CanFor assured them it would maintain a "company operation" and not contract out all its logging to private contractors.

By mid-week the two sides were comparing shortlists in a bid to find a suitable mediator.

Firing without cause: a landmark fight

By KEITH BALDREY

It's not too often that a labor dispute arises in this country that promises to drastically alter the course of collective bargaining in Canada.

And rarely does such a dispute involve a union attempting to hang on to what it already has, instead of fighting for more rights.

But that's the case in the current landmark showdown between the provincial government and the B.C. Government Employees Union.

The key factor in this dispute is not so much the negotiations between the union and the provincial government, but the amount of support the BCGEU can muster from private sector unions and other public sector unions.

Both sides realize the BCGEU cannot win its fight by itself, isolated from the rest of the labor movement, and therefore a large section of the public.

As most everyone in this province knows (unless they've been camping for the past three months), the dispute is centred on the government's contentious Bills 2 and 3, which together give the government the power to fire thousands of public sector employees

and effectively eliminate almost all the BCGEU's power and bargaining rights.

It isn't the first time public sector employees have had to fight to protect their bargaining power. Since the BCGEU was formed in 1972, it has had to ward off several attacks on its rights by the Social Credit government.

But never has the attack been so fierce and unyielding as the latest measures adopted by the government.

And that's why contract talks broke off after only two days of negotiations. There wasn't much room for either side to manoeuvre: any concession by the union would almost be suicidal, while government negotiators were bound by impending legislation.

There is little hope anything will be resolved before the Oct. 31 deadline, when the BCGEU's contract expires. The union is in the process of taking a strike vote among its 35,000 members, and the result of that vote will be known Oct. 29.

What happens next depends on several factors, the most important being the state of other labor disputes across the province.

If it appears there is a good possibility of other unions joining the BCGEU on the picket line, a walkout can be expected. How long the walkout would last, or what form it would take, is anyone's guess.

The BCGEU may opt to employ the strategy it used in its last dispute with the government: revolving walkouts or selective picketing. Or it may stage a full-scale walkout first, and then return to work and employ other strategies.

If the forest unions are locked out or on strike at that time, it would give both the BCGEU and the forest unions added strength, especially at the bargaining table. Other public sector employees, such as municipal employees or hospital workers, could be inclined to join a strike if they see it would encompass private sector unions as well.

The possibility of a general strike, which is thrown around by many groups — including the media — without much understanding of how it would work, is another possibility.

The scenario could work like this: a bus driver is disciplined for refusing to

cross a BCGEU or another union's picket line. Bus drivers could then walk off the job. This same scene could be replayed in numerous industries.

The mass action would then take effect like a bushfire, slowly building momentum until it was all-encompassing.

But several things could happen before such an event. One is a major government concession, but a more likely occurrence is back-to-work legislation used by the government.

If it is passed in an unusual manner, such as an order-in-council, it could harden public opinion against them and increase the chance of a mass defiance of the order.

Whatever the result of this landmark battle between a right-wing government and a diversified opposition, it will certainly have an effect not only on B.C.'s industrial relations and social fabric, but on the rest of the country as well.

Conservative governments, if the Socreds succeed, could be inclined to pass similar legislation, and that could have long-lasting and far-reaching effects.

Hear that lonesome whistle blow: time running out on talks

By STAN PERSKY

It sounded like a chorus from "The Wabash Cannonball" or one of those other old railroading songs.

Premier and Chief Engineer Bill Bennett huffed and puffed, "The train is leaving the station. The legislation is proceeding."

Solidarity Coalition co-leader Art Kube declined the "all aboard" command from the premier. "If there's a train leaving the province, Bennett would do everybody a favor by putting all his advisers on it, and possibly himself too," replied Kube.

In all the steam engine smoke, there was only one thing clear about the past fortnight's on-again off-again efforts to get negotiations underway between the government and the Solidarity Coalition over Bennett's controversial legislative package. The Socreds seemed hell-bent on a head-on collision course with a sizeable proportion of the people they propose to govern.

The excitement began down at the station — the television station, that is. Various hotliners and editorialists decided at the end of September that "B.C. is on track for a wrenching confrontation." The Fourth Estate, when it wasn't busy announcing the death of Solidarity ("Solidarity close to disintegrating," declared a typical article by Province writer Barbara McLintock), spent its time nudging the two sides into one camera frame.

The broad-based labor and community coalition appeared willing to meet. Bennett was his familiar stubborn self. The premier gave a hard-line "no" to suggestions of compromise on Sept. 29.

Meanwhile, the allegedly dying Solidarity Coalition was alive and well in Burnaby that night. A 400-delegate provincial coalition assembly was preparing for the worst. The coalition unanimously passed a resolution announcing support for the B.C. Government Employees Union, about to begin doomed negotiations with a government intent on firing 1,600 of its mems at the end of October.

As well, the assembly set plans for a major Vancouver march on October 15, put the finishing touches to a two-day training program set for October 6-7, and laid the groundwork for a late-October delegated provincial conference to discuss policy. There was even a representative from the Workers Compensation Board union named, appropriately enough, K. C. Jones, who roused a cheer when he delivered a wad of cash raised in Richmond. It hardly looked like a movement about to roll over and play dead, despite press notices to the contrary.

Over the first weekend in October, Bennett had a change of mind (or polling information). He dispatched deputy Norman Spector to phone the Kube

household. A comedy of errors followed. Kube was out. Then a second phone call from a man claiming to be Bennett asked if Spector had called. But Spector denied that Bennett was directly involved. "It must have been an angel in the night. It was not us," claimed Spector.

Angels or not, by Monday morning, Oct. 3, Kube and coalition co-chairs Renate Shearer and Father Jim Roberts were riding the waves to Victoria, the legislative zoo where angels fear to tread.

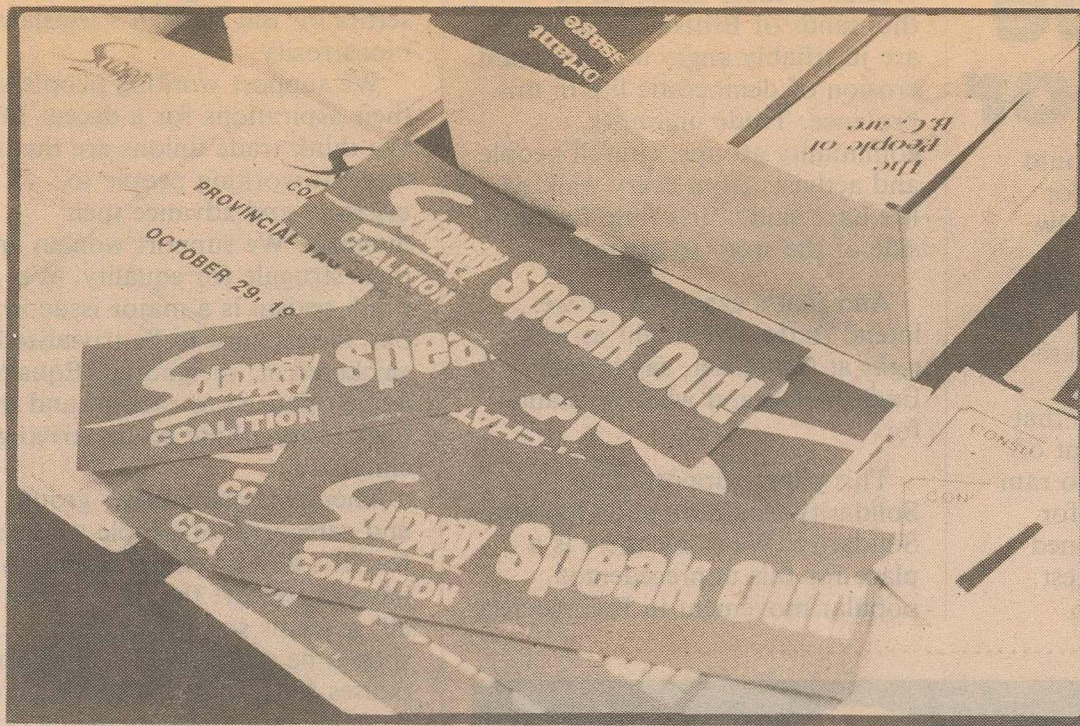
At first there appeared to be grounds for hope. The Solidarity trio understood that Bennett agreed to the coalition presenting its concerns to standing committees of the legislature. Presumably, while public hearings were taking place, the premier would cease railroading his bills through all-night sessions of the legislature.

Not so.

Bennett, never the clearest of communicators, issued a clarification. The government would continue to follow standard procedure, said the premier. Solidarity would have the same opportunity as anyone else to wave from trackside.

Although the media promptly jumped on the coalition, claiming they had been snookered, two days later, editorialists decided, on second thought, that the coalition proposal for standing committee hearings was a sane idea. The rapid collapse of government-BCGEU talks the day Bennett was bafflegabbing no doubt hastened the cause of compromise.

Solidarity tried again. Most of the week before last was spent on a coalition proposal for another meeting with Bennett. The coalition offered to put forward a wide-ranging position paper and bring its entire steering committee to the bargaining table with Bennett's



BEV DAVIES PHOTO

Solidarity: A history of its birth

Special to The Times

Colin Swinney is up at dawn to catch the first ferry from Sechart to Horsehoe Bay. From there the 29-year-old self-employed printer takes a bus the rest of the way to the Operating Engineer's hall in Burnaby. It's now ten o'clock and the July morning is no longer cool.

Just over two months earlier, on May 5, Colin Swinney had voted for what he thought was restraint. He was pleased with the election result, but on this day, eight days after Swinney's Socreds dropped their "restraint" package — the budget and 26 attendant pieces of legislation — on the province, Swinney feels duped. He considers himself as someone who believes in individual initiative — he would sell 30 of his "Nuke Kaiser Bill" T-shirts at today's meeting — but here he was, taking his place alongside 300 delegates representing half a million unionized workers in B.C. They were gathered to preside over the birth of Operation Solidarity.

July 7 shocked not only organized labor but just about everybody else to the left of the Fraser Institute. As polls show, Bill Bennett's version of restraint is not what the majority had in mind. And although labor groups had been bracing themselves for an attack, few thought the new Socred government would move so far, so fast, to the starboard side of Thatcherism-Reaganism. There had been warning signs, however, of the government's intentions. Bennett, in Kelowna a week before the legislative deluge, warned that his cabinet faced "unbearable and unthinkable" proposals to reduce anticipated deficits. He didn't say *who* would find them unbearable and unthinkable.

The meeting at the Operating Engineers' hall was called in the days following July 7, when labor, poor people, religious and community leaders and the news media were reeling from the blow, slowly realizing the extent of the damage. The meeting's organizers asked the 300 delegates, representing virtually every union in the province, to endorse "Operation Solidarity" — an attempt to bury inter-union hatchets to form a powerful coalition against the Socred agenda.

For four years, while Bennett's government struck blow after blow against organized labor, union leaders restrained militant members, urging them instead to wait for the election when, with their hard work, the NDP would inevitably win. When that election finally came the NDP campaigned on a platform of jobs and services.

For whatever reasons, the strategy failed, and a new one was now needed. "Restraint", it seemed, meant restraining the expectations of workers, tenants, women, minorities, students, pensioners, poor people and handicapped people. It meant lifting restraints on employers, bigots, landlords, the rich. The restrained couldn't afford to wait for another election to right things, and Operation Solidarity was created.

It was quickly joined by Coalition Against the Budget, an amalgam of independent and B.C. Federation of Labor-affiliated unions, civil rights advocates, gays, handicapped people and church groups, that had also popped up in the Lower Mainland in early July.

Led by George Hewison of the

cabinet as early as the Thanksgiving weekend. The premier countered with a suggestion to let individual cabinet ministers meet with Solidarity reps, and to follow that with a personal appearance on October 19. All the while, more legislation would barrel through the legislature.

While negotiation efforts sputtered, and the province drifted toward an end of October confrontation, The Sun conducted a helpful poll testing public opinion on the question of a general strike. The results were surprising. While a predictable 45 per cent of respondents said they would continue punching in, more than 25 per cent said they would support a general strike by staying off the job or seriously considering the move. Another quarter said they weren't working.

If the non-working are eliminated from the count, that means more than a third of those on the job are willing to pull the plug, a startlingly high number. For a movement whose demise had been announced almost weekly, it proved that reports of Solidarity's death had been greatly exaggerated.

Last weekend the Bennett machine produced a small flurry to defuse the situation. The government announced a relaxation on schoolboard constraints, and followed that with movement on the hotly-contested Bill 3. Although the afternoon media ballyhooed the move with frontpage headlines declaring "concessions," by the time the fine print had been read for the 6 o'clock evening news, commentators admitted that the changes merely tightened a few legal loopholes in the bill.

As of the middle of this week, prospects for negotiations remained at an impasse. Solidarity turned its attention to a major Vancouver march on Oct. 15 while the Socreds laced up their runners for the party's annual convention.

United Fisherman and Allied Workers Union, Jeff Keighly of the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers, and Jim Roberts, a Roman Catholic priest, the Coalition soon moved behind the Solidarity banner. By the end of the month the Solidarity Coalition had broadened dramatically beyond unions and now represented 750,000 people, virtually every organization or individual hurt by the Socred budget.

Meanwhile, anti-government demonstrations began to occur almost daily: 3,000 people at this park, 6,000 at that arena. On July 23, 25,000 rallied at Vancouver's B.C. Place, where Jack Munro, leader of the International Woodworkers of America, told the crowd, "This government has offended every decent and right-thinking person in this province."

The B.C. Federation of Police Officers bought half-page ads in newspapers featuring the silhouette of a beat cop asking: "How will I investigate allegations against politicians if I can be fired without cause?" The heads of the Anglican and Lutheran churches in Canada sent Bennett a letter questioning his policies. Federal cabinet ministers did the same. Even Bill Vander Zalm said Bennett's measures made him a little squeamish.

Operation Solidarity continued to grow in size and — well, in solidarity. On July 27, Operation Solidarity staged its biggest event yet, as 20,000 people demonstrated on the steps of the legislative building in Victoria. Two weeks later, 45,000 people filled old Empire Stadium in Vancouver in the biggest and most impressive display yet of anti-budget feeling.

What we stand for

If we were cynical, we would say: Thanks, Bill Bennett, for sparking the creation of a new weekly newspaper.

But cynicism, which is merely the affluent side of despair, is not something we can afford these days. The undemocratic and uncaring legislative package that the Social Credit government of British Columbia is trying to ram down our throats calls not for slick cynicism but for reasoned debunking, anger, and protest.

Solidarity Times has been

created because hundreds of thousands of British Columbians are justifiably angry at the blatant erosion of democratic life in this province. Trade unionists, community groups, church people and activists from every walk of life have said, "It's time for our side of the story to get told."

And that's exactly what we intend to do. We might as well, right at the outset, say in plain English who and what we stand for.

This paper supports the Solidarity Coalition and Operation Solidarity. We think there is a place for this unprecedented popular movement in B.C. society

that will last long after the dust settles on Bill Bennett's legislative monstrosity.

We support working people and their aspirations for a decent life. We think trade unions are the best way for working people to organize and advance their interests. We support women and their struggle for equality. We think sexism is a major issue in our society, not to be trivialized, snickered at, or ignored. Equally, we're opposed to racism, and we back every ethnic group striving to eliminate it.

There are many other groups and categories of people we stand for. It's almost embarrassing to have to reel off the list — after all, it seems so obvious they should be supported — until one pauses for a moment and realizes that the daily business media does not support these people. So let's make it clear: Solidarity Times supports the rights of the unemployed, injured workers, welfare recipients, lesbians and gays, native people, the handicapped, seniors and pensioners, tenants, defenders of human rights, environmental and peace activists, consumers, students, artists, and religious people seeking a socially relevant church.

The founding of Solidarity Times has been financially sponsored by the Solidarity Coalition and Operation Solidarity. It is a politically-independent weekly newspaper and it is not the official mouthpiece of any organization. We hope it will become the voice of a popular movement. And it can become that if 15,000 readers subscribe to it in the next three months. Unlike the others, we plan to be a newspaper accountable to our readers.

This is the first time in decades that trade unionists and community groups in B.C. have decided to sponsor a provincial newspaper. We will not disappoint you.

Solidarity Times

Editor
Stan Persky
Staff

Esther Shannon, Keith Baldrey, John Mackie, Debbie Wilson, Tom Hawthorn, Don Larventz, Bev Davies, Rob Joyce

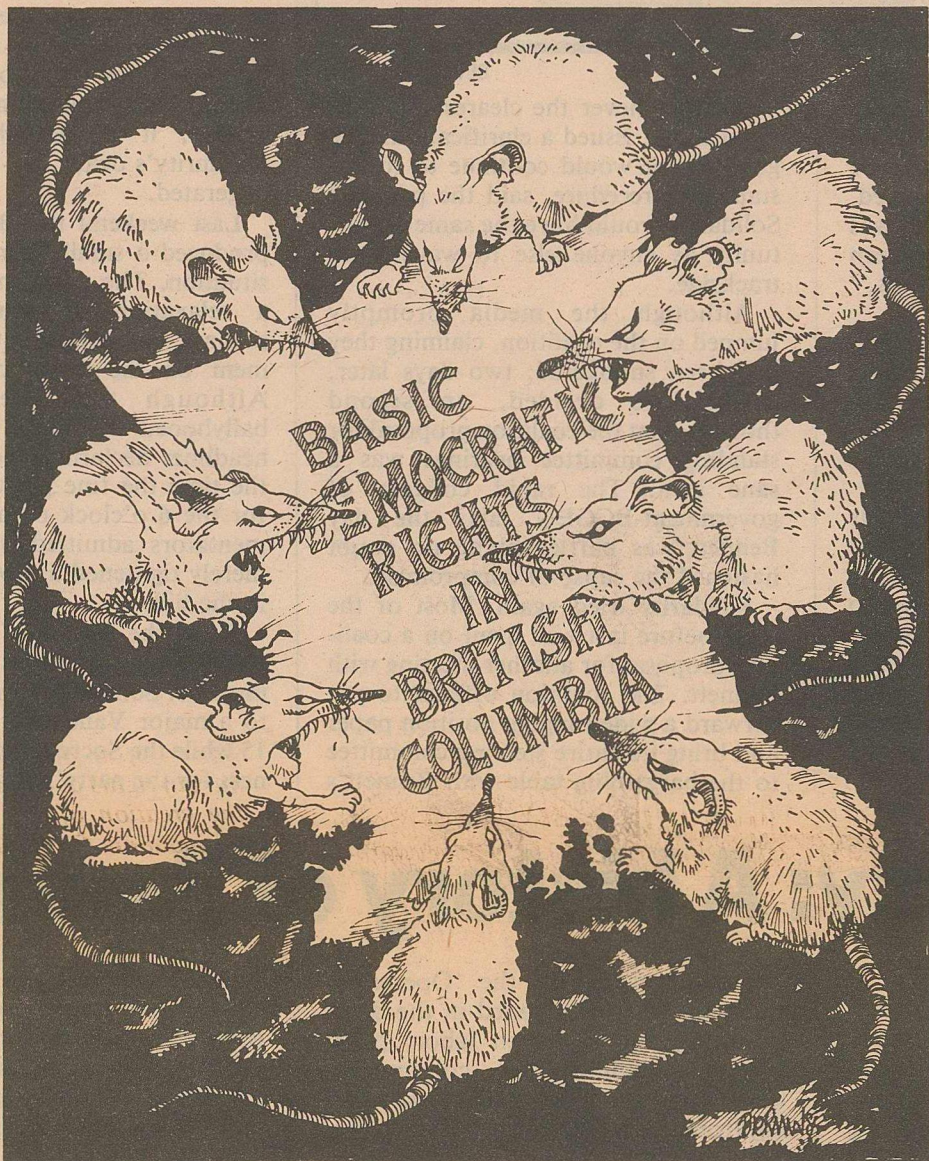
And special thanks to:
Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union for giving us space and letting us steal the name of their bulletin;

For our first issue, Solidarity Times hit the road.

Our Person in Victoria sat through a legislative all-nighter to get a feel for 1984, Sacred-style. A group of Island writers volunteered to form a Victoria bureau and do the snoring for us.

Our Trusty Agent didn't spend a dime in Nanaimo where a consumer strike is taking shape. We combed the bushes in Coquitlam, rushed to the airport to greet our Ace Reporter from Terrace, talked to teachers everywhere (they're getting angrier at the government everyday), investigated the sandwich lines where some of the 20 per cent unemployed in the 18-24 age group were waiting for bread, learned about the Catholic Church in Nicaragua from a visiting Margaret Randall, and slept through the World Series.

With our other tentacles, we grabbed the constantly-ringing phone, invented a newspaper office, and found the first of 15,000 subscribers. The Sun, 'OR, CBC, and BCTV publicised us and even flashed a picture of Canadian hero Norman Bethune residing on the wall of one of our resident geniuses as we all trudged through the Valley of the Shadow of Restraint.



Recovery: Not even fun while it lasted

By STAN PERSKY

As soon as I saw the headline last spring, I knew something was wrong.

It said: "Lalonde says recovery underway; jobless to remain high."

It was one of those messages buried in the business pages of the daily press that you usually pass by without a second thought.

Hey, wait a minute, I said to myself. How can you say "recovery" is underway if "jobless to remain high"? "Recovery" means the jobless recover from being unemployed, doesn't it? Or does it?

That's when I began asking a simple question: "Recovery for whom?" (My mother taught me to always use correct grammar when asking embarrassing questions.)

I asked it all through the jobless B.C. summer of '83. But there was never an answer. Just more headlines hyping the recovery while the despairing baked on Wreck Beach (on cloudy days it was more modestly called a "fragile" recovery). I did my best to believe in this frequently-announced recovery, but frankly, I didn't notice much recovery in B.C. for woodworkers, miners, civil servants, teachers, welfare recipients, senior citizens or the young. Who was recovering? I asked myself.

Finally, as autumn crept down the Fraser River from Prince George, I got my answer. The Province business section headline of Sept. 26, 1983, let the cat out of the bag: "Bank profits soar despite economy." According to business reporter Patrick Durrant, "Combined net profits of 11 Canadian-owned banks were \$451 million in the quarter ended July 31, up 14 per cent from a year earlier . . . if earnings continue at the pace set in the first three quarters of fiscal 1983, the banks will establish a new full-year profit record, easily surpassing the \$1.75 billion they earned in 1981."

And there was even more good news from Back East: "A survey of 375 companies by the Toronto Globe and Mail shows they had combined second-quarter earnings of \$1.78 billion, up 38.7 per cent from the depressed profits of a year earlier." (Psychiatrists, take note: how do you cheer up a "depressed" profit?)

I was a little disappointed. I even had an unpatriotic thought: "Are they saying recovery simply means the restoration of pre-recession profit levels?" But being a loyal positive-thinking subject of Premier Bill Bennett's regime of restraint, I put seditious broodings behind me. Well, now that the bankers and factory

owners have recovered, maybe the rest of us will soon recover too," I reasoned.

No such luck. Three days later, the front page of the Globe and Mail declared in barely uncertain terms: "Economic recovery: is it all but over?" Said the Globe's Peter Cook: "The Conference Board of Canada has warned that the best of the current economic recovery may already be over, and growth in the economy will be sluggish for the rest of the 1980s . . ." Doesn't sound like much fun, does it?

But if the much-touted "recovery" is a hoax, then what about the rest of the gobbledygook thrown at us by Bill Bennett, Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher? Naturally, after having it poured through our ears a million times in the last year, we're all for "restraint" (nor do we kick small dogs). I mean, didn't Premier Bill swear up-and-down that the way out of "recession" is "restraint" and "restraint" leads straight to "recovery"? But if "restraint" doesn't lead to recovery, then what's the point? And if recovery is an illusion, is it possible that restraint is merely a vicious hoax as well?

Just asking.

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EDITORIAL

BERMAN

COMMON SENSE

In the Valley of Restraint

By LANNY BECKMAN

Lately it seems as if everyone in B.C. has joined the Province-wide Church of Restraint. Everywhere people rush to proclaim not only their own devotion to this modern diety but everyone else's as well.

However, Church leader Bill Bennett does not preside over a contented congregation. His is a House divided. On one side of the aisle are the unquestioning followers of his fundamentalist teachings which demand the harshest measures of universal austerity as enunciated in the Holy Book of the Fraser Institute.

On the other side are the renegade followers of Lay Preacher Art Kube. They, too, pay homage to the penny-pinching deity but dispute Rev. Bennett's orthodox interpretation of the Gospel. The will of Restraint, they agree, must be done, but with fairness and compassion.

The rift between the two factions has grown so wide that they now have almost nothing in common except their professed belief in Almighty Restraint. The one other

thing they have in common is their actual disbelief in it.

God Helps Those Who Take a Big Helping for Themselves

The more stridently Rev. Bennett sings the praises of Restraint, say his opponents, the more brashly he breaks its commandments. They accuse him of acts of charity, and worse, of upsizing the Church. They claim that each year he spends more of the Church's money than ever before; that he commits the cardinal sin of sinking the Church ever deeper into debt; and that he allows the Church elders to cup uncouthed fistfuls from the collection plates. And in a moment of unrestrained blasphemy, he erected a majestic monument to his Lord — a Megatemple which will accommodate 60,000 money-changers and other assorted worshippers.

Those Who Have Known Only Restraint Shall Know More Of It

Rev. Bennett's followers fly to his defence. Has he not, they ask, shown his devotion by withholding Church funds from the poor, the

sick and the disabled? Has he not drawn upon his deepest convictions to refuse aid to bettered women, abused children and the propertyless? Has he not thrown Church secretaries and their co-workers into the snow? To these questions the Reverend's opponents have no reply. Some wonder why the wrath of Restraint is reserved for those who have sinned by failing to become rich.

By comparison Preacher Kube offers up praise half-heartedly, certainly without the firing-and-brimstone hysteria of Rev. Bennett. In fact according to the text of as yet unauthenticated sermons leaked from Kube's tent, he may soon publicly renounce his faith in Restraint, thus taking the considerable risk of having his career burned at the stake (as happened in the heat of the mid-day Sun to poor Brother Barrett during the Church's last election).

According to Kube's heretical texts, Restraint is neither the Way Out of the Wilderness nor the Path to the Glory of Recovery. It is rather

an unnatural force which seeks to make water and gold flow from a lowly to an elevated place, and is content to be half successful. The sermons advocate Generosity where there was Miserliness — more, not less, for the poor and the sick, more for rape victims, more for disabled children, and more jobs everywhere, none to be lost anywhere.

The Bennett Church is sure to greet these recommendations as naive and earthly dreams which fail to appreciate the rigors of heavenly logic.

The sermons, however, claim that buckets of gold are cloistered throughout the Church, enough to banish most of the horrors of Restraint. And if the Church coffers run dry, there reputedly are secular institutions whose main function is to issue loans to those who need them.

In conclusion, the documents argue that Work — the arch enemy of Restraint — is a Good Thing and ought to be made available to all. And further, that Rev. Bennett's lofty goal of universal unemployment ought to be indefinitely postponed, perhaps until the after-life.

We've got room for your words

We want to hear from you. Solidarity Times is looking forward to your letters, comments, criticisms and opinions.

Here's how to Put It In Writing: write to Letters, Solidarity Times, 545 W. 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1K9.

Letters must be signed and bear the address of the writer (name and address will be withheld upon request). Solidarity Times may edit letters for brevity, clarity and legality.



You can say that again . . .

Jack London, dean of law, University of Manitoba, speaking on human rights at a luncheon marking the creation of the Rhodes Smith Foundation for Human Rights in Winnipeg:

Throughout the world today, the powers of oppression are rampant. Dictatorships flourish and poverty and tyranny are the birthrights of most of the world's population. In Europe there is a return to conservative, neo-Fascist movements and undercurrents which are resulting in more and more terrorism, synagogue burnings, insidious and invidious discrimination, fear and anger...

In the United States, trickle-down Reaganism has cut a swath through social and educational programs, leaving those already defenceless even more so. Legal aid services have been cut, milk programs abandoned, welfare reduced and made more difficult to obtain, educational assistance and quality lowered, tolerance diminished.

One senses a return to the notion of the "survival of the fittest," a phenomenon perhaps acceptable in the animal world, but above which humankind was expected to rise.

There are many, all too many, who have been unhappy with the drive for increased understanding and expanded human rights. There have been many who since the sixties have chomped at the bit waiting for their turn again, their opportunity to put the dogooders in their place, which is somewhere, anywhere else, to bring us back to what the moral majority, that most insidious of movements, might describe as the values that made this continent great. Yet, in hushed tones, when pressed, they will add that "after all, for the good of the nation, that is the greatest good for the greatest number, one can excuse the odd victim here and there." Very utilitarian, very dangerous, and very hurtful.

What's in a mandate? Bill!

By STAN PERSKY

Solidarity Coalition co-chairperson Art Kube has been trying to get a very simple idea into Bill Bennett's head. Clearly, it's a thankless task. Given the ragdoll stuffing inside the premier's cranium, getting anything to penetrate is a chore. And as for Bennett's bullyboys in the legislative zoo, an idea is the last thing they want to hear.

But for the rest of us, it's an idea worth understanding, and it's at the centre of the now four-month-long controversy over the draconian Social Credit legislative package.

The word is "mandate." According to the Concise Oxford dictionary a mandate is the "political authority supposed to be given by electors to parliament." The point reiterated by Kube, and the cause of the present hue-and-cry, is that Bennett is exceeding his mandate. That is, when British Columbians elected the Socreds last May by a relatively narrow margin (49 per cent to 45 per cent), they weren't giving Bennett the authority to tear up the rules of society as we've known them and do anything he damn well pleased.

Is a mandate a legal concept? No. It's a matter of custom, tradition

and convention. The last major Canadian squabble over the difference between legality and tradition was sparked by the 1981-82 Canadian constitutional debate. The Supreme Court of Canada was asked whether Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau had the right to unilaterally repatriate the constitution without getting provincial approval. The court replied: legally, yes; but, by tradition, no. In the end, Trudeau bowed to custom and succeeded in securing substantial provincial approval for his plans.

Are some mandates more powerful than others? Sure. If a government scores a crushing popular victory, it's obviously got more leeway than if it scrapes through in a squeaker. Nonetheless, even in a virtual one-party province like Alberta, Premier Peter Lougheed observes some traditional constraints on his power.

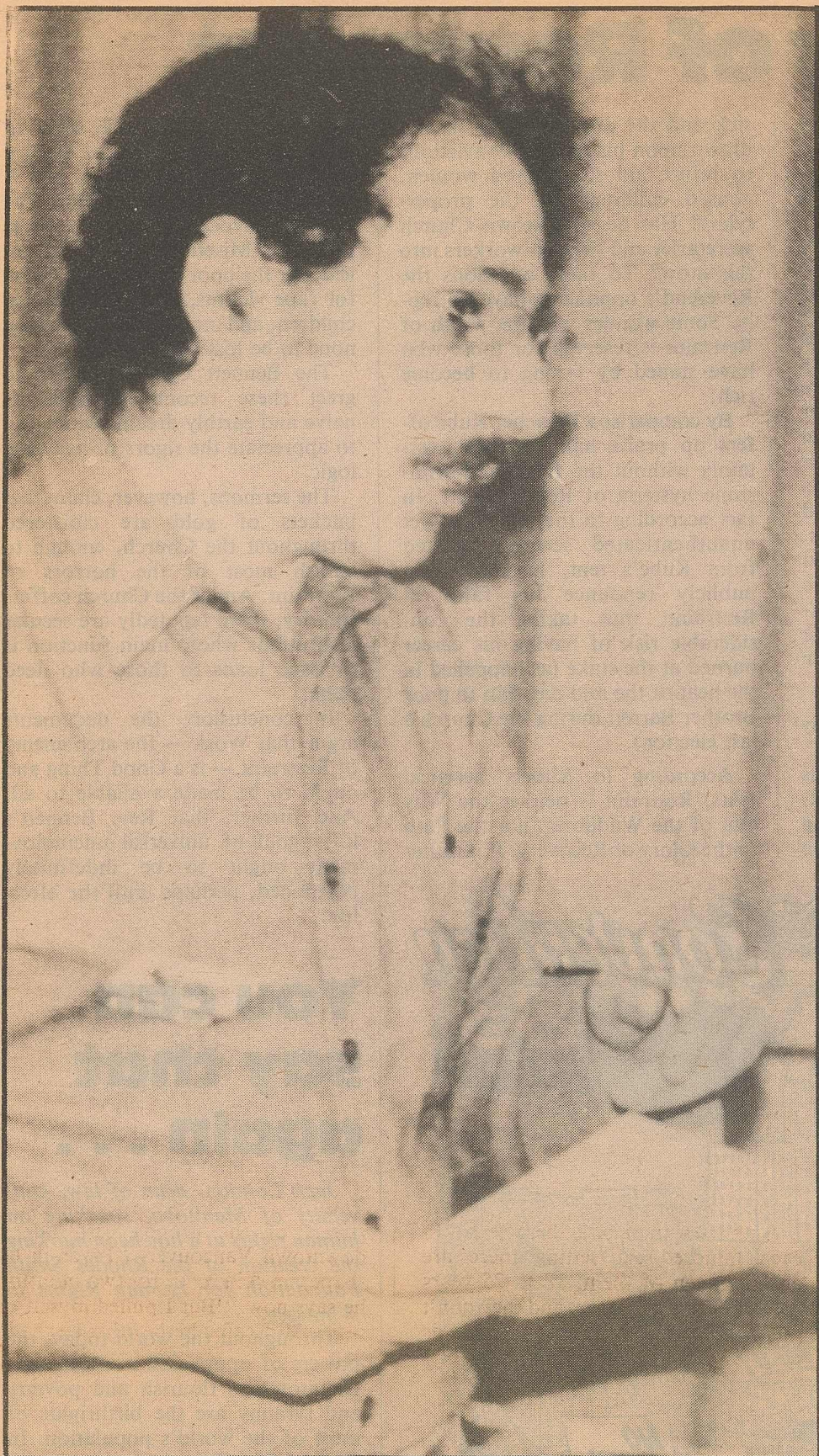
Another way for a government to firm up its mandate is to announce its more controversial plans ahead of time, during the campaign. If it wins the election, then it clearly has the right to do the things it promised to do.

Obviously, neither of these things

happened in British Columbia. Bill Bennett didn't win in a landslide; nor did he detail his post-election legislative intentions (in fact, he didn't even bother to bring down a budget that would let people know about our financial condition).

No one is denying Bennett's right to govern. Nor is anyone denying his right to introduce measures people don't agree with (that's the grist for the mill of letters-to-the-editor writers, critics, and protesters). But what's happening in B.C. today is qualitatively different from the usual grumbling about politics. And apologists for the government are trimming the truth when they pretend that a question of mandate isn't involved.

When Bennett was re-elected last May, the people (including many of those who voted for him) weren't authorizing the Socreds to rip up the Human Rights Commission, wipe out the Rentalsman dispute settling process, fire workers without cause, undermine collective bargaining, destroy the regional planning process, centralize educational decision-making or eliminate a raft of basic social services.



Mel Lehan: "They shouldn't blame themselves."

Recovery begins at action centre

By KEITH BALDREY

Earnest and energetic, Mel Lehan is trying to explain to the two women sitting across the clutter from him how this office works. Trying, because the telephone interrupts every 30 seconds. Finally, exasperated, he asks one of the women to field a call. Without hesitating, she answers the caller's question about unemployment insurance.

Lehan grins. "Great, another volunteer. Fan-tastic."

It's a constantly recurring scene at the Unemployed Teachers' Action Centre, an office set up by the B.C. Teachers' Federation to help teachers cope with unemployment. Since it was formed last March, the centre has helped more than 1,000 teachers, says Lehan, the centre's co-ordinator. Offered are psychological and emotional support as well as help in applying for jobs, unemployment insurance and welfare.

"The first things we do when someone walks through that door is to try and relax them," says Lehan. "We've got to let people know that they're not forgotten and not alone."

Unemployed teachers, like other unemployed people, tend to blame themselves for their situation. "We try to get it across to them that unemployment is a social problem and not an individual problem. They shouldn't blame themselves for something that is largely society's and the governments fault," says Lehan.

A gauge of the centre's success is the large number of volunteers who staff the office. One of them is Gail Reser, a primary school teacher from Victoria.

She's had no luck in finding teaching work, despite her willingness to move to any part of the province. "I'm willing to go anywhere, but they aren't even hiring in isolated areas anymore."

Part of her problem is her lack of specialized training. "They seem to want specialization these days, so I may go back to university. I don't know yet."

But Reser said additional training

could also hurt her chances for employment. "Schools, especially now with their limited funds, will be more apt to hire someone who is fresh out of school, the kids. That way they won't have to pay them as much. You have to pay someone with a master's degree the master level rate."

She sighs and shakes her head. "It's just one big catch-22."

Another volunteer, Patricia Wispinski, is a substitute teacher who decided to go back for more education. But after completing her masters degree qualifying year, she still can't get a job.

"I've tried every year for the last four years. I'm beginning to believe I'll never get on the substitute list," she says. Wispinski is a single parent, and since April has supported her 12-year-old son on a monthly \$640 welfare cheque. Of that, she pays \$375 in rent, leaving just \$265 for other expenses.

Wispinski says she picks up extra money from tutoring a couple of hours a week, but her low income hampers her ability to teach. "I can't afford resource materials or teaching aids."

Wispinski has almost given up finding a job in Canada. "I'm thinking of moving out of the country. It's rough to do with a kid and no money, but I've got to do something."

But the primary purpose of the centre is not to find jobs for unemployed teachers. "We'll help anyway we can, but we're not a job placement centre," says Lehan. "Employers occasionally phone us, and we're trying to reach out more to them, but it's not in our mandate."

"Our services take many forms, whether it's just talking to each other or whether it's providing information and advice for applying for unemployment insurance or welfare."

Although the centre has matched up quite a few people with jobs, according to Lehan, the centre's main attraction seems to be its typewriters and resume service.

A weekly workshop series, which of-
See page 12: TEACHERS

Boycott gives a new twist to restraint

By KEITH BALDREY

NANAIMO — Overlooking this city's harbor is a large federal government development sign. The sign is faded now, a weathered reminder of Nanaimo's development craze of several years ago.

Most of the large development projects here are "on hold," in the optimistic language of Nanaimo's citizens, and the boomtown feeling has been replaced by a brooding depression. One person in five here is out of work, victims of the economy and their city's dependence on the forest industry.

Like people in other towns across B.C. and Canada, residents of the Hub City are frustrated with government economic policies and their own seeming inability to influence the people who design those policies.

But some here are trying a new tack to get the provincial government to withdraw its restraint package. It's a consumer boycott, and according to its organizers it's designed to convince the business com-

munity that restraint will do them more harm than good, and to show people the "dangers" of Socred economic policies.

The boycott was started by the area's teachers, led by Jim Howden, a serious young man with a broadcaster's voice who describes himself as a small-c conservative.

Howden's first act in the boycott was to return his credit cards, and he has helped prepare a list of examples of "personal restraint" to distribute through the community.

Some of the suggestions include avoiding restaurants, bars, movies, entertainment, and buying only the essentials needed for daily living.

"The whole idea behind this is to get across to people what the hell would happen if there were extreme restraint practiced by consumers," says Howden. "It's necessary to do this to illustrate just where the premier of this province is taking us."

The main argument against

the boycott has been that it will hurt only small businesses. But Howden says they were hurt by the government's restraint measures.

"The business community doesn't realize that consumer spending will go down under these policies. They have a preconceived notion that what the Socreds do is automatically good for business. We've got to change that notion."

As for the charge that ordinary people will be hurt by the boycott, Howden says: "There are thousands being hurt already and who are going to be hurt by the government's extreme and radical policies."

He said local boards of trade and large corporations are the backbone of Socred support, and doesn't think smaller businesses are protected by Socred policies. He also disputes claims that the boycott is being used to punish businesses that voted for Social Credit in the last provincial election. "The election is over. It's time to move on and do something now."

Howden comments that the boycott could spread out of control, forever changing Nanaimo's consuming habits. "Sure, it could be frightening," says Howden. "The local paper has said it could be like an H-bomb waiting to go off. Some of the fear comes from the fact that no one knows who would call it off."

But those fears are groundless unless the boycott proves to be popular. And that won't be known for some time.

"How can I tell if someone is boycotting my store?" says Wilf, a camera store owner. "It's like asking what the queen had for breakfast. I don't have a clue." Sandra Lysenko, a food store operator, said it would be difficult to gauge the boycott's success until several months pass. "The economy is so bad anyway, and I don't think we could just compare our store's grosses to last year's," she said.

Howden calls the boycott a "conservative action" and a

"twentieth century" response to unfair government policies. "We really have very few weapons. I think the track record of a general strike is limited. What the hell else besides the boycott do we have to use? If it succeeds the government will have to worry about it happening again."

He says the key to the boycott's success is extending it to other parts of the province. "It has to be widespread so the government will take it seriously. If it's only a local action, it would take too long to get some response," he says. "We're willing to do this, but not in isolation."

The local solidarity coalition committee and the giant Hub City Co-op have endorsed the idea and is encouraging its members to participate. Coalition committees in Salmon Arm and Victoria have also expressed their support, and Howden says his group has been in contact with its lower mainland counterpart.

KIDS

on the SKIDS

By DEBBIE WILSON

The line grows from the kitchen door at the Franciscan Sisters of the Atonement convent. By noon it stretches along East Cordova, turns the corner down Dunlevy, and continues up the alley. A thousand men and women huddle by the convent railing under a grey and damp Vancouver day, waiting for the biggest meal of the month on the city's skid road soup circuit.

Some of them have been coming here for years. They're the ones with the empty eyes, sticky hair, flaccid skin, the bloated features of alcoholics or the gaunt faces of addicts.

Some of them remember the 1930s — when the lines first grew long — but more and more of them these days are 17-year-olds, 18-year-olds, who have never had a real job. Many are recent arrivals from the other end of the country, here because they searched for work along the road and found none. Because Calgary gives them a few hostel and meal tickets and sends them on, and because there aren't any missions at the end of the ferry ride to Vancouver Island. Because the Vancouver skids is where they land, the Terminal City, the end of the line.

At one o'clock, the first hundred turn in their tickets. A volunteer waves them into the basement hall. Another volunteer ushers them briskly to four long tables, each one with 25 place settings, paper plates and plastic forks. Coffee, dinner and dessert are cooling there. The meals are small, but clean, and the food isn't bad and coffee flows strong into bottomless cups. One pale and silent man throws up — on himself, on the floor, in a box Brother Tim passes under his chin. A couple of guys try to get rough but don't get far; Brother Tim is a big bruiser who used to work in Ryker's Island prison in New York city until his bosses began to worry that he was starting to walk, to talk, to look too much like the cons. He's the bouncer at the Sisters Atonement.

The air smells of boozy sweat. Sometimes, leaning over a thin man to take a plate or fill a cup, you catch that

odd, acrid smell of the rooming houses, of piss-stained linoleum and empty wine bottles in musty hallways.

The afternoon wears on and some hands begin to shake. It's Sunday and two weeks to go until the next welfare cheque. No money, no booze. Those few who've managed to procure something to dull the day teeter to chairs. Later, outside again, they walk on the backs of their heels as though the ground might suddenly shift and send them reeling.

A small army of parishioners who drive in from the suburbs are the volunteer waiters. After each serving they sweep the debris into shiny-new green plastic garbage bags as each diner leaves, wipe each table and set another hundred places. One hundred more men and women file in, eat and leave. The whole cycle takes about a half hour: reset, file in, eat, leave. The

**They might sleep
in a cheap hotel
but they
just don't fit in**

volunteers, teenagers and matrons and clean-faced men, are dressed and powdered and pressed against the contagion of poverty like they might bundle against the cold.

The seven Sisters of Atonement move among the diners and the servers, grey hair tucked under brown habits, dispensing instructions, coffee and assistance. But no prayers. That's their policy. It's the first meal in a long time for many of the diners, and they eat as if they would swallow the plate whole. For the sisters, it's another day. Tomorrow there will be sandwiches at four and another line at the door.

The line doesn't shrink when the evening business pages announce

renewed investor confidence. It grows steadily in spite of the declarations by government leaders and business analysts that economic recovery is just around the corner.

And then there are these kids. In each hundred-seat setting there are about fifteen of them, 18 to 25 years old. They don't stagger, and they don't puke under the tables. Their hands don't shake when they hold out their cups for a refill. And they look away from the sisters and the volunteers, ashamed, unaccustomed to charity.

These kids are different from the others. They might sleep in a cheap hotel, or near a heating duct in the lane, like some other diners; they might stand in the same soup lines, eat out of the same industrial trash bins. But they just don't fit in.

Ed Maksylewicz and Dwayne Rockwell lean against the hedge and peer from under the umbrella they share, looking like a couple of heavy metal fans waiting to buy concert tickets. They're got no use for the kind of people who settle into a life on welfare. They've got plans and they hang on to them with a determined grip.

They're not asking for much: a grade twelve diploma, steady work, maybe even a trade and a union card. They know times are hard — who wouldn't, standing in a sandwich line 600-long in the rain. "The way things are now it's probably gonna take five years before it's better," says Ed. But somehow they feel that it doesn't have very much to do with them personally.

Ed is 18, Dwayne is 19. They blew into Vancouver from Edmonton a year ago. Life was going nowhere there, and winter was creeping up fast. "I thought maybe Vancouver would show me something," says Dwayne.

Within a couple of days their money ran out. "So I decided to try my hand at shoplifting. I went to the Safeway and they caught me with about nine dollars worth of steaks. They gave me four months." What Vancouver showed Dwayne was the inside of Pine Ridge prison camp.

He was paroled after two and a half months of work at three dollars a day in the prison sawmill.

Meanwhile, Ed did another kind of time in the rooming houses and on the streets of the grubby east side of downtown Vancouver. "I was in bad shape, on skid road, for two months," he says now. "But I pulled myself out of it. All I came here with was a shirt, pants and a jacket. Now I have a stereo. A TV. I'm clean all the time."

Marcel Petrin, 20, is also clean, so clean he would take the award if there were any in a life spent in missions and under bridges, for best-disguised down-and-outer. In a fuzzy grey sweat-shirt and a designer jacket, he looks like he's on his way to a university lecture. In a soft Quebecois accent he explains: "I try to show that I'm not a bum. I used \$130 of my first welfare cheque here to buy myself a winter jacket and a shirt." That left him \$240 for a month's food and shelter.

Later, in a greasy spoon nearby, Marcel wearily tells of hitting the road after finishing three months' military training and hitching around Canada and the States. "I'm used to sleeping under a bridge or something like that. There's missions everywhere but a lot of the missions are full. I try the most to keep away from people who take drugs and drink."

He almost settled down in one Oregon town, where he worked for nine months as a cook in a mission, but despite more than 150 sponsors he couldn't get his working papers. There just aren't enough jobs for Americans as it is, he was told. So he was off again.

And so he waits: for work, for welfare-sponsored job training, for the next cheque (they last about two weeks into the month, he complains), for word from the army on his application to re-enlist. "I should never have left the army," he says. "It's a career, you know."

He describes his day. "When I get up in the morning I go to Manpower. Then I go back to my room. There's

See page 12: KIDS

Women's health, man's budget

Turning out the lights on tenants

By DEBBIE WILSON

The Rentalsman is alive and well and living in Greece.

Four of his officers are frustrated and demoralized and talking to a reporter.

His return is expected in mid-November.

Their pink slips are expected October 31.

The officers cannot be identified. They are sworn from making public statements. They are the people who settle disputes between landlords and tenants. When they are able, arguments over maintenance costs or security deposits are resolved with their mediation between the two. When they cannot, they can order a landlord to return rent collected illegally for example. But they won't do it much longer.

The officers sit, tossing about stories of past cases, reminiscences between friends. They retell stories about the worst landlords, not only the big ones but the small ones who sometimes shoot the glass out of tenants' windows or demand "favors" from women they rent to.

Lately, though, there are more stories about the office's fate.

One tells about an officer who got the usual call the other day: "Are you still open?" He looked around. Paused. "Well . . . I don't know," he said.

The other officers hoot with laughter. It is the perfect answer.

Management told the officers they should try to go out 'with class.' Professionally.

"I think we have accomplished that," says one.

Another: "I'm surprised that we have been able to carry on so well."

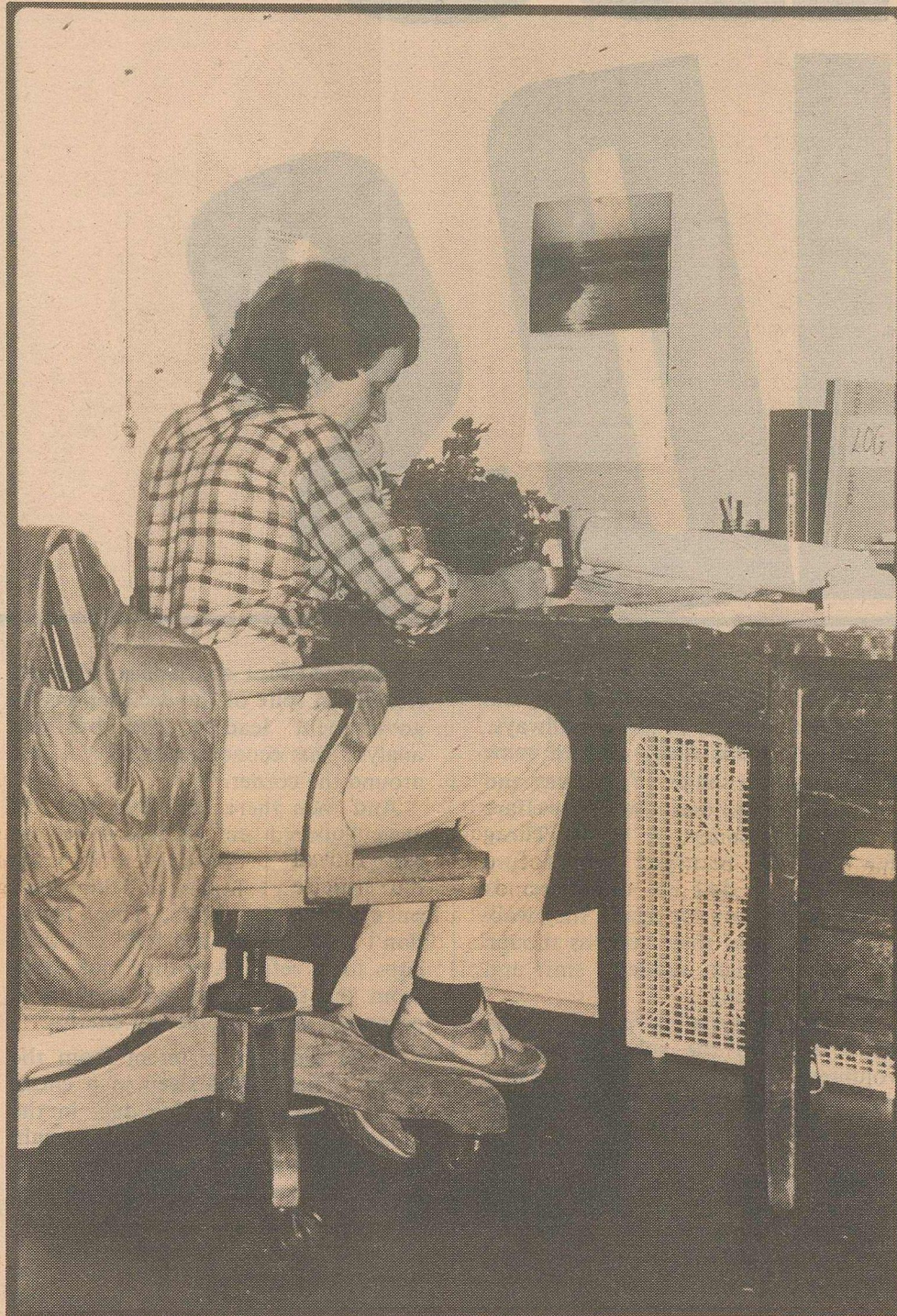
"Very professionally," says a third.

It is obvious that these people care very deeply about their work. When Rentalsman Jim Patterson returns from his leave of absence in Greece next month, only 50 employees, mostly management, will remain. The messy part should be over. But one officer holds out hope still that just maybe they will still be there.

"We listen to the radio madly, read papers and watch TV to try to find out what is happening to our lives because

By DEBBIE WILSON

Maybe B.C.'s cabinet let their fingers do the walking through the health budget. Or it might have been part of government incentives to business; to cut printing costs for B.C. Telephone's Yellow Pages. But every listing under "Family Planning Information Centres" in the Vancouver Yellow Pages is off the province's funding roster.



Beth Hutchinson

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

nobody else is telling us. We don't know if we're gone tomorrow or gone today or gone yesterday."

"And you can forget about the government's precious 'productivity' under these working conditions," says another woman.

"People can't plan their lives with this uncertainty."

They experience fits of depression waiting for news about their jobs. One thinks he was used. After shouldering the staggering workloads and stress of Vancouver's housing crisis for the last couple of years he is simply being discarded, he says.

"Then you have the clients who come in and say: 'Well, what about next week? What about next month?'"

A lot of people don't come in at all these days, though. Business has slowed. Even the legal aid office thought the Rentalsman's office was already closed. The office moved to another part of downtown Vancouver days before the budget was introduced. Some officers think a new climate of fear keeps tenants from seeking their rights. But it is picking up again. And officers are processing claims as usual. Until the changes to the Landlord and

Tenant Act pass in the legislature only they can handle disputes.

"Every client I've had, landlord and tenant alike, has been appalled that the office is going.

"Since July 7 I've had the losing party get up after a hearing and shake my hand and say 'Well, thanks. You were fair. Sorry to see you go.'"

Some landlords tell them they wanted rent controls quashed, but not the Rentalsman's office.

"We think we're a restraining factor for those on the edge of sanity by just being here," says an officer. "Some of this element thinks we're already impotent."

Says another: "Just this week I had a tenant come in and say his landlord had seized his belongings. So I phoned the landlord and said, 'So, are you holding his things?' He said 'yes'. I said, 'Do you know that is illegal?' He said 'no.' 'Well, it is,' I told him. 'Who's going to stop me,' he said. 'We are.' " The landlord returned the tenant's possessions.

The Rentalsman will still be able to handle some steep rent increases with the limited rent review powers it will

See page 12: RENT

The Vancouver Women's Health Collective doesn't even make it under the Family Planning heading in the phone book, but birth control information is what most of the 10,000 women who use the organization's services each year are after. They're after that, and a selection of other services that read like the index page of a medical school textbook: for premenstrual problems, unplanned pregnancies, and information on nearly every sort of health problem common to women.

But a lot of those services won't be offered there for a long time to come. The organization's yearly \$119,000 grant was killed by the provincial government on Sept. 8. But the centre will remain, somewhere, somehow, providing any service it can with whatever cash it can muster.

They have lost some business — if you want to call it that — since the funding cut kicked in. It seems people think the collective has dispersed. But not one member has yet left the group.

For now the centre operates from the same noisy mid-town intersection of Broadway and Granville streets, up a steep flight of stairs.

Telephone callers are greeted more often lately by a recorded message listing hours and asking callers to protest the funding cut in letters to health minister Jim Nielsen. The office hours are nearly cut in half.

The axe to their grant caught health collective members by surprise, says five-year member Beth Hutchinson. They filed their grant application as usual this year and were told by health ministry staff there would be no problem getting it.

"When the budget came out it looked less promising. Then the ministry of health said that portion of their budget was not affected." It was finally announced a month after the July budget was introduced.

"They still haven't directly told us a reason."

Through the newspapers, they learned that the ministry of health justified the cut because the health collective is not a clinical service or a direct service. Not true, says Hutchinson.

"We do have clinical services like diaphragm and cervical cap fitting. And we have a good reputation for doing those fittings thoroughly and properly. We have a free pregnancy testing. We do emergency counselling and referral with women with unwanted and unplanned pregnancies. Much of the work we do is very direct."

And from the legislature, they heard that at least one Social Credit government member justified the cut because he thought the collective an acrimonious collection of man-haters and free-lovers whom his constituents would not want to fund. That member was Don Campbell from the riding of Okanagan North. He had heard they operated some sort of service for . . .

Lesbians. Perhaps he forgot to poll the lesbians in his constituency on the issue. It was a statement in the small-minded tradition of his predecessor in the riding, Pat Jordan, who once told the opposition MLA Rosemary Brown, a black woman, to "go back where you came from."

Says Hutchinson: "It is obvious that a significant proportion of the female population is lesbian. Therefore, certainly our services should be of use to lesbian women."

See page 12: HEALTH

FATH AND REVOLUTION

Special to The Times

A powerful mix of Christian faith and socialist zeal has inspired Nicaragua's unique social experiment, according to an author who has lived in that Central American country for the past three years.

Margaret Randall, author of a new book called *Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution*, said Nicaragua is the first country where Christians have sided with a popular revolution and opposed the status quo.

"The Nicaraguan Christian community — practising Catholics, priests and nuns — are completely immersed in the revolutionary project and see their politics as the practice of their Christian faith," said Randall.

"Through their Christian faith, they opted for the poor and for social justice."

Randall, a 45-year-old author of oral histories on Cuba and Nicaragua, said that without Christian support the Nicaraguan revolution would likely have failed and the current Sandinista government would inevitably fall.

Christians, especially radical clergy, were pivotal in the insurgency which overthrew the dictatorship of Anastasio Somoza, she said.

The Nicaraguan experience included Christians as well as socialists in a broad-based opposition representing all sectors of society. The church, for decades a conservative force in Central America, allied with the left because of the extreme repression of the Somoza family which came to power in 1936 in the wake of U.S. intervention.

Most of those clerics active in the revolution continue to support the Sandinista government. Two priests hold key cabinet positions while another two priests are members of Nicaragua's powerful Council of State.

The high degree of Christian involvement in Nicaragua has undermined U.S. president Ronald Reagan's attempt to discredit that country's socialism by pegging its leadership as the "anti-Christ", said Randall.

"The U.S. is having a hard time attacking Nicaragua because its revolution was not Communist. It is really a revolutionary project of political pluralism and a mixed economy which is creating a unique experiment."

Nevertheless, Reagan has received help, she said, from the Nicaraguan Catholic church's hierarchy, a conservative group of powerful bishops who have consistently opposed the socialist reforms and attacked clerical involvement in the government.

These bishops, led by Miguel Obando y Bravo, the archbishop of Managua, feel threatened by the government's ideological power and have tried to cause a rupture between church and state by claiming that the Christian faith is being suppressed by the Sandinistas.

This split between the right-wing hierarchy and the radical rank-and-file clergy came to the forefront when Pope John



Author Margaret Randall

Paul visited Nicaragua in March this year. The Pope, in a clear attempt to aid the bishops, called for church unity, railed against the involvement of clerics in radical politics and refused to criticize the raids by armed counter-revolutionaries operating out of nearby Honduras and Costa Rica.

"The Pope discussed education, for instance, during one rally but failed to mention the literacy campaign which in 1980 reduced the country's illiteracy rate from 53 per cent to just over 12 per cent of the population."

"During an outdoor mass attended by about 800,000 people, the Pope stunned the audience by crying 'Silence!' when mothers of young Sandinistas killed in battle called upon him to say a prayer for their sons and for peace."

Randall said the cries of "People's Power!" which greeted the Pope during the mass were authentic and spontaneous and were not prompted by orders from the Sandinistas.

The charges of interference by the Sandinistas in religious affairs are false because of the presence of many clerics in key government positions and the hierarchy's freedom to appoint and transfer priests at will, said Randall. Indeed, many radical priests — both Nicaraguan and North American — who back the revolution have been forced to leave their congregation and move to other parishes, she added.

The myth of religious persecution is especially apparent when the church freedom in Nicaragua is compared to that in nearby El Salvador and Guatemala — two right-wing dictatorships

heavily supported by the U.S.

Since the early 1970s there have been selective and continuous expulsions and murders of clergy in both countries by government forces and right-wing death squads. Among these martyrs were El Salvador's Archbishop Oscar Romero, who was gunned down while saying mass in a chapel in 1980, and four American women, nuns and lay missionaries, who were brutally killed during the same year.

Asked about press censorship in Nicaragua, Randall said the opposition paper, *La Prensa*, continues to publish editorials untouched by state censors. Only articles about delicate military matters or stories which might spark economic turmoil are censored, she added. *Barricada*, a Sandinista newspaper, recently replaced *La Prensa* as the largest daily publication, said Randall.

She said U.S. support for the counter-revolutionary Somocistas, former members of the late dictator's hated National Guard, is hurting the Nicaraguan economy but cementing popular support for the Sandinistas.

Behind Reagan's apparent determination to topple the Nicaraguan junta is the fear of the threat of a "good example," said Randall. "The U.S. is worried that if Nicaragua survives and succeeds then it will be an example for other small and impoverished nations who want to overthrow dictatorships and determine their own national destinies."

She rejected U.S. claims that it funds the counter-revolutionaries in order to stop the funneling of military hardware from Nicaragua to

rebels in El Salvador. "The U.S. knows that there have been no substantial flow of arms from Nicaragua to El Salvador. They've never been able to prove it with evidence and you can be sure that if they had evidence they would use it."

Nicaraguan socialism is fueled by the liberation theology which has spread rapidly throughout Latin America since the early 1970s. Under this theology, increasing numbers of clerics and lay Catholics felt the church should actively oppose the political repression and grinding poverty faced by the majority of people in Central and Latin America.

Christianity and socialism have a common philosophical base, said Randall. "The true Christian aspires to poverty as a way of showing solidarity with those who have less while a revolutionary socialist creates the conditions for the sharing of material and spiritual goods equally among the population," said Randall.

Under both perspectives, the individual good is subordinated to the general good, she added.

The great majority of Nicaragua's Christian revolutionaries are not Marxists but simply people who view political repression and imposed poverty as a sin, said Randall.

Liberation theology emphasizes behavior over creed and liturgy, and calls for an increased participation of lay people. This secularization of church practices was led by Christian base communities — small groups of people designed to bring poor people together in faith and activity.

Delegates of the Word, lay people trained in social promotion and church rites, are at the centre of Nicaragua's base communities.

Asked about Soviet and Cuban activity, Randall said Nicaragua receives most of its aid from Mexico, Japan and Western Europe. There is Soviet aid, and many Cuban teachers and military advisers, but not enough to threaten Nicaragua's determination to remain non-aligned.

Asked about the Sandinistas' achievements, Randall said unemployment had been reduced from 40 per cent to 11 per cent. More than 500,000 people have learned to read and polio has been eradicated. And for the first time in decades, poor people have an input into community decisions.

Randall said about 60 per cent of the economy remains in private hands. Not surprisingly for a country under military attack, there are political prisoners. But the number is far fewer than those jailed in other Central and Latin American countries. And, unlike most Third World nations, there is not a death penalty.

Randall has also written *Women In Cuba*, Doris Tijerino: *Inside the Nicaraguan Revolution* (1978), *Sandino's Daughters* (1981) and *Christians in the Nicaraguan Revolution* (1983).

Kids

From page 9

nothing else to do. I don't want to hang around in the streets or anything. I don't know anybody at the hotel — don't want to know anybody."

When I called his hotel a few weeks later, Marcel was gone. The local army recruiting office can't find him either. Maybe he's become another working stiff at last. Or maybe he's just moved on to another filthy rooming house or another heartless town.

A few years ago, 21 and just in from the prairies, I found a room in the Fraser Hotel on Gastown's Carrall Street, after someone noticed that the old man who used to look out his second floor window all day wasn't looking out anymore. By then the body had smelled up the place quite a bit and left a good-sized reddish-brown stain at the head of the bed. When another room came vacant I took it.

The place stank. Drafty windows faced more drafty windows across the alley where a police paddy wagon was always parked while its driver and another cop hassled pedestrians. The walls were thin, the plumbing

unreliable. A red streak ran up the staircase along the velvet-textured bordello-style wallpaper. We were allowed no visitors after 11 p.m.

It's a kind of hopeless marathon 19-year-old George Smith has run, all the way from home on the east coast of Newfoundland — The Rock — to rock bottom, the Yale Hotel at the seamy end of Granville Street. Three hundred and twenty bucks for two beds and a shower and a television ("and even that doesn't work") in the room he shares with the friend he left home with to look for work.

But 4,500 miles later there's no work. Still, every day George puts on his boots, ready for the job he hopes to find. "I mostly walk around. I try the docks and all the ships and every restaurant. I been back east of here and checked out all the ranches and farms and all that. Mostly I thumb my way around; I'm very good at it, eh? I spend most of my days looking for work. Night time, I'm usually hanging around some friends, around shopping malls, checking out some young women and just passin' away the day."

He shows me the ring his girl gave him before he left home. She also gave him a choker necklace, some pictures and a watch, but he left the choker and

the watch in Newfoundland where someone stole them. Someone stole the pictures he brought with him too. "She was decent," he remembers.

At the end of the conversation George leans close and lowers his voice confidentially: "I think this place'd be real bad if there wasn't a place like the Sisters and all that. I think there'd be a lotta violence. Not a lady'd be able to walk with a purse, and there wouldn't be a store with anything in it. I know that."

A purplish web of broken blood vessels runs a fine pattern over his cheeks and nose as he chews out the insides of his baloney sandwich and chucks the crust on the grass of Oppenheimer Park, across the street from the Sisters. A mushy bit of white bread is pasted to his right cheek. Slowly he turns to the woman sharing the bench and starts small talk. Yeah, he mumbles, not looking straight at me, he fled the farm in Salmon Arm for the big city in forty-two. No money to be made on the thirty-five acres. Became a seaman. Sailed to Australia, married, came back.

Nineteen forty-two. That's 41 years. I want to know if it was the same for him then as it is for the kids now joining the line cross the street. Did his

generation run on the same thin gruel of hope and guts and charity?

"Yeah, but there were jobs then. People had dreams but they forgot about them when they had something to do. Me, I never thought about anything but my work in the shipyards . . ." A big white seagull scatters aside the group of pigeons tentatively picking at the breadcrust, and takes it all for itself. I head across the street to the convent kitchen.

The old man with the torn upper lip is cleaning up around the scullery and the convent daycare. He's been around, off and on, for about 50 years. He's seen the old buildings come down and these already-shabby ones go up. He's seen the lines grow long in the depression, again after the war, again today. He looks at something far away. Yes, it was different then. He always had a job too.

The line starts to wind around the corner, growing by ones and twos. Old men and a few women, young men and women who have never even had a job and can't find one. No experience, little hope. And unless there are some big changes, says the scullery man, a lot of them will be standing there 40 years from now. "But I'll be long gone by then," he snorts, and goes back to his chores.

Health

From page 10

"It's funny," she says. "Our opponents characterize us as a bunch of lesbians, and that's why we work so hard on birth control." But Campbell was gunning for birth control counselling too.

Hutchinson picks her words like they come straight from the oven: gingerly. She shares the same shyness about careless talk which infects many people burned by the budget. Loose lips: pink slips. Who knows what more they might lose?

When they learned their grant was eliminated, she says, the group determined, from the first hurried meeting, to remain in operation. They decided to search out other sources of funding, and to all continue working without

pay. Aside from the staff paid with the seven salaries the grant provided — mostly part-time — that group included about 40 unpaid members (she disdains the term 'volunteers'). They decided to search out other sources of funding, and to all continue working without pay.

A fund-raising campaign is underway. The city of Vancouver gave the health collective a \$5,800 emergency grant "by unanimous vote." Someone else has taken on the task of organizing a benefit dance. Donations are coming in but they desperately need more.

"It's a huge amount of work for a small amount of money," says Hutchinson. And collective members are frustrated by the need to channel energy from their chosen work.

"Our work has been drastically affected. Our fall program for organizing new groups, speaking and writing, has ground to a halt, and we are con-

centrating on keeping our resource centre going, our birth control work, fitting, counselling and referral. Regular workshops have really been cut. We have had to cut hours in the resource centre.

"The fall program was to establish a group concern with pre-menstrual problems, a group on menopause, and work to improve our information on pregnancy and birth. We were going to improve our program of having an information table at Carnegie Centre (a community centre in the poorest part of downtown). We were planning something about withdrawing from psychiatric drugs and something on fitness, especially for large women. Nothing is happening on any of that."

Their usually extensive public speaking schedule is clipped. "We plan in the long run to go back to that kind of work, though at the moment we are working hard to keep our heads above water.

"We are determined that we will continue but it is very hard. Former staff are having to look for other jobs to support themselves. That's hard work. And the unpaid people have to work a lot harder.

"But we think it's necessary that women have this service available, particularly because we think there are changes needed in society so women will have more control over their lives in general and their needs will be given a much higher priority than they are.

"It's very frustrating and it's very maddening that work which is so obviously inexpensive in terms of money and so necessary in terms of people's lives is considered so unimportant and cut.

"And there's fear: Will we be able to manage, will we be able to get funding; be able to keep going? It's hard to plan for the future because the future is so uncertain in trms of funding."

Rent

From page 10

retain until June 30, 1984. But powers to handle claims about locked-out tenants, disputes over damage deposits, maintenance and repairs, illegal seizures and tenants' property will turn to the courts.

But the abuses are beginning already.

"We have noticed a decline of 30 per cent in the number of notices of rent increases being filed with us. Filing notice is still a legal requirement. The penalty for that is still severe.

"History has shown us that when landlords don't send us notices there's a reason."

Scene change: The Jolly Alderman, a hotel bar near Vancouver's city hall. Three men in unholstered chairs chairs around the low table talking union. Talking about bus drivers and bank workers and farm workers and strikes and alternatives to strikes. A fourth, Wayne MacEachern, a coordinator in the B.C. Tenants' Rights Coalition, turns his attention to housing again. The black plastic briefcase beside him, (his third one since the budget was issued), is stuffed, and he digs into it from time to time for notes, or a press release, or a news clipping. The office the coalition shares with the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association has been flooded with calls

in the past week. He says it is clear that the number of landlord and tenant problems have increased since the budget's release.

"The Socreds have continually stated that high rent increases, evictions without cause and discrimination against tenants will not happen as a result of the changes. Actually they have endorsed a blacklisting service for landlords." He produces a news clipping stating that consumer and corporate affairs minister Jim Hewitt will allow the service to operate if it meets the requirement of the Credit Reporting Act.

More clippings. One about discrimination in buildings owned by Greenbriar Holdings, where furniture deposits became selectively charged to unemployed tenants. "Entire buildings have been handed rent increases of 49 per cent, and increases of up to 100 per cent have been reported."

"And all this is happening while landlords are biding their time, waiting for the changes to be passed."

MacEachern pulls another sheet from the briefcase. This one describes the sorts of jobs available to staff fired from the Rentalsman's office. Of 110 positions, it says, 76 are in the liquor trade. Of the 34 others, 25 were related to services for corporations and only four were for consumer services.

There are more barbs in the bill itself, he says. Compensation required for mobile home owners who are forced to move has been reduced. The im-

proved tenant status some residents in Downtown Eastside hotels aquired, which protects them from unlimited rent increases and eviction without notice, is no longer specifically noted in the bill.

And there are the better-publicized changes, like the increase in non-profit housing rents to 30 per cent of tenants' incomes, up from 25 percent; a 20 percent increase. The first home owner grant — used by many people to buy into co-op apartments is eliminated.

Meanwhile, the government is downplaying the bill, he says, and a Social Credit party office in Richmond was telling tenants who called in that

the 'eviction without cause' clause in the revised act was dropped.

John Usher, an information officer in the Ministry of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, says the Richmond office is technically correct. "The expression 'without cause' does not appear in the legislation. It is what we call a margin note. But it may do that, in effect."

He thinks it is probably a very low percentage of landlords who are hiking rents phenomenally or locking out tenants. And he doesn't think more than 20 or two dozen letters protesting the changes have crossed his desk.

Teachers

From page 8

fers tips on everything from stress management to public speaking, is another service which is growing in popularity, says Lehan.

The centre's other main function is to prepare teachers for job interviews.

Lehan has mixed feelings about the centre's popularity. "It's gratifying to help them, and to make them realize it's not their fault that they're unemployed. But at the same time, it's disgusting that we have such a waste of talent here. If I was hiring for a school, I could build an incredible staff with the people who come in here."

As for teachers who look for work outside of the teaching profession, they suffer from a subtle type of discrimination, says Lehan. "Either they're told they are over-qualified, or the employer is worried they will quit the job once the economy gets better and they can get a teaching job again."

Lehan says employers don't realize the potential value of teachers employed in non-teaching jobs. "The skills one learns to teach kids will make anyone a valuable worker in any job. But these people are not being offered any jobs."

Until those job offers increase, the centre will continue to be a busy place.

Laughing, he adds: "Sometimes I think we're the only growth industry in town."

Teachers polled on possible political protest actions

When is a walkout a political protest?

The answer to that question could determine the legality of a possible strike by B.C. teachers.

The B.C. Teachers Federation is polling its 30,000 members about possible job action as a strategy to pressure the government to withdraw its contentious legislation. Although not a Labor Relations Board-supervised strike vote, the executive hopes to get a mandate from its membership to authorize some sort of job action if it is needed.

If the teachers do walk out, they hope the action would be ruled a form of political protest, and therefore not an illegal strike, according to BCTF vice-president Pat Clark. A walkout by public employees in Vancouver and Victoria earlier this year was

ruled a political protest by the LRB.

The School Act prohibits teachers from striking over salary disputes, but says nothing about job action over other issues, says Clarke.

Any action would be "extra-legal," he said. "The law does not deal with it. It's in the area of political protest."

Clark said since teachers are specifically excluded from salary dispute related actions only, a strike could be ruled a form of protest. But he said any action from teachers would involve other unions. "We won't do anything alone. Anything we do has to be part of a Solidarity action."

The strike vote itself is tied to other strike votes underway among members of the Hospital Employees Union and employees at the Worker's Compensation Board, Clark said.

Results of the teachers' vote won't be released to the public until it is the best time strategically, Clark said. And any job action will be the result of a forecasted high rate of unemployment among teachers in the next few years, as well as a reduction in the quality of education, all the result of government restraint measures, said Clark.

"There could be upwards of 8,000 unemployed teachers in this province by 1986. There will be more kids in the school system by then too, so we're going to have bigger classrooms and limited resources," he said.

Since there will be 3,000 fewer teaching positions by 1986, university education students could be the hardest hit by the budget, Clark said. "If I was an education student right now, I think I'd pack it in."

President takes political plunge

Special to The Times

While academics in gowns and mortarboards have not yet been seen on the streets or the barricades, the president of B.C.'s largest university has called for educators to unite and fight the Social Credit government's restraint program.

George Pedersen sternly criticized the Socreds Oct. 8 in a speech to the Vancouver Institute at the University of B.C., saying Bill 3 and Bill 6 will damage and education system already in decline because of inadequate funding over the past several years.

Both the public and post-secondary education systems have been misunderstood by the public, he said. Teachers and professors will have to go out into the community to make sure it is informed, and marshal support to put pressure on the Socreds to halt the destruction of educational quality and accessibility.

"I think we have to spend more time in the political realm," Pedersen said afterwards. He and other leaders in the education community will be lobbying the government "like in the U.S." rather than making their polite requests and hoping for the best.

Pedersen said he believed his own university has already lost too much ground to even attempt maintaining current levels of service unless there is a complete turnaround in the Socreds' attitude.

"There's no doubt we're going to be a smaller institution." UBC has told the universities ministry what funding it needs to survive in its current form and "we're certainly not going to get it," he said.

With enrolment up sharply, Pedersen said it is inevitable that restrictions on admissions to UBC will be imposed after

the next round of cuts in the university's budget.

When a concerned member of the audience asked how the government could justify policies that will lead to enrolment restrictions when the demand for trained workers and post-secondary education is at an all-time high, Pedersen said the universities ministry does not consider the education of more people a priority.

He said he had the impression from his talks with universities minister Pat McGeer that "Dr. McGeer thinks there are a few too many people attending university in B.C."

McGeer later refused to confirm he said there is a surplus of students, saying, "That just sounds confused."

Confusion, vagueness of purpose and public hostility have presented problems for the public education system since its beginnings, Pedersen told the Vancouver Institute audience of more than 500. He said these problems have now been enshrined as government policy.

He cited University of Victoria economist Rod Dobell's analysis of the restraint package as not making sense when examined closely. Rather than being a program for restraint, says Dobell, it is simply a shift of taxpayers' money away from social services and payrolls of public employees.

Pedersen noted that while government spending has steadily risen in most areas, it has decreased in real dollar terms by 24 per cent when it comes to B.C.'s universities.

"What we have witnessed, thus, is not an inability to pay but simply a change in choosing where to spend," said Pedersen.

He quoted Dobell: "A government which continues

to spend millions of dollars on roads to high-income condos in ski resorts while cutting expenditures on salmonid enhancement or reforestation is exercising a discretionary choice, not responding to limits on ability to pay.

"A government which elects to continue to work on a domed stadium or Expo 86 or subsidized coal exports and to save a few thousand dollars by cutting income support to the handicapped is making a statement about priorities, not accepting the dictates of some mythical resource constraint."

Pedersen also cited Dobell's contention that the Socred call for increased productivity in the public sector is another red herring. "Dobell astutely notes that the government's concept of productivity does not serve in any respect as a guideline or target for action," he said.

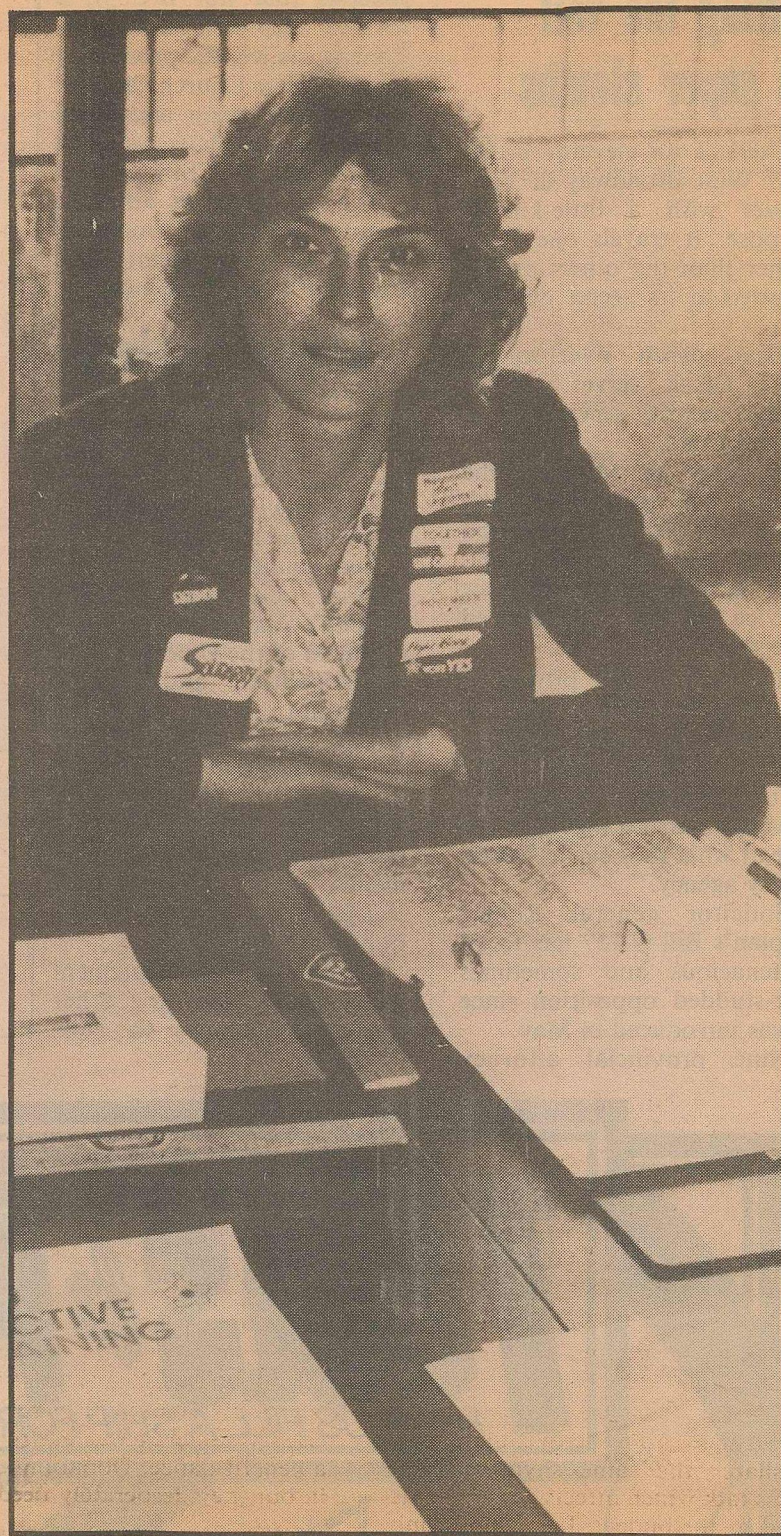
The real object of the restraint program is to centralize power which has until now been partially held by locally elected boards or by leaders in public institutions, said Pedersen.

"Government has, it seems, lost faith in the process of management by consensus and has retreated into an authoritarian governance practice of a bygone age."

He called Bill 6 a "landmark piece of legislation" in that it represents the termination of educational autonomy at the local level.

"It implied that the public and their elected representatives at the municipal level could not be trusted to do the job that is needed to be done."

Pedersen raised doubts that the Socred drive for centralized efficiency could work in these times and said that it violates the principle of citizens' rights to local control of schools.



BEV DAVIES PHOTO

BCGEU strike vote continues until Oct. 27

Labor roundup

It's almost come to a boil: since the provincial government put its kettle of hot legislation on the front burner in July, a solid wall of opposition from labor groups has been building.

And everyone is heading for the Nov. 1 showdown; several unions have timed strike votes to coincide with that deadline, and each day the wall of opposition gets bigger.

More than 85 contracts in various industries in B.C. are currently under negotiations or in mediation. Some of the major unions involved are:

- B.C. Government Employees Union. Contract expires Oct. 31, 1983. Currently in the midst of a strike vote.
- Hospital Employees Union (24,000). Contract expired Jan. 1, 1982. Currently in the midst of a strike vote.
- B.C. Teachers Federation (32,000 members). Contract expires Dec. 31, 1983. Currently in the midst of an internal strike vote.
- International Woodworkers of America (40,000 members). Contract expired June 14, 1983. Strike vote has already been taken.
- Canadian Paperworkers Union (9,000 members) and Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada (5,500 members). Contract expired June 30, 1983. Strike vote has already been taken.
- Independent Canadian

Transit Union (2,700 members). Contract expired March 31, 1983. Currently under mediation.

• Canadian Union of Public Employees (5,100 members). Contract expired Dec. 31, 1982. Currently under mediation.

• Hotel, Restaurant, Culinary Workers and Bartenders Union. (10,000 members). Contract expired Dec. 31, 1982. Currently under mediation.

• International Association of Firefighters (1,485 members). Contract expired Dec. 31, 1982. Currently under mediation.

Hot type

The Vancouver Newspaper Guild want a province-wide boycott of Maclean's magazine, where at press time editorial staff were still on strike after walking off the job Oct. 5.

The Guild voted Oct. 10 to ask members to cancel subscriptions to the magazine and to ask the B.C. Federation of labor to declare a province-wide boycott among its members at its executive meeting later this month.

The management of Canada's largest weekly magazine says it opposes the principle of a closed union shop and is offering a four per cent wage increase instead of the nine per cent asked by employees.

Lifting the veil on super sleuths

There is an elevator inside 1177 West Broadway in Vancouver with a little-known purpose. It travels one floor higher than the others and is guarded at its secret destination.

That perch overlooking False Creek serves as the RCMP security service's B.C. headquarters.

At noon on Monday, the sleuths will be able to look down on a demonstration against the proposed Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS, pronounced Cee-siss).

The Vancouver protest is one of several across the country this weekend, as organizers use the thirteenth anniversary of the invocation of the War Measures Act to highlight the role of what they call a "secret policy agency."

Solicitor general Robert Kaplan's Bill C-157 has faced a tenacious and sometimes star-studded opposition since it was introduced in May.

Nine provincial attorney

generals (but not B.C.'s), a former supreme court of Canada justice, the primate of the Anglican Church, as well as civil libertarian and labor organizations, have spoken publicly against CSIS.

The bill divorces domestic security operations from the RCMP and puts them in the hands of a civilian agency.

Kitimat kickback

Members of Kitimat municipal council unanimously passed a resolution calling on the provincial government to withdraw Bills two through 28 from the legislature.

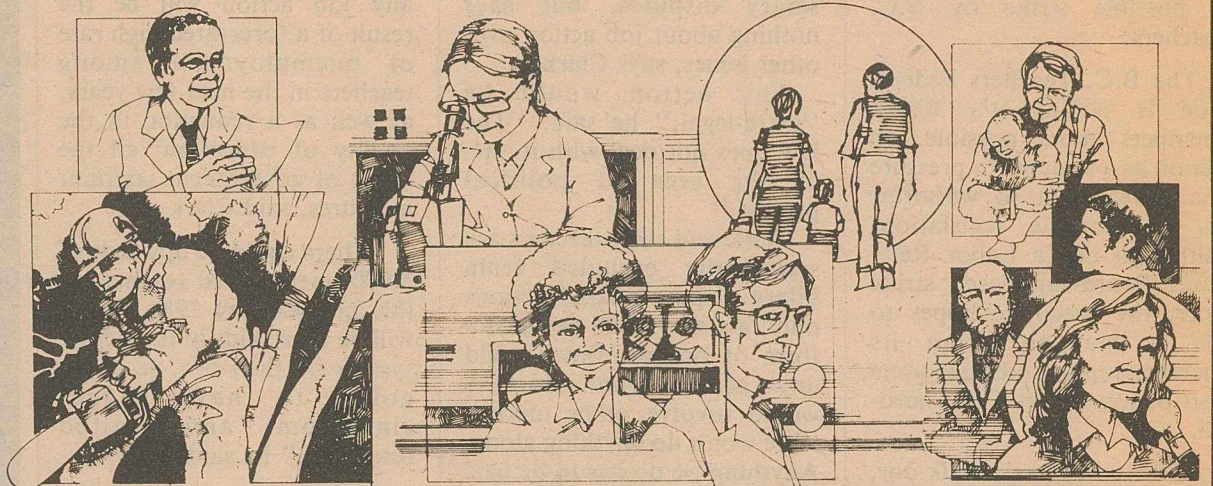
The council — which includes George Thom, Kitimat's mayor and the past president of the Union of B.C. Municipalities, and Joanne Monaghan, the defeated Social Credit party candidate in Skeena in the last election — wants the province to ask for and consider recommendations for local elected governments, and to emphasize legislation rather than regulation in the package.

Copies of the statement have been sent to other municipal councils in Northwest B.C.

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In 1981, the first boat project was spearheaded from Vancouver and resulted in more than \$25,000 worth of goods being sent.

In subsequent years, churches, unions, community groups and solidarity committees have worked hard to organize similar boat projects.

If past practice is any indication, the people of Canada will not let down their brothers and sisters in this small, but determined country.

A COUNTRY IN NEED

As the second poorest country in Central America, Nicaragua faces many economic problems trying to provide for its people. This has been made worse by recent trade embargoes announced by the U.S. government, a move aimed at holding back the advancement of the country and isolating the Nicaraguan people.

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By JOHN MACKIE

They say baseball is the sport of the common man. Being commoner than most, I spent my growing years trying to become the next Ron Swoboda. Poetry in his name, virtue in his heart, Ron Swoboda was a giant belly flop for those marvelous New York Met teams of yesteryear that displayed inimitable flair at devising methods of losing. He was a loser among losers. He struck out a lot, but boy could he make the dust swirl with his mighty swinging misses.

I don't remember who my brother Bill emulated, but whoever it was must have been a slugger, cause that was his style when we learned to play on our farm near Purves, Manitoba (population: 9). With the outhouse as backstop, we would pitch and hit to each other all day long. The well-worn patch from blazing fastballs that whizzed past our Rocky Colavito Louisville Slugger bat inched upward with our growth.

Eventually we discovered some twins, the Bright boys (Eddie and Ernie), who were as baseball-mad as we. Every Saturday and Sunday we cycled two miles to their farm outside Snowflake (population: 50) to play two-on-two. Every week, one of the two sets of brothers would attempt to brush his kin back with a fastball and ding him in the back. The pitcher would laugh, the hitter would snort and chase the other around the haystack we played against, trying to wing the ball at their head to get even. When the chaser bapped the chasee, their roles would reverse.

Nonetheless, I did become fairly proficient. I was always the best of the worst, or, if you prefer, the worst of the best. And when we moved into Winnipeg when I was 11, I had a giant head start from playing scrub (work your way up) with boys years older than me at Purves's one-room school, which went from grades one to eight and featured two or three children per grade.

I went out for Little League tryouts. I was immediately spotted by one Weez the Geez, coach of the Phillies, who made me go home so I wouldn't be spotted by another coach. The Phillies were a powerhouse: somehow, they'd gotten all three of the great athletes in the area, Bob Joyce, Jim McPherson and John Bridle, on to one team. The rest of the team was as good as anybody else's best players too, so we were virtually unbeatable. This peeved Weez, who wanted us to lose a few games so we could learn character. When we finally did, he was mighty pleased and gave us supreme shit for being bad losers.

Weez moved on to torment volleyball players and I moved under the auspices of the mighty Boop. If Boop had been a movie, he would've been rated S: warning, completely concerned with sports. Boop coached hockey, baseball and football, which is why I didn't play hockey or football. Boop used to hang out with his star players, riding bikes around and stuff. I thought it was a bit strange for a guy in his early twenties to hang out with 13 and 14 year olds, but Boop had no pretensions to being smarter than them, so I guess it didn't hurt.

After Little League, you wind up playing kids from other areas, so friendly rivalry goes out the window and things get more intense and less fun. Boop did his best to accelerate this feeling, making us practice and practice until we actually choked in games from the pressure. It did little to improve team morale, too, that every year we'd pick up a couple of stars from other areas, relegating last year's regulars to the bench or retirement. Probably my main claim to fame is that the year we won the city championship, my spot on the team was taken by Brian Engblom, who went on to even greater glory as a star

The Sport of the Common Man

Hey, When I Was Young, We Had To Use Fenceposts For Bats . . .

defenceman for hockey's Washington Capitals. Without me, we lost to Hamiota in the provincials. Coincidence? Probably.

Playing with young athletes entailed mixing with self-styled cool cats who thought their physical prowess made them King of the Castle. Every year they'd make up stupid sayings that "the boys" would repeat ad nauseam. One year the big saying was *haddy-saddy-rattnnnn*. The real winners worked *haddys* into every conversation: "How's things?" "Oh, *haddy haddy, saddy haddy haddy haddyrattnnnn*."

Baseball has it over other sports because you don't really have to be physical to play it, and don't need to do any of the ridiculous psyching up that drives players in other sports to behave like the missing link. You just stand around and twiddle your thumbs, catching and throwing every once in a while, then you get to go to the plate and strike out in front of any number of good-looking girls you have crushes on. It's real hard to keep one eye on the ball and one eye on that special someone.

Boop moved me from my natural shortstop position because I was the only infielder with a strong enough arm to throw people out from third base. Thankfully, our first baseman, the mighty Pickle, was as tall as an oak tree and could catch my throws, which were released quickly and thrown hard but which ranged from one-hoppers to snowballs from the stratosphere.

Actually, the real reason I was put at third base was because Boop considered me expendable. You can get killed playing the hot box, as they call it. In bunting situations, Boop would want me to charge kamikaze-style towards the plate, and usually the hitter would blast it down my throat. Our community club was designed, too, so that the sun would come down right into the third baseman's eyes around the fifth inning. You couldn't see the batter and more or less had to rely on instinct.

John Nelson was this 6-foot, 4-inch beast on our team who went on to play

for the Saskatchewan Roughriders. He had a gentle disposition, but could absolutely *kill* the ball. He came up one night in batting practice. The sun was in my eyes, I could barely see him, so I drifted back into shallow left field to give myself more time to react to anything hit my way. The pitch came, he swung, there was a crack of the bat. I couldn't see a thing, so I stuck my hands between my legs and readied my body to block anything that came at me. Wap! A line drive bounced right off the top of my head. Everybody rolled around on the field laughing themselves sick.

It's always funny when something bad happens to somebody else. Duane Miller got hit in the head by a pitch once. The pitcher was really slow. He threw a curve ball that started out about a foot above Miller's head. Instead of hitting the dirt, Miller just ducked his head a few inches and the ball, as if in slow motion, slowly descended right onto his head. We almost died on the bench. Miller insisted he was alright, and went to run at first base. The he started wandering around, looking at the sky. Boop took him out.

There was another guy named Barry LeClaire who was our version of Pete Rose. LeClaire would do anything to win. He was one of those guys who reach six feet when they're eight years old. Legend has it in his early days he was impossible to get out. If he hit to the infielders he'd beat the throw to first, round the corner to second outrunning the relay from first, continue on to third, make for home and slide into home plate ahead of the ball.

LeClaire used to show up for practices in cutoff shorts that resembled a slingshot bathing suit. He was the only person who'd slide, and slide hard, in practice. He's always have big rasberries on his legs. The all-time classic LeClaire was when somebody hit a long, high foul ball to right field. LeClaire charged after it, running full speed head-first into the fence. Sproinnngggg! He got up bleeding a little and said "I'm okay, coach," to Boop, and then fell over.



Boop liked LeClaire's attitude. He didn't like mine. One year I did play six-man football and we were being massacred by a 240-pound 12-year-old defensive lineman on the other team. He'd fling blockers off like ants and thud into the backfield to whomp our quarterback. Finally Gary Milne, Boop's assistant, turned around to us benchwarmers and gave us a chance to redeem ourselves. "Do any of you guys want to *hit*?!!!" he screamed. I looked at Gary Sanguin. Gary Sanguin looked at me. In unison, we replied, "no!"

I don't think Boop trusted me after that. Gary Sanguin, though, was a fantastic outfielder. Every game he'd make some brilliant diving catch. *Nobody* makes catches like that in the bum leagues, especially someone as small as Sanguin. Playing third base near the opposition bench, I was constantly razzed about "the phony little pecker in center field."

Those were the days before I figured out how small I was, so I used to swear back at them. The last near fight I was in happened when an ump called a grounder foul after I'd already started my throw. I tried to hold back, but the ball popped about 30 feet in the air, coming to rest on the other side of the first base fence. I was embarrassed and shot a few verbal barbs with the enemy.

Then a pop fly went right by their bench. I ran to the fence to try and catch it, but some big dummy lummo stood in my way, smirking. He went "duh," I went "uh" and pushed him. He stood like a brick wall and my momentum carried my head into his stomach, which led my teammates to congratulate me for my ingenious head butt. Lucky for him we were broken up. He probably would've broken his knuckles on my face.

Don Jonas, the old Winnipeg Blue Bomber quarterback, used to come down to the club and watch us play. A very ugly man: he had an eight-footer's head on a six-footer's body. He wore white pants and smoked stogies and told us the kids in Florida our age would wipe us.

My dreams of the major leagues were finally shattered once and for all when we finally faced someone with real talent in another city championship game. I can't remember his name, but he was amazing. Pickle's dad was of the school that held curve balls to be mere illusion. This guy's illusions dropped two feet when they crossed the plate as fast as anybody else's fastest fastball. When he threw *his* fastball, I would've had to swing when the ball left his hand to get around in time to hit it. It was just a joke. He got a no hitter. I squatted Campy Campaneris style, making my strike zone minimal and hoping for a walk. No go — three at bats, three strike-outs.

Did I cry? Nah. I laughed. Forget all that stuff about how football and hockey build character — baseball is the sport that teaches you to be civil and accept life for what it is. Football and hockey just build psychos or destroy confidence. There's too much of an emphasis on winning. My friend the Born Loser was on the bum line on a bad hockey team once. They'd let him on once a game if they were ahead or behind by an insurmountable margin.

So the Big Figure's taking his one whirl on the ice, and he gets a breakaway. He's hauled down from behind, and the ref called a penalty shot. So what does the coach do? He calls the Born Loser over to the bench and makes him take off his sweater pronto so somebody else can take the shot. The ref catches them in the act and the Born Loser winds up taking what's rightfully his, anyway. Only now his confidence is destroyed. He skated in and, natch, flubbed it. The Born Loser still weeps at the memory. Unlike me. My baseball memories are all laughs.

The Real Face Of War

I once saw a film in high school about two African tribes at war with each other over a piece of pasture land. During the war's only battle, between some 200 men, both sides made abortive rushes at the other, throwing spears before turning and running away. Spears are slow travelling things, and are easily dodged, but one guy finally got nailed in the thigh. He was rushed from the field by his friends, followed by the rest of the warriors on his side. The war was over and they had lost.

I was reminded of this film the other night while watching the CBC documentary **WAR** hosted by former war correspondent Gwynne Dyer on Sunday nights at 9 p.m. The first episode, titled "The Road to Total War," described how war has evolved from small local skirmishes in which there were few casualties, much like the African tribes I had seen in the film, to global conflict slaughtering millions.

War was originally a tool of diplomacy. Small armies would agree to a place, show up and fight. Soldiers rarely saw battle more than once a year. Napoleon was the first to issue universal conscription, and, given the success of his armies as they flowed over Europe, other nations were quick to follow. With the new technology of the industrial revolution, wiping out large numbers of people became easier, creating the need for even larger numbers of new recruits. With the introduction of the machine gun, chemical warfare, and the refinement of high explosives during World War I, the butchery became unbelievable.

Scarcely 20 years later, Britain was destroying entire German cities in colossal firestorms, killing hundreds of

thousands of defenceless civilians. The primary target in warfare was no longer the enemy's army, it was the labor force supplying the army.

While the first episode was historical, the second dealt with the personal element.

Titled "Anyone's Son Will Do," it told how a government can take an out-of-work kid and turn him into a crazed killer. People just can't normally do what soldiers are supposed to do every day in wartime. So that a modern army can be efficient when at war, a soldier must be able to kill again and again without being crippled with remorse.

Much like the way guard dogs are trained, new recruits are driven almost insane. Every vestige of their individuality is removed, they are constantly humiliated, shouted at, and exercised to exhaustion. They are brainwashed.

It works. They become the most brutally efficient soldiers in the world.

The series has been impressive so far. It's not your average guts and glory war documentary, nor is it simply the recording of events of a particular conflict. It goes to the root of war, why it exists and where it is going.

— Stu Morris

Vietnam Retold

Vietnam: A Television History (PBS, 15 parts, written and produced by Judith Vecchione) features choppers of the ominous variety, features helicopters. These choppers are of the ominous variety, floating down in wave after wave to deliver death into Vietnam.

For those of us who lived through it,

See page 18: VIETNAM

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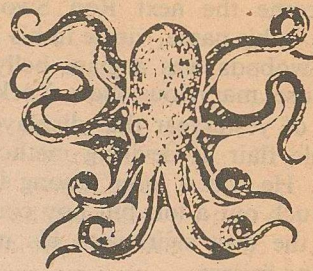
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By JOHN MACKIE

When you're doing the boogaloo to the Big Beat, there are two kinds of jump that are practised by both audience and performer: an angry jump, and a happy one. The former occurs when Guitar Gods leap up and down with an "I'm in pain" look as they wield their ax, *trying* to look angry, more often than not pouting their lips in a "I've just swallowed the sourest thing on earth" grimace. Out in the audience, their fans play air guitar and hoot and grimace like mad fools trying to project against the nth.

The Blasters do the other jump. Even when they're angry, they smile. Fueled by a highly combustible mix of old-time rhythm and blues, rockabilly, pop and hundreds of musical styles that shaped them, the Blasters put the pedal to the floor and breathe life, happiness, and fun back into musical forms a lot of us had given up on years ago. When the Blasters jump, they jump to the joy of banging out music they love. When angry rockers jump, they grunt "arr-arrgh!" When the Blasters jump they yell "ee-hah!"

"Our songs tend to sound like they're 20 years old," says Blasters guitarist-songwriter Dave Alvin. "We have a very traditional sound, but the lyrics are more up to date, so it's new music for a new time. That sounds old. Sort of. (laughs)

"What happened in the late '60s and early '70s was they sort of bled the carcass and they left this thing there, this empty shell. I think bands like us and Rank and File are putting the blood back into the empty carcass. 'Cause we play at about the same energy level that Carl Perkins did in his prime, or Chuck Berry. Black Flag plays with the same energy that Chuck Berry did in 1956, or Elvis Presley did, so it's not like an energy-less type of music, it's like a lot of people that have grown up now, their idea of Johnny B. Goode is the Grateful Dead, not this revolutionary statement Chuck Berry was saying.

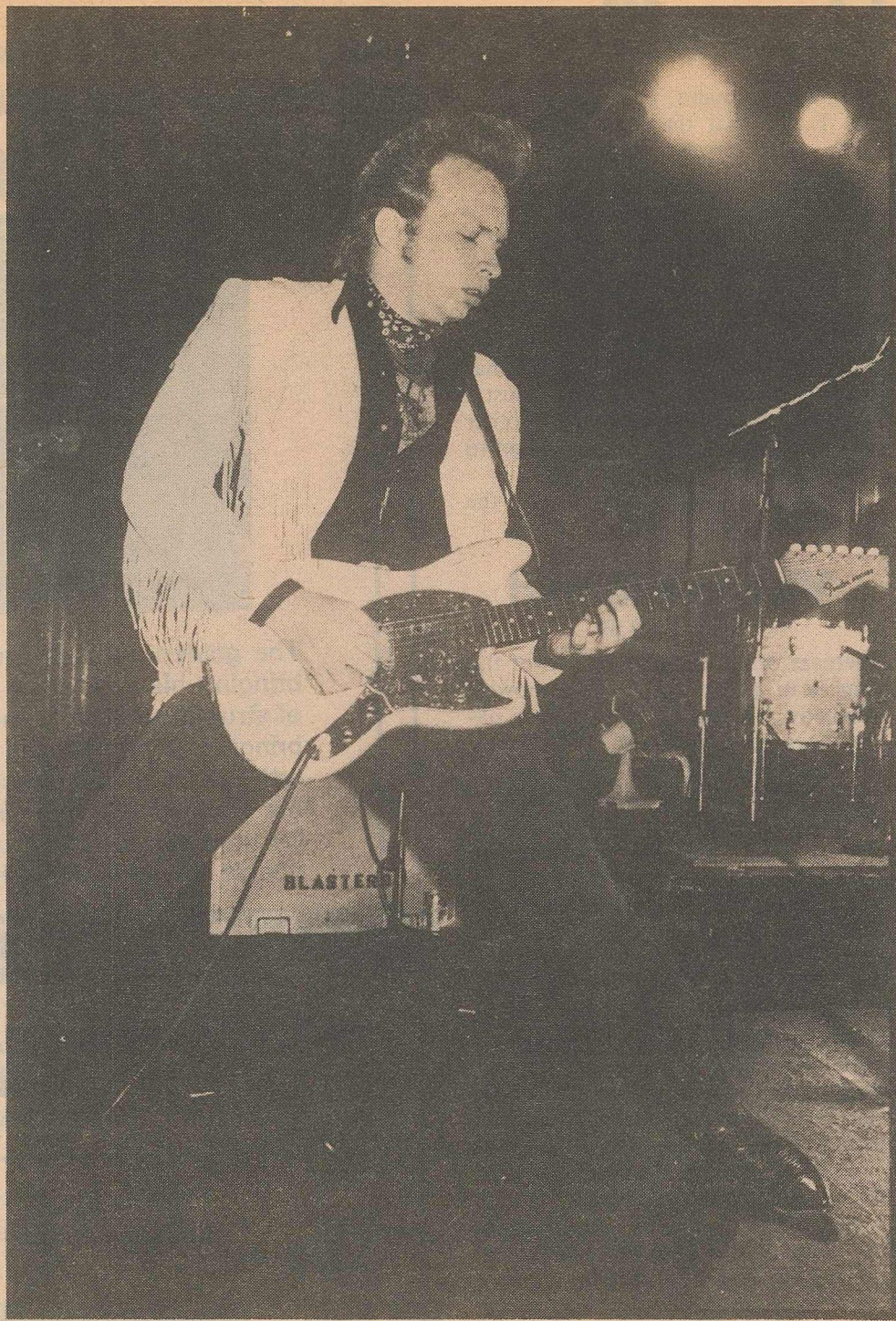
"So many people tend to look at blues and stuff like that, and music like that as a museum piece," he continues. "'Yeah, that's where it all started, but now here's David Bowie.' And 'he's great, and he's a genius, he's 8,000 times more talented than Chuck Berry.'

"David Bowie is talented, but he didn't invent the shit. He's put together some nice little configurations and little baroque curly cues, and I like him, but he ain't Chuck Berry, and Chuck Berry's the guy who deserves credit for everything, him and people like Carl Perkins, for rock and roll."

A guy in a r'n'b/rockabilly band equating LA's premier hardcore punk band, Black Flag, with Chuck Berry? The Blasters are open-minded, unlike most 'revival' type groups. Rather than just automatically write off any music that's outside their genre, Dave and his cohorts (brother Phil, lead singer/guitarist, Torontonion Gene Taylor, piano, Bill Bateman, bass, and John Bazz, drums) cast a discerning ear towards more 'current' sounds. What makes them so special is how they refuse to limit their scope: instead of cranking out note for note copies of tried and true styles, they flick in off-the-wall little runs and lyrics which are decidedly a cut above standard fare.

On the first album, for example, there's a song called 'Border Radio' which is neither blues, rock or country, but which fuses all three in a mid-tempo beat that has decided humability. The lyrics deal with a Mexican woman trying to get the favourite song of her and her lost loved one played on the radio, where he might hear it and return to her.

Dave Alvin, from an interview in the Los Angeles Times with Robert Hilburn: "To me, a song like 'Border Radio' is a statement. You can take it as a love song, but that's not the way I



Dave Alvin does the 1956 . . .

Blasting off

see it. It's a song about alienation. The woman is alone with her radio and her kid. It's about how she feels.

"If we came out with a song called A-L-I-E-N-A-T-I-O-N and Phil sang, 'I'm so alienated, blah blah blah,' it's not as effective to my mind as if you write about the *feeling* of being alienated or lonely. When you slip up behind someone and give him a nudge, it's usually more effective."

Springing from Downey, California, the Blasters took a circuitous route to their present calling.

They immersed themselves in old records when they were growing up, and played in all sorts of bands, sometimes together, often others. The Alvin brothers' dad is a vice-president of the AFL-CIO in southern California, and they were steeped in labour stories as they grew up. (Phil Alvin, from New York Rocker: "When I first heard Joan Baez sing 'Joe Hill,' I just about *died*. Here was this song my old man gave me, and here was this *weirdo* singin' it!") After he grew up, Phil Alvin became, of all things, a mathematics professor at Long Beach State University. Gene Taylor, who looks like he should be playing bongos in a smoky beatnik hideout from the late '50s, actually played in Canned Heat for awhile.

Then along came punk. Excited by the energy, everybody quit their jobs and the Blasters started working the LA circuit. A limited-edition LP was recorded in 1979 for a small American label, Rollin' Rock records, and

English singer Shakin' Stevens somehow got ahold of a copy. His cover of an incredibly infectious little rocker, "Marie Marie," bounced up the charts in Europe. Record companies had labelled them 'uncommercial', yet Stevens had managed to score big with an inferior version of their original. Did it bug them?

"It used to," says Dave Alvin. "But it doesn't anymore, cause it gave us a credibility among record companies in the States. 'Hey, this band from nowhere came up with a hit song for this guy.' We were (deep voice) 'Yeah, we're hit song writers,' where before it was 'oh, they're a good bar band.' In the long run, it was good for us."

Signed to Slash, a small LA indepen-

dent company that specializes in new music, they've released two LPs plus a live EP since then. The first album contains several classics, including "Marie Marie," "Border Radio," "Hollywood Bed" and "American Music," which is a defense against those Americans who'd given up on their country's music as it got more and more mundane in the seventies and they had to turn to England and Europe for sounds that showed some semblance of originality and verve. Summing up the American sounds he loves, Dave Alvin penned some classic lines: *It's a howl from the desert, the screams from the slums, the Mississippi rolling to the beat of the drums.*

Non-Fiction, their latest release, continues to mine the same vein of music as their debut, with a slight shift towards more bluesy tunes necessitated by the lyrical subjects. "Boomtown" deals with the bust such places inevitably run into, "Long White Cadillac" deals with the night Hank Williams died, and "Jubilee Train" is about the thirties depression, and the New Deal that lifted the U.S. out of it. "Leaving" is the first real waltzy-type ballad the band has attempted, and it shines thanks to some warm singing from Phil Alvin as his brother Dave strums a beautiful melody. And for those who wore the soles off their shoes to the first album, "It Must Be Love" is another killer rocker to blare out when you need cheering up.

Seeing as they have such a wide range of musical styles, I asked Dave Alvin what his personal ideal radio mix would be. His reply sums up just what the Blasters do best: knocking down artistic fences inhibiting both artists and audiences from just going out and enjoying good music, whatever the stripe. "I think there should be a very powerful AM station and a very powerful FM station that plays everything, probably excluding most jazz and the classics, not that they're bad or anything, but you should be able to hear Michael Jackson's "Billie Jean" followed by X, followed by some techno pop band, followed by us, followed by the Cramps, followed by Muddy Waters, followed by George Jones, followed by the Circle Jerks, followed by Rank and File. Part of the problem nowadays, part of the reason people are so divided is 'cause their media's so divided.

"A lot of kids, for whatever reason, don't like black music in the eighties, a lot of white kids, and black people call it racist and all that stuff. It's just . . . in the sixties, you heard the Beatles followed by Smokey Robinson, then followed by some surf group. That allows people to be more open to every type of sound instead of being stuck in one genre. I hope to God that our fans don't just listen to rockabilly or don't just listen to blues or don't just listen to anything.

"I think that's the main thing, to have people open their brains more. Cause there's a place for bands like us and there's a place for bands like DOA, and they all belong together, cause it's all rock and roll."



. . . while brother Phil flashes his pearly-whites.

BEV DAVIES PHOTOS

Big Chill big swill

By GEORGE STANLEY

The Big Chill is basically an unprovoked attack on the University of Michigan. The characters in this latest run at the class reunion genre (remember *The Group*, *Return of the Secaucus Seven*?) are five men and three women who are now in their late thirties, but who were undergraduates at Michigan in the 1960s.

They talk a lot about Ann Arbor and watch Michigan football on television. The television viewing and all else takes place in South Carolina, apparently, where one of them, Harold (Kevin Kline) lives in a white-columned mansion. Harold's small company is about to be gobbled up by a "conglomerate," and Harold's the kind of guy cheerfully willing to break 14 Securities and Exchange Commission Regulations to give his dope-crazed Vietnam vet former classmate Nick (William Hurt) a tip.

The reason I say it's an attack on the U. of Michigan, which is really quite a respectable institution of learning, and had a real student movement in the 1960s, is that Harold and Nick and the other six are portrayed as confused people with soap opera minds. The movie is in fact a two-hour soap opera larded with banal dialogue. Sample: the Bruno Gerussi look-alike, a television private eye, confides: "In L.A. there's nobody I can trust," implying that there might be someone he could trust among his old college friends. These people, by the way, have gathered to celebrate the funeral (and suicide) of the former leading campus radical at Ann Arbor in the 60s.

I went to see *The Big Chill* because I like Mary Kay Place, and I still do. She has the least embarrassing role in this disaster, that of a woman who wants to have a baby, but dislikes men. If you

follow soap opera, you will anticipate (as I did) that the mansion owner's wife steps in to supply husband Harold's services.

The wife matching up the genitals is supposed to have a California-superior morality that justifies this arrangement, not for love, as in the 1960s, but because each of the prospective partners has good genes. The deep message for me was the reproduction has nothing to do with sex, but was just a technical means of producing another consumer, who, if lucky, would get to see movies like this one.

Columbia Pictures bills it as "the feel-good movie of 1983." It isn't.

Vietnam Retold

From page 16

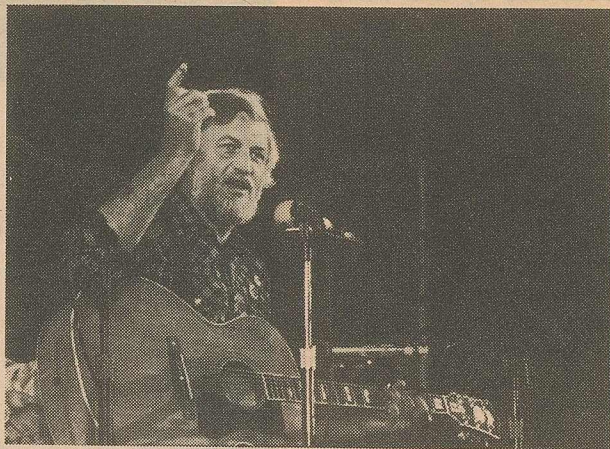
Vietnam offers familiar images of the American presidents — Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson ("If this little nation goes down the drain . . ."), Nixon — reciting the domino theory to explain why two-and-a-half million Americans fought in Southeast Asia.

Part one provides a thumbnail history of Vietnam's several-century struggle for independence and its efforts to resist the destruction of Vietnamese unity. Utilizing rare archival footage of French colonialism ("French civilizers have brought peace, work, prosperity and joy," intones an early newsreel), the opening episode focuses on the story of Ho Chi Minh, the father of Vietnamese liberation, and the Vietnam rebels who fought the French during the 1930s and the Japanese in World War II.

Succeeding segments will examine the story of the United States' brutal undeclared war on the country. For those who didn't watch it live on the nightly news, *Vietnam* is informative.

Vancouver Folk Music Festival presents

UTAH PHILLIPS



The golden voice of the great southwest returns, bringing his vast store of wonderful yarns, songs of struggle and jokes there should be a law against bringing them over the border. Utah is a people's artist in the finest sense, and in these dark days, his blend of humour and music is just the tonic for tired spirits. The music and history of working people comes to life with Utah Phillips.

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Tickets: Black Swan Records - 2936 West 4th
Octopus Books East - 1146 Commercial Drive
Vancouver Folk Music Festival - 3271 Main St.



THE B.C. GOVERNMENT'S BUDGET LEGISLATION PACKAGE:

LEGISLATION THAT WOULD ERODE THE RIGHTS OF EVERY CITIZEN...

Loss of basic democratic rights, elimination of local decision-making, and cuts in needed social services are the common features of the government's plan. Some examples:

Human Rights Repealed

Bill 27 would repeal the Human Rights Code and replace it with a statute that fails to protect against many forms of discrimination, and has no effective enforcement procedures or education program. Already the government has fired the Human Rights Commission and human rights branch employees.

Renters' Protection Ended

Under Bill 5, renters would be subject to eviction without cause and unjustified rent increases. Rent review and the rentalsman are eliminated — leaving tenants without protection.

Social Services Cut — Everywhere

Almost no area has escaped the inhuman "down-sizing" of vitally needed community services. Among the programs cut or eliminated: child-abuse teams; family service workers; legal aid; grants to the handicapped; consumer counselling; funding for community health groups; the list goes on and on. Bill 24 undercuts Medicare; Bill 8 disbands the Alcohol and Drug Commission; Bill 9 eliminates regional planning...

Basic Employment Rights Eliminated

Bill 3 would give government wide, arbitrary powers to fire employees, without real cause and without real appeal rights. All semblance of employment security is eliminated. Public employees face permanent wage controls which allow the government to end real collective bargaining by simply setting budget levels. Bill 26 takes away the guarantee of even minimum employment standards for all employees, and abolishes the Employment Standards Board.

And Taxes Go UP!

The budget puts new taxes on meals and long-distance calls, and raises tobacco and minimum property tax payable. Ironically, the social services tax is raised! Renters' and personal tax credits are eliminated — as are the minimal "price" controls: the 6 per cent rate increase for B.C. Hydro and other public corporations is ended. Overall government spending is up over 12%!

A BUDGET THAT ALARMS EVERY PERSON CONCERNED WITH EDUCATION...

All those who teach, all those who learn, and all those whose children's future depends on the quality of B.C.'s public education system, have special cause for concern. Here are some of the reasons:

Larger Classes in Public Schools

The government has consciously decided to put the quality of education back 10 years. School boards will have three years to eliminate 3,000 teaching positions, fire support staff, and cut \$80 million from present budgets — at a time when enrolment is growing! Returning to the days of over-sized classes, when today's students need more attention than ever, creates damage that can't be repaired.

No Room at the Universities and Colleges

The government proposes to starve universities to the extent that, for the first time, enrolment limits will mean that fully qualified students are turned away. All post-secondary educational institutions — universities, colleges and technical institutes — face cuts of needed programs, teaching, and non-teaching staff, as well as increased class sizes.

Education Decisions Centralized

Bill 6 means that politicians in Victoria — not locally elected school boards — will control key education decisions until 1987. School board budgets will be set by Victoria, based on centralized formulae, not local needs. Similarly, Bills 19 and 20 would allow a cabinet minister to decide what courses will be given at our regional colleges and institutes. All community and school board representation is removed from college councils.

Student Aid Cut

While tuition fees are rising between 15 and 50 per cent, and it is next to impossible to find summer work, the government has cut \$10 million from student grants. New rules make aid unavailable to those who need it most.

Educators Could be Fired at Whim

Bill 3 would allow the indiscriminate firing of teachers, college instructors, and university professors no matter how long they have taught, how well they have taught, or how important their program is. There would be no appeal on the merits of these firings, leaving wide possibilities for abuse of these sweeping powers.



"This is NOT about 'Restraint' — This is about losing our RIGHTS"

A Message from the B.C. Teachers' Federation



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733-0118

Darcy Bader
Burnaby Solidarity
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Burnaby, V5G 3S3
294-8141 W.

Debbie Barron
Williams L. Solidarity
RR3 Box 46 Corner
Williams Lake,
392-2770

Don Bennett
Langley Solidarity
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533-1618 W.

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Duncan Solidarity
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Duncan, V9L 2M9
748-2133

Marion Cornish
Revelstoke Solidarity
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Revelstoke,
837-5978

Dave Coughlan
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462-9415, 463-8804

Dave Crosby
Port Alberni Solidarity
4904 Montrose (IWA)

See page 20

IWA

Local 1 - 217

Vancouver

Supports Solidarity



D. G. Evans, President-E. A. Ewert, Financial Secretary

Building Trades United Against Repressive Legislation

The B.C. & Yukon Territory Building and Construction Trades Council, representing 17 affiliated International Unions fully supports Operation Solidarity and the Solidarity Coalition in the campaign against the Socred Budget and the accompanying repressive legislative package.

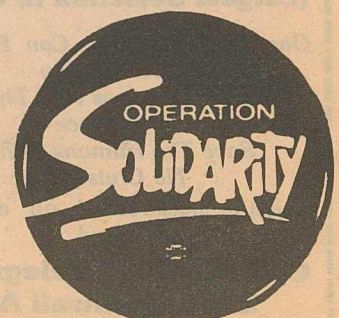
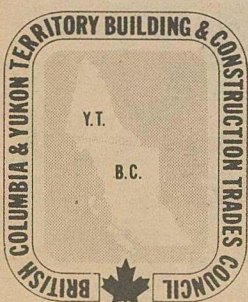
The Budget hurts working people, the disadvantaged and the unemployed in this province. The legislation attacks the rights of thousands of British Columbians who are trade unionists, tenants, members of minority groups, women and seniors. The legislation threatens the quality of health care, education and social services.

We call on the Government to come to its senses, to end its attacks on all but the powerful and privileged and to begin to act co-operatively to create a climate in British Columbia which can lead to real economic recovery.

B.C. & Yukon Territory Building & Construction Trades Council

Asbestos Insulators
Boilermakers
Bricklayers
Carpenters
Cement Masons
& Plasterers
Culinary Workers
Electricians
Elevator Constructors

Ironworkers
Labourers
Machinists
Operating Engineers
Painters
Plumbers & Pipefitters
Sheet Metal Workers
Teamsters
Tiler/Setter Helpers



From page 19

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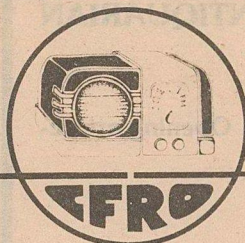
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Boag Foundation's

BANQUET

- Meet the Conference participants
- Hear Joop denUyl's views on our future
- Hear Harold Winch's report on the Boag Trust
 - Enjoy music of Latin America
 - Enjoy folk songs by Roy Bailey
- Master of Ceremonies — Lister Sinclair

TICKETS: \$25.00
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SEND MONEY ORDERS TO: Boag Foundation,
c/o Arvena Tokarek, BC NDP Provincial Office,
517 East Broadway, Vancouver V5T 1X4
or, 675 Keith Road, West Vancouver V7T 1L7.

Dallas Calgary South?

Vanderberg (CBC, Sundays, 8 p.m.) opens with rugged, mustachioed entrepreneur Hank Vanderberg (played by Michael Hogan) proposing a multi-million dollar scheme to fuel cars with compressed natural gas to his Calgary-based Vandoo board of directors. "We can be the biggest son-of-a-bitch on the block," Hank assures them.

CBC's **Dallas North**, a free-wheeling serialized hymn to the joys of free enterprise, is chock-full of sportscars, helicopters, ranch-style mansions, company jets, corporate towers and occasional doses of breathtaking Alberta landscape. Hank's the good guy — the ambitious, honest capitalist (he only cheats once in a while, stealing the other company's secret reports, and eavesdropping on the conversations of government mandarins). We're supposed to identify with him.

He's beset on all sides by evil and frivolous forces. Naturally, Vanderberg manfully wades through wily competitors, a stuck-in-the-past father, and a flighty Maggie Trudeau-type wife (played by Susan Hogan, the real-life spouse of Michael Hogan). His only stumbling block are those bungling bureaucrats in Ottawa, propping up debt-ridden companies in order to prevent Hank from making an honest million or two.

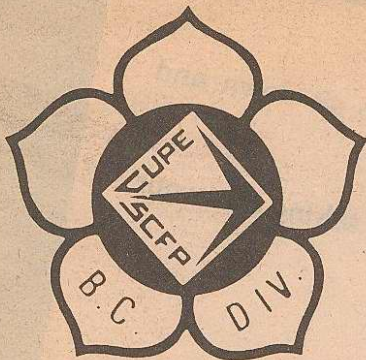
The message from director Peter Rowd's slickly-moving prime-time soap is that business is exciting, cheating is part of the game, and the heroes are purposeful men striding around glass-and-concrete towers (for relaxation Vanderberg watches aquarium videotapes on television). Predictably, Vanderberg's corporate wife gets the short end of the stick: she's portrayed as artsy, unstable, and torn between horseback riding and

"causes" she can't stick to (the latest one is the anti-nuke movement). Naturally, Vanderberg can't understand why she leaves him (their reconciliation takes place in a helicopter; where else?). Considering all the moving around that occurs in the first 60-minute episode, **Vanderberg** will probably become an official exhibit in Vancouver's 1986 Transpo exposition. Recommended only for corporate executives wondering where the zest went.

From the sublime to the ridiculous is only a flick of the channel away. It was a made-for-TV movie called **The Making of a Male Model** (ABC, Oct. 9) a tempestuous tale of the trials and tribulations of the advertising business starring Joh-Erik Hexum (he was last seen in **Voyagers!**) and Joan Collins (she's in **Dynasty**). A friend made me tune in because Jon-Erik's "hot" ("hot" is a revived 1980s word for sexy, as in, "He's got a hot bod").

We saw exactly the right amount of it — about four minutes' worth. In this portion of the networks' latest meat-market saga, Jon-Erik gets his break, which consists of splashing his pecs with a male cologne, riveting his blue eyes on the viewer, and uttering one deathless line (I think it went something like, "Let her catch the Fever" — that's the name of the cologne, in case you were wondering). For this Jon-Erik gets millions and sultry Joan Collins. We turned it off before discovering who else gets their hands on Jon-Erik's flesh, and before being invited to consider the state of his soul. My friend made a wistfully obscene suggestion to our celluloid hero as he dissolved, but by then Jon-Erik was fully occupied with Joan.

—Stan Persky



Canadian Union of Public Employees (B.C. Division)

#100-7535 6th Street, Burnaby, B.C. V3N 3M2

Telephone: 520-6301

Special Area Meetings

NORTH

Terrace Hotel, Terrace: Friday, Oct. 14, 1:00 p.m.

LOWER MAINLAND/FRASER VALLEY/VANCOUVER ISLAND

Blueboy Hotel, 725 S.E. Marine Drive, Vancouver: Saturday, Nov. 5, 11:00 a.m.

EAST KOOTENAYS

Town & Country Inn, Cranbrook: Wednesday, Nov. 16, 7:00 p.m.

WEST KOOTENAYS

Hi Arrow Arms Hotel, Castlegar: Thursday, Nov. 17, 6:30 p.m.

OKANAGAN

Village Green, Vernon: Saturday, Nov. 19, 11:00 a.m.

President: Owen Dykstra

Secretary-Treasurer: Bernice Kirk

It's Bennett's Fault

Premier Bennett and his government have embarked on a political vendetta against the labour movement and other groups in our society that is taking us all down the road to economic disruption and years of industrial relations chaos.

These are the immediate victims in Mr. Bennett's war on working people. They are among the ones who are paying the price for the government's economic mismanagement.

— A 53-year-old human rights worker with a husband whose UIC has run out and a dependent son who is unemployed. Their mortgage is due for renewal.
Fired Without Cause.

— A terminated conservation worker who is the sole support of 3 children was forced to send one child away because she could not afford to keep him.
Fired Without Cause.

The long term victims will be those among us who depend on social services.

The people of this province will also suffer the economic consequences of the Premier's vendetta. Employees and employers will have to deal with a climate of industrial relations instability not of their making.

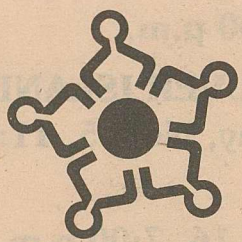
The on-going disruption in services will affect everyone in the province as Bennett's plan for revenge continues to unfold.

The B.C. Government Employees' Union has publicly stated that we are willing to sit down and bargain under the same rules as the private sector.

The government's response has been to ram repressive legislation through the House taking away our rights and those of thousands of B.C. working people.

JOIN US IN PROTEST AGAINST THE BENNETT PLAN.

SAY NO TO REPRESSION.



Published by the B.C. Government Employees' Union
Norman T. Richards
President

AGIT-PROP

OCTOBER 15 VICTORIA

Rally to protest the budget at 2:30 p.m., Courthouse (Burdett and Blashard).

SMITHERS

Rally, contact Coalition representative Lila Wallace at 847-3525 or 847-2645.

RICHMOND

Petition blitz, contact Casey Jones at 273-2266 or 271-6656.

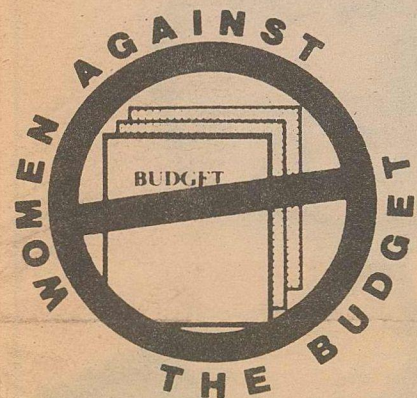
CRANBROOK

Information Day, contact Denise Buchan at 489-3331 or 427-5656.

VANCOUVER

Rally, March for Your Rights, 10:30 a.m. Gather in front of B.C. Place stadium at the foot of the Cambie St. Bridge.

Author Margaret Randall speaks on "Correcting the Lies" about Nicaragua, 8 p.m., Russian Hall, 600 Campbell Ave. Admission \$3.



Feminist singer Robin Flower performs at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr., 8 p.m. Admission \$5. Co-sponsored by Vancouver Folk Festival.

"Children of the Night," a play by Paul Ledoux, opens Oct. 15 and runs through to Nov. 5, at Firehall Theatre, 280 East Cordova. Tickets are \$6 and \$7. Call 687-8737.

OCTOBER 16

VANCOUVER

Lesbians and gays Speak Out, 7:30 p.m., King George School, 1755 Barclay (at Denman).

Film benefit for Amnesty International, with

"Missing." Joyce Horman will be the guest speaker, 4 p.m., Ridge Theatre (16th and Arbutus).

Women Against the Budget, provincial conference for women only, at the Fishermen's Hall, 138 East Cordova. All women welcome. One day seminar to develop provincially coordinated plans committed to defeating the legislation. For info call Susan Croll at 253-5959 or Lorri Rudland at 873-1427. Bring lunch.

OCTOBER 17

VANCOUVER

Protest against Bill C-157, noon at 1177 West Broadway. For info call 736-9374 or 224-4435. Sponsored by the Coalition Against Bill C-157.

BURNABY

Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition meeting, 7:30 p.m. at BCGEU Hall, 4911 Canada Way (near Sperling).

SUMMERLAND

Solidarity 1st Choice Rally, 7:30 p.m. at the Oddfellows Hall. For more info call the local coalition.

OCTOBER 18

KAMLOOPS

Solidarity Coalition meeting with guest speaker Renate Shearer. Contact local coalition for more information.

VANCOUVER

Little Mountain Neighborhood House presents two films, "As Friend and Foe" and "Who Wants Unions?", 7:30 p.m., 3981 Main St.

OCTOBER 19

VANCOUVER

Lesbian meeting to discuss lesbians' and gays' place on steering committee of both Solidarity coalitions, 7:30 p.m., at the Vancouver Status of Women office, 400 West 5th Ave.

OCTOBER 20

VANCOUVER

British labor and folk singer Roy Bailey performs at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr., 8 p.m. Cover \$3. For more info call 251-6626.

OCTOBER 21

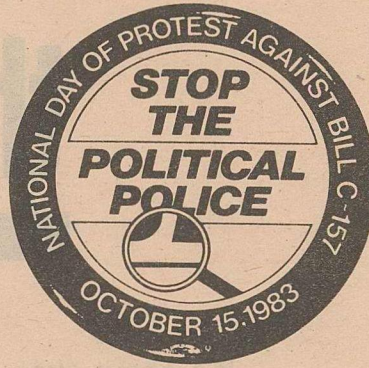
VANCOUVER

Women Against the budget's petition drive

moves to the Wall Street area. For more info contact Jackie Larkin at 253-5068, October 22.

PORT ALBERNI

Solidarity Coalition meeting, 1 p.m. at the IWA Hall. For more info contact Henry Nedergard at 724-0171.



VANCOUVER

Humanities at work seminar. Topic: Government Power and Personal Rights — The Situation in British Columbia, 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. panel discussion, and between 1:30 p.m. a workshop. At the Downtown Education Centre, 549 Howe St., rooms 601-602. Sponsored by the SFU Humanities Program. Free.

OCTOBER 22

VANCOUVER

Conference at the Western Institute for the Deaf. Topic: Coalitions and Human Rights, 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. For more info call 736-7391.

Benefit for the new MacLeod's Bookstore with a Saturday Night of Poetry at the Western Front, 303 East 8th, 7:30 to 11:30 p.m. Admission \$4. For reservations call 683-3022 or 681-9990.

OCTOBER 23

VANCOUVER

"From The Ashes," a film on the reconstruction in Nicaragua, with a guest speaker, 7:30 p.m. at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr. Cover \$2. For more info call 251-6626.

Send all notices to Agit-Prop/Events Editor, Solidarity Times, 545 W. 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C., V5Z 1K9.

Blather

Don't start the revolution without us.

This is the place to publicize your meeting, demonstration, club, semi-secret cabal, party, poetry reading, concert, wake, petition, art show, campaign to save B.C. or other places from the excesses of those who have money and power to spare.

We're interested in short announcements carrying the basics: who, what, where, when and why. If you think your group or conspiracy is worth more than an announcement, send us a short article of 100 words or less. Make it to the point, lively and informative.

Agit-Prop is a bulletin board for people and groups who, shut out of existing media, have had to use clandestine and extra-legal means to spread the word about their gatherings and campaigns. But keep on gluing up those posters. We all need something to assault our senses as we trudge to our workplaces, be they real or imagined.

Send your messages, preferably typed (so if there is a screw-up, you can blame us), to Agit Prop, Solidarity Times, 545 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1K9. Deadline is Monday, 10 a.m., before the issue you want to see your announcement in. We reserve the right to edit for space.

ARE YOU AFRAID OF



At sea

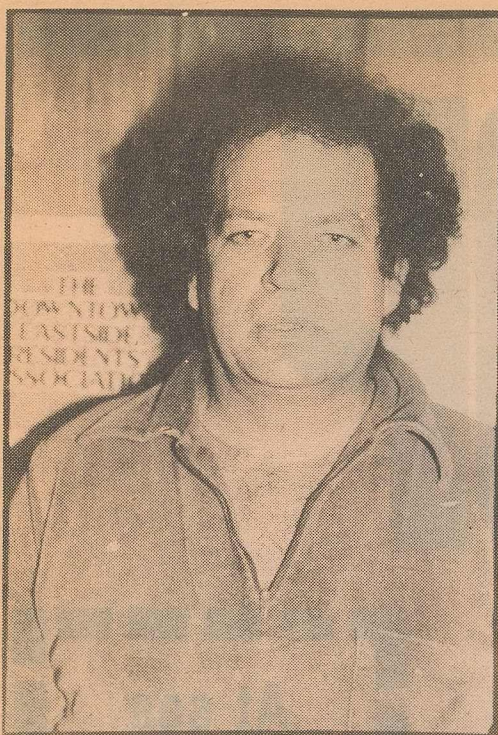
Canada is not at war with Nicaragua, but you wouldn't know it from our foreign aid expenditures. In the last three years Canada's bilateral (that is, non-food) aid to the embattled Central American nation of two and a half million has added up to \$240,000. In the same period the Honduras, Nicaragua's slightly-bigger next-door neighbour that shelters the bases of U.S.-bankrolled anti-Sandinista armies, received \$43 million in Canadian aid.

Convinced that anti-Sandinista Canadians don't outnumber those supporting Managua's current regime by the same 179-to-1 ratio, a group called Canadian Aid for Nicaragua is trying to redress the balance with a foreign aid program of its own. This winter a ship will leave Vancouver's harbour for Nicaragua, and CAN is trying to raise a half million dollars to load it with medical equipment, education supplies, tools, fishing gear and office equipment.

So far CAN has raised more than a fifth of that total, and attracted the support of such people as B.C. Federation of Labour president Art Kube; Father Jim Roberts, a co-chairperson of the Solidarity Coalition; author ("Fragile Freedoms") and former supreme court judge Tom Berger; musician Bruce Cockburn; and MPs Pauline Jewett (New Democrat) and Walter McLean (Conservative), as well as scores of church groups, trade unions, and community groups.

CAN's campaign extends beyond this winter's shipment of aid. Ultimately, says CAN spokesperson Jim Sinclair, the campaign hopes to reverse Ottawa's foreign aid stance toward Central America. "We hope the success of the campaign will show our government that there is tremendous support for the achievements of the Nicaraguan revolution. Their advances in health care and literacy have been nothing less than remarkable" and deserve Canada's support, Sinclair says.

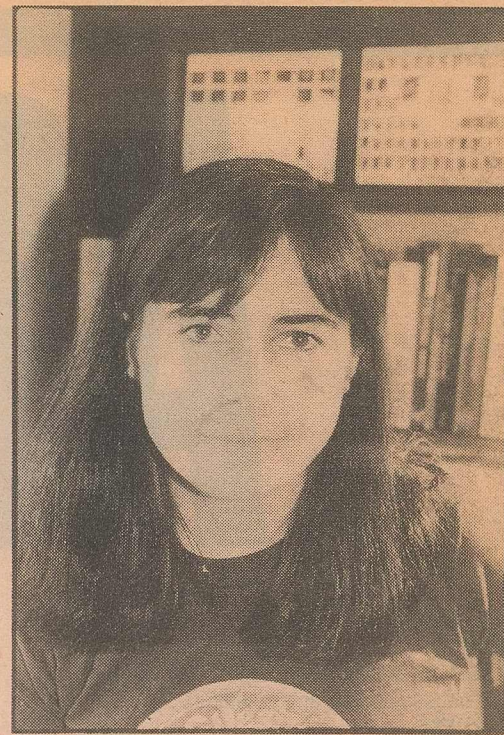
In addition to donations of money and/or supplies, volunteers are also needed to help put the shipment together. CAN is at 2524 Cypress St., Vancouver V6J-3N2 (telephone 733-1021).



"Community groups and labor need an opportunity to get their views across, and there's no better way to do that than with our own paper."

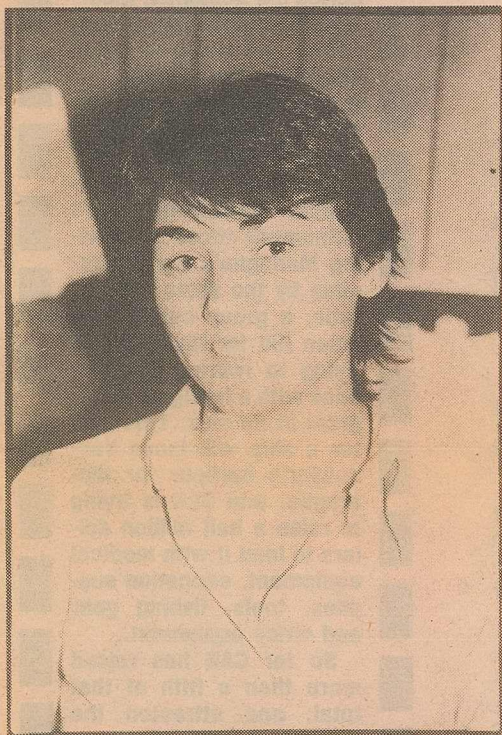
— Jim Green, community organizer

How the other half thinks



"It's time we had a good weekly magazine."

— Terri Wershler, businesswoman



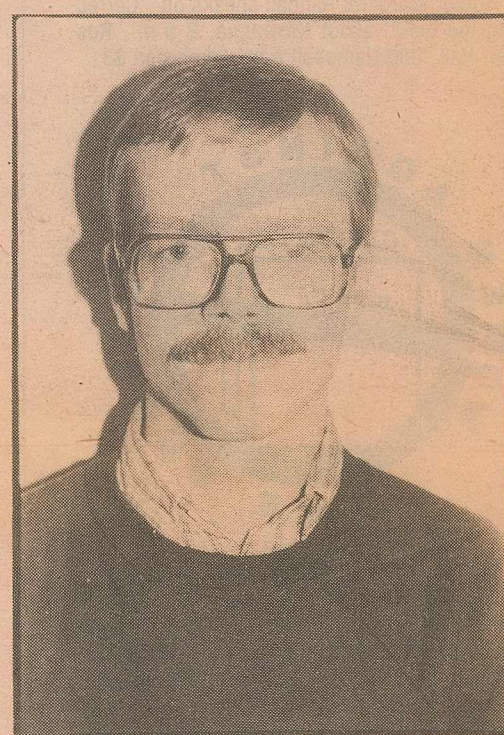
"B.C. needs something to get the voice of the people out."

— Paddy Jones, office worker

It's about time this province had a paper British Columbians can call their own, people have been saying. A paper that speaks with the voice of the other half, the half that didn't vote for you-know-who. A paper that believes in worker's rights. Women's rights. The rights of the elderly. Of the sick. Gay rights. Children's rights. Human rights.

Solidarity Times gives you all that, and more: intelligent and lively writing, a bright new look and outlook, viewpoints that are provocative instead of infuriating.

Cartoons and illustrations by Boswell, Bierman and others.



"We need an alternative voice in the media."

— Dave Lovell, graphic artist

What's more, Solidarity Times delivers. Every week, right to your door. \$33 buys 52 weekly issues. To get yours, just send the coupon below to Solidarity Times, 101-545 West Tenth Avenue, Vancouver V5Z 1K9.



"There needs to be somebody covering the alternatives in Vancouver — things like art, music, theatre. The dailies don't want to cover those things properly."

— Michelle Normoyle, student

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"How about something that's a little fun to read?"

— Gary Trigg, waiter and musician