

BCGEU OUT: TEACHERS NEXT? (P3)

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DOWN TO THE WIRE

**B.C. TEETERS ON THE
EDGE (PAGES 2, 3, 8)**



BCGEU MEMBERS WALKOUT OCTOBER 31 AT MIDNIGHT

BEV DAVIES PHOTO



DERA ORGANIZER JIM GREEN

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

TALES FROM THE FRONT

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Trouble in Paradise

Ticked off talks

By Stan Persky

Even with an additional hour gained from the seasonal setting-back of the clock, it went down to the wire.

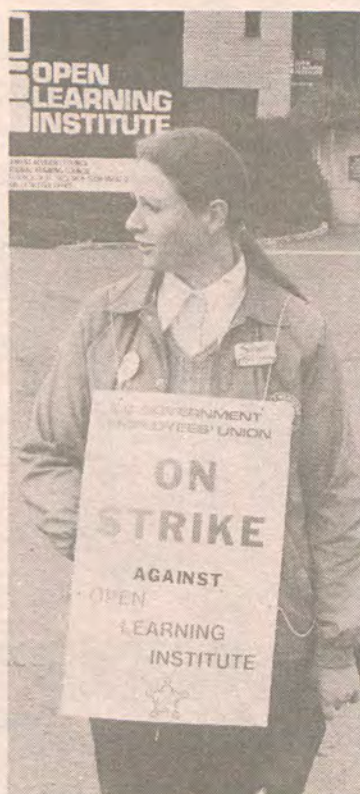
As timepieces ticked toward a midnight, Oct. 31 deadline for the launching of an unprecedented general strike in B.C., teams of government and union negotiators jawed their way into the seventh day of marathon talks designed to avert the confrontation.

For four months, a burgeoning organization of trade unions and community groups — the Solidarity Coalition — had marched, rallied, petitioned and protested against a harsh right-wing package of so-called "restraint" legislation introduced by Premier Bill Bennett's Social Credit government last July. And for four months Bennett resisted

changes to a program that ranged from elimination of the province's Human Rights Commission to labor legislation allowing the government to override contracts and fire public sector workers without cause.

But when more than 50,000 Solidarity marchers paraded past the Socred annual convention on Oct. 15, two weeks before the slated firing of 1,600 members of the B.C. Government Employees Union, the premier had second thoughts. Bennett took to television Oct. 20. Though vowing that protestors would not be permitted to "picket their way to prosperity," he softened his stand once past the rhetoric, offering Solidarity ministerial consultation on unpassed legislation and inviting the BCGEU back to the bargaining table with hints that an "exemption" was possible from Bill 3, the firing-without-cause law.

On Monday, Oct. 24, government and BCGEU negotiators began a last-ditch week of talks behind closed doors at the B.C. Labor Relations Board with the help of board chairman Steven Kelleher. For its part, Solidarity Coalition announced the same day that it would take up Bennett's offer to meet with cabinet ministers to discuss yet-to-be passed legislation on human rights, health, and the rentalsman process. "We want to bend over backwards to be as co-operative as possible," said coalition co-chair Renate Shearer.



BEV DAVIES PHOTO

At the same time, in an unrelated labor dispute, pulp workers locked out at nine mills indicated they would be willing to go back to work in a bid to re-start stalled talks in the forestry industry. (The lockout was lifted later in the week.)

But not all signs were hopeful. As bargainers met under a news blackout, B.C. Federation of Labor secretary-treasurer Mike Kramer sketched out the high stakes in stark terms. He warned that any move by the government to force public sector workers back on the job if talks failed would precipitate a general strike. Kramer and B.C. Fed

president Art Kube unveiled an escalating program of job action unanimously adopted over the weekend by the federation's 32-member executive council. If the government attempted to retaliate with back-to-work legislation, Kramer warned that the 225,000-member federation would support affiliates defying such legislation.

"We've had a number of communiques in the past week from the private sector unions telling us if the federation calls for an all-out action, they would support it. That's as close to a general strike as damn is to swearing," said Kramer.

Provincial Secretary Jim Chabot vowed the next day that the government would not back down on Bill 3. "Bill 3 is law and Bill 3 won't be changed . . . there is no intention on the part of the government to repeal Bill 3," he insisted. Chabot dismissed Kramer's warning, saying, "Our negotiations are with the BCGEU, not the B.C. Federation of Labor. The talks are separate and distinct."

By mid-week, however, the BCGEU made sure the talks were not "separate and distinct." Making clear that the 40,000-member civil servant union was not about to cut a deal on its own and leave the other public sector workers hanging out to dry, GEU chief negotiator Cliff Andstein invited representatives from the B.C. Teachers Federation, the Hospital Employees Union and the Canadian Union of

Public Employees to join the GEU at the bargaining table as observers. It was an unmistakable signal that the government had to settle with the entire public sector, or not at all.

As the talks proceeded through the week with few signs of progress — and overshadowed by a startling international event, the invasion of Grenada by U.S. troops — the embattled B.C. workers picked up bits of support here and there. The Ontario Supreme Court ruled that part of the Ontario legislative program preventing workers from bargaining on non-monetary items — similar to the Bennett government's proposed Bill 2 — violated the constitution's Charter of Rights protecting freedom of association. B.C. Attorney General Brian Smith as much as admitted that Bill 2 was dead in the water unless the ruling was overturned by a higher court.

Also in Ontario, B.C. workers got a boost from the annual convention of the Canadian Union of Public Employees. A string of speakers — from Canadian Labor Congress president Dennis McDermott to B.C. NDP MLA Rosemary Brown to newly-elected CUPE president Jeff Rose — criticised the Bennett regime. My first priority, said Rose, head of Canada's largest union, is to fight the B.C. government's program to fire civil servants. "That is where the spearhead of government repression is

See page 14: TROUBLE

IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN OUR CHILDREN'S FUTURE READ THIS

Do you know that:

- The provincial cabinet has decided to institute provincial government examinations for all Grade 12 students, starting in January 1983.
- 1937 was the last year that all students were required to write government examinations.
- The two-hour examinations will count for 50% of the student's mark in each course; they are worth as much as an entire year's work.
- There is no academic evidence that government examinations give any better prediction about a student's success in university than do teachers' marks. In fact, the evidence points the other way.
- Teachers do give examinations, all year: class exams, school exams and district exams.
- When government examinations were last used, it was to screen that small percentage of students who went on to a college career. Now, in a different society, the examinations will downgrade "non-academic" studies and take us back to a pre-World War II pattern.
- The examinations will discriminate against students who are not going to university.
- Provincial examinations set last year by the Ministry of Education were ill-conceived and badly administered. We are proceeding hastily toward a new set of examinations developed by the same ministry.
- In a time of "restraint" provincial examinations will cost \$3,000,000 per year.

Education Minister Heinrich says that one of the purposes of the examinations is "to respond to strong public concerns for improved standards of education."

Parents, school boards, and students have been expressing their concerns about the examinations.

Add your voice to theirs and let the minister and your MLA know that the proposed examinations have more to do with privilege and discrimination than with education.



A message from the British Columbia Teachers' Federation.

NEWS

Strike on; talks too

By Keith Baldrey

Twelve hours after government workers across the province went out on strike, their union leaders and the provincial government's negotiators were back at the bargaining table.

But any hope for an agreement that would end the strike by 35,000 government employees depends on one side backing down from the firmly entrenched position it has held since the budget was brought down.

And that will be hard for either side to do: the labor movement says it's fighting to keep basic workers' rights and for its survival; the provincial government has made a firm commitment to its supporters to lead the province into economic prosperity by drastically reducing the civil service and curbing union strength.

Down in the B.C. Government Employees' strike headquarters, staff people say they're prepared for a long strike. "We started planning for this strike on July 7. We're ready to go and only a miracle will stop us," said a worker who refused to be identified.

The long planning for the strike is evident in the "war room." Gone is the usual chaos of strike preparation: there is no frantic, last-minute rushing around to plug holes on picket lines or anything like that.

Instead, the atmosphere is business like and low-key. "We've known what we had to do for quite a while. It's almost anti-climatic now that the strike is actually happening," said a person answering phones two hours before the first picket lines went up.

The union has divided the province and large cities into geographic zones, with different people responsible for coordinating each zone's pickets. In the Lower Mainland, for example, there are 50 zone representatives and 500 picket captains.

A daily strike bulletin will also be issued to each member, the union says. After the strike's first week, picketers will receive \$75 a week in strike pay, plus \$15 for each dependent.

How long will the strike last?

The union and Operation Solidarity have continually said they will not give in on their demand that layoffs in all public sector unions be carried out on a seniority basis applied through the entire bargaining unit. The government wants the right to severely restrict any seniority considerations,

and to limit what can be included in a public sector collective agreement.

The labor movement has also said that the next move is up to the government, who are now in the position of either making a major concession during bargaining, or using their power to order the workers back to work through the Essential Services Act or back-to-work legislation.

But Operation Solidarity and B.C. Federation of Labor president Art Kube said Oct. 31 that Federation affiliates will be advised to disregard any orders to return to work, and any attempt by the government to punish unions or individuals for that refusal will be met with an escalation of job action that could lead to a general strike.

If no settlement is reached,



BCGEU takes Halloween hike

the timetable for future job action looks like this:

- Nov. 8 — Teachers and education employees, including those in universities and colleges, walk off the job.

- Nov. 10 — Workers at Crown corporations such as B.C. Hydro, B.C. Rail and the provincial ferry fleet join the strike.

- Nov. 14 — Transportation workers, including bus drivers, and civic workers join the strike.

- Nov. 18 — Leaving enough people at work to care for critical patients, the members of the Hospital Employees Union and the Health Sciences Association walk out at the province's hospitals.

Among the services affected by the strike are the liquor stores, traffic courts, highway maintenance, coroners' services, sheriff's services, human resources counselling, probation officers and provincial prison guards.

The union plans to keep almost 2,000 workers on the job to supply what they consider to be essential services.

At press time, negotiations were continuing at the Labor Relations Board with newly appointed mediator Vince Ready on hand to assist.

Teachers go next week

By Keith Baldrey

B.C.'s public schools are slated for a Nov. 8 shutdown when the province's 30,000 teachers walk off the job to support the fight against the government's public sector restraint legislation.

And the teachers are also prepared "to join a general

strike," according to Pat Clarke, the B.C. Teachers Federation's vice president.

The teachers, whose strike will be part of Operation Solidarity's escalating protest strategy against the legislation, voted 59 per cent in favor of strike action in a vote announced Oct. 29. The strike will go ahead as planned unless the B.C. Government Employees Union reaches an agreement with the provincial government.

"The vote is an expression of frustration by teachers," says Clarke. "The (former education minister Bill) Vander Zalm era did a lot to radicalize us."

Clarke says while the strike vote was "not a terrific mandate," he thinks support for job action among teachers is higher than the 59 per cent because the question on the voting ballot did not mention the Solidarity movement.

"Many teachers don't want to go out on strike alone, but the support for Operation Solidarity is quite high among our membership," he said.

The teachers' contract does not expire until Dec. 31 and so a strike would not be legal, but Clarke says they are hoping their job action will be ruled a "political protest" by the courts, and therefore legal.

"We have well established precedents and we're quite confident any injunction can be overruled on the basis of our arguments," said Clarke.

Earlier this year one-day walkouts by Vancouver bus drivers and government employees in Victoria to attend anti-budget rallies were ruled political protests by the Labor Relations Board.

The last strike by B.C. teachers was a one-day walkout over pensions in 1971.

Midnight strikers provide walkout fireworks

By Debbie Wilson

"Welcome to the general strike."

It was greeted — although prematurely — with sparklers and fireworks a minute after midnight Oct. 31 at the emergency human resources office in downtown Vancouver. Off-duty staff and fired workers from other offices of the ministry assembled to join one of the first picket lines in the government employees' dispute with the province.

"I wouldn't miss this for the world," said Ken Holmes, a fired Port Moody human resources worker.

Despite the holiday atmosphere, every B.C. Government Employees' Union member interviewed was certain many more picket lines will be established by other unions before this strike is over. Picketers were prepared for a long wait. "Resolute" was shop steward Joe Whitman's word.

"I don't think this strike could have been avoided," said Michael McAllister, a social worker at the office for five years. "I don't want to go out. But I think there are principles involved."

"I'm not picketing about my contract. It's not about my wages or benefits."

"It's really hard to leave the office," said McAllister. "There's one manager to handle all those kids. They've been phoning all night. They want to know what they're going to do."

The emergency office is the only human resources of-

fice in the area which remains open when all the human resources offices shut down for the night, on weekends and holidays, or when child abuse calls or urgent calls for aid come in. They had a street program for juvenile prostitutes: it was cancelled. Eight of the office's 50 employees are sacked.

Mariam Moses was one of the staff terminated Oct. 31. She was telephoned last week and asked to come to work Nov. 1. She was told a letter was on its way.

But the letter never arrived and many staff think the promise of delayed layoffs was simply a ruse by the government.

"I want my job," said Moses. "And if I don't get my job back there there's really not much point in going back."

Even the union leadership turned out on the line. Chief negotiator Cliff Andstein showed up as the embers in the bonfire barrel at the back of the building began to cool. And John Shields, first vice president of the BCGEU, paced the picket line with the rest of the strikers.

He was fired from his human resources job in Victoria when staff cuts were made. The second vice president was fired too.

"We were both singled out," said Shields. "In my office I was the only one fired."

While he spoke, witches, vikings, and other costumed forms stamped the sidewalk and hooted support while they passed.

NEWS

Kids lose with cuts

If proposed cuts to Vancouver's budget go ahead, 734 teachers will find themselves out of work next year. An education ministry directive to cut \$17 million from the 1984 budget has school trustees searching for alternatives.

Final plans for implementing the cut must be made by Feb. 15 next year and submitted to the ministry.

The proposal currently before trustees, prepared by school board officials, closes seven schools, dismisses 734 teachers and reduces or eliminates special programs.

The provincial government promises to protect special education programs like English as a Second Language courses, alternate schools and programs for refugee children and the mentally handicapped. But the proposed cuts are so broad even these programs will be jeopardized, claims trustee Wes Knapp, of the Committee of Progressive Electors.

"COPE trustees thought the Non-Partisan Association would embrace the cuts, but they backed off and want to spend more time with the proposal," Knapp said.

"Regardless of our final decision, the bottom line is going to be pretty damaging for kids."

A public meeting with interested groups on the budget plans is scheduled for Nov. 14.

VanCity keeps rightist link

The Vancouver City Savings Credit Union doesn't think a planned boycott of its banking services by the Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition will cause it to drop its membership in the right-wing Fraser Institute.

"It's hard to tell, but I wouldn't think that the boycott would have a signifi-

cant effect," said Peter Cook, the credit union's corporate affairs manager.

But VanCity will sooner or later "have to decide if they want big business banking there, or working people," says Ed Lavalle, one of the boycott's organizers.

Although at press time a formal campaign and strategy for the boycott had not been developed, the Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition met Nov. 1 to decide the final details, said Lavalle.

The Coalition has so far asked members to withdraw their funds from the credit

Landlords ignore rules

An attempt by a landlord's group to bridle its members' excesses is being ignored, say tenants' rights advocates.

The Rental Housing Council of B.C. wrote almost 6,000 landlords on Sept. 15 warning them not to abuse the "no-cause" eviction clause in Bill 5, the new Residential Tenancy Act, or to make large rent increases.

abiding by the advice in this letter," says Wayne MacEachern. "They're already taking advantage of people. There has been a drastic increase in the number of complaints."

Linda Mead of the Tenant Rights Coalition is also unimpressed by the council's letter.

"Once again tenants have to rely on the magnanimity and benevolence of landlords," she said. "It doesn't work. The reason we had rent controls in the first place was because they can't regulate themselves."



Tall shadows in Vancouver's Pigeon Park

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

union, but to leave their shares intact.

The boycott was prompted by the recent revelation that VanCity pays an annual \$1,000 fee to the Fraser Institute in return for its publications, research data, and an invitation to its annual meeting.

But the credit union rejected the Coalition's request at its Oct. 27 board meeting, claiming that VanCity is a "non-political" body that subscribes to a number of services to obtain "broad viewpoints" concerning economic developments and theory.

"VanCity basically relies on the banking needs of working people," counters Lavalle.

Abuses could cause a return to rent controls, the letter states.

"We don't want the no-cause taken too literally," said council executive director Jack Hayes. "You can lose everything if you do."

"Coming out of rent controls should not cause large rent increases all at once. There should be two or three steps to bring the rents up to market levels. There shouldn't be radical rent increases just because rent controls are gone."

The B.C. Tenant Rights Coalition says the letter has had little effect on landlords. "The indications the coalition have is that landlords are not

Toronto cops slam scabs

Toronto Police Association president Paul Walter called for legislation banning scabs last week.

The head of the 6,800-member police union made his bid in the wake of an injury to a police officer during the recent Toronto Star strike when a truck driven by a scab hit the officer.

Walter claimed that strikebreaking is the prime cause of physical violence on picket lines. "It is unfortunate that police officers have to intervene while management peers out the window watching pickets and police defend themselves," complained the police-union president.

Like their B.C. counterparts, the Toronto Police Association has aligned itself with a coalition of Ontario trade unionists in a campaign against public-sector wage controls. The association took out full-page ads in Toronto newspapers last weekend condemning the controls as "a cynical attempt by the government to avoid its responsibilities."

Kamloops food bank grows faster than Safeway

By Trish Webb

KAMLOOPS — Even though almost one in three people here are on federal assistance, Hank Woodlands is trying to work himself out of a job.

That's understandable, since "business" just keeps growing at the food bank he set up in Oct. 1981, in a United Church basement.

Last year 877 people a month used the food bank. An equal number ate at the Salvation Army across town.

"The basic support comes from people who are close to needing the service themselves," says Woodlands. "let's face it, the basic ongoing support is from the little old ladies who are on a pension and come in at the end of the month and drop off the \$25 they never used." Adds Woodlands: "Service clubs have been the worst."

About \$45,000 divided between the food bank and the

Salvation Army — was raised last year, but the foodbank alone costs \$4,000 a month to operate. Today only families with children are being helped.

An increase in shoplifting brought the foodbank into existence. That problem still plagues local businesses.

"Shoplifting hasn't decreased. We've got young guys going through our garbage at the back of the church. I've never seen that before. A guy came in the other day who had cut his hand going through the bin at Safeway. If it gets dirty cold, things could get really ugly," Woodland says.

"There is no level of government anywhere that is going to get us out of this mess we're into. They got us into it — so did the people — and the people working together in their own neighborhoods is the way we're going to come out of it."

DERA

RAISING HELL

UNTIL SOMETHING'S

DONE

By John Mackie

Vancouver's Downtown Eastside looks like any other skid road in any one of hundreds of cities. Rubbies panhandle and stumble about, knife-eyed young men lurk on street-corners, little old ladies search through street-corner garbage containers, people shuffle slowly, aimlessly along littered sidewalks. The welfare office looks like a World War II bunker. And there's bars, bars, bars.

Four out of five Vancouver pubs are in this tiny corner of the city. Nine out of ten Downtown Eastside residents live in tiny, roach-infested rooms above these bars, where they pay three times as much per foot of living space as people a mile away in the West End.

Ten thousand people live in the Downtown Eastside. The average Downtown Eastsider has lived here for 13 years, making this, next to Dunbar, the most stable neighborhood in Vancouver, more stable than wealthy Shaughnessy, more stable than respectable Kerrisdale, more stable than family oriented Mount Pleasant. This is no transient community.

DERA, the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association, was formed ten years ago to organize this neighborhood and fight for the rights of its citizens. It must be doing its job well, because it constantly finds itself in trouble with the powers that be.

Rather than act as a passive relief organization, doling staples to the poor, it takes an active interest in exposing the actual causes of poverty, plus attempting to alleviate some of the harsher aspects of life that the poor have to contend with. It makes no bones about being objective — it just raises hell until action is taken.

Just how nit-picky DERA's opponents can be was well illustrated by last week's front page headline in the Province that screamed out "\$13,000 Picnic?" DERA has to come before city council quarterly to get approval for the next installment of the grant for its

community organizer, Jim Green. NPA Aldermen Warnett Kennedy and George Puil and TEAM Alderman May Brown took exception to DERA for obtaining \$13,000 in federal money to hold a "picnic", which was their way of describing a 10th birthday celebration in Oppenheimer Park August 28. The event was organized by 4 students on a federal make-work grant, and met all the prerequisites for the grant, which were that the project would be finite and would be recreational and/or educational in nature and wouldn't create a dependency on the community.

It met the fed's standards, but not the locals, who battle with DERA tooth and nail for every penny.

What rubs NPA aldermen the wrong way is DERA's thorn-in-the-side stance with council in regards to enforcing things like standard and maintenance laws. "The Non Partisan Association is a stumbling block in anything we have to do with hotels," says Green. "Their basic position is that 'it's a man's right to run his own business any way he wants to.'"

The way some hotel owners do run their businesses borders on the obscene. The DERA office is full of thick files documenting abuses of the city's standard of maintenance bylaws (Green calls them the "S and M bylaws"), hotel by hotel. The average cost of a 10 by 10 room in the Downtown Eastside is \$200, and that's with "no toilet, nothin," according to Green. Moreover, the \$200 is tied to welfare cheques. "It's a form of rent control," says Green: the maximum housing allowance on the cheque is \$200, so that's what most hotels charge. When the housing allowance goes up, so does the rent. "Anytime there's an increase in welfare cheques, 90 per cent of the time that increase comes on the shelter side of the cheque," so welfare recipients never actually see the increase in their

pockets. "It's a straight payoff to the hotel owners."

For your 10 by 10 room, more often than not you get cockroaches, free of charge. "It's sickening," he says. "There's cockroaches everywhere in this neighbourhood. People think cockroaches are nothing, but they carry disease. Besides, they're hideous." When hotels do use pesticides, problems often arise: Green recalls that a Downtown Eastside resident was sick for months, and no one could figure out why. He later found out that hotel workers had come into his room when he was out and had sprayed indiscriminately without telling him, including all over his food, which he had continued to eat.

"If they strictly enforced the S and M bylaws there would be about 3 hotels open," says Green. "At least 70 per cent are not in compliance with the standard of maintenance laws. It took us over a year to get the Hotel Europe closed down, and it was in violation of hundreds of S and M laws."

One area where DERA's perseverance has paid off is in fire regulations. They initiated a proposal to have sprinklers installed in hotels, and it results in the saving of 25 to 50 lives a year, according to Green. In 1973, before sprinklers, there were 107 fires in the Downtown Eastside. 56 were repeats, and 21 hotels had 3 fires, one had 4, one had 7, and 13 people died in the fires. This year, only one person has died, and that was in one of the hotels exempted from putting sprinklers in because they were so small (under 3 stories and 20 rooms).

While we were talking, a man came in on an advocacy case. Two years ago, somebody stole his income tax refund and cashed it. He went to DERA and they proved it was somebody else who cashed it, but he still hasn't seen any money. "We went through it ten times," says Green. "Last time we phoned up, they'd never heard of him."

DERA handles up to 1,000 advocacy cases a year. The average case takes about ten hours to deal with, and can range from welfare and old age pension problems to a man who lost his dentures and can't eat, so he's losing weight fast.

The biggest battle DERA is facing for the future is saving the neighborhood itself as B.C. Place and Expo 86 loom closer and closer. Green estimates that close to 9,000 out of the area's 10,000 residents may be displaced by a three-pronged assault on the Downtown Eastside. Already, places that haven't washed their facades for years are sandblasting their bricks in expectation of big tourist dollars. Green says that the Socreds have created a Crown Corporation, Renaissance Townsite Corp., "to turn East Hastings into boutiques."

Luxury condos have sprung up in buildings on Beatty and Alexander: more will come as the area becomes increasingly "gentrified," a catchword for a phenomenon in the States where rich people move back downtown from their suburban base as it becomes trendy to live in older buildings. The Port of Vancouver also has plans to run a four-lane freeway from the Second Narrows Bridge to the Bayshore Inn; Green fears that this will cause even more condos to spring up along the waterfront, a la Toronto. "It's totally ironic that this area was consciously set up for the poor," says Green.

In the meantime, DERA will continue to come before council every other week to try and get them to enforce their own laws, which will erupt in more slanging matches between councillors, which will result in more banner headlines, which will result in more controversy. And it won't bother them one bit — it's when people stop paying attention that they'll begin to worry.



Jim Green

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

WHITE HOODS

Who's who under the white sheets

He walks quietly into the restaurant where he had suggested we meet on this day, early in 1982. It's a small, modern bar in midtown Toronto, crowded with fashionably-dressed people from the offices and university nearby. Rock music pounds over the sound system. Not the kind of place you expect the leader of the Canadian Ku Klux Klan to frequent.

But then, James Alexander McQuirter is not the kind of person you would expect to lead the Klan. He is 24, tall and slender, with neatly combed black hair and a clean-shaven, almost boyish face. He does not bother with a hat or gloves despite the blizzard outside. He could be the boy next door. (In March, 1980, only a few months before he became known as the Canadian chief of the Klan, McQuirter's smile earned him a pin-up spot as the Toronto Sun's Sunshine Boy. "He'd like to find himself a seat on Parliament Hill," read the caption under his photograph.) He could be the boy next door, but he is not. The moment Alexander opens his mouth, he becomes the Grand Wizard McQuirter, national director of the Canadian Ku Klux Klan.

"We are racists and we're proud of it," he boasts. "We're a racist organization. We want to see Canada as an all-white country. We dismiss the notion that all humanity, that all the races are equal."

"Is it true you're a fan of Adolf Hitler?" I ask.

McQuirter smiles and leans back in his chair. "Well, if I say that, you're going to write: 'He's inspired by Mr. X who killed 6 million people.' As far as I'm concerned, I'd like to see a neutral history written on the Second World War, of what really happened. The Holocaust was the biggest hoax of the twentieth century." But McQuirter concedes his admiration for Hitler. He says he has read and enjoyed *Mein Kampf*: "There are a great many things in that book that I like and things that I have applied."

And so our conversation continued. I listened, sometimes incredulously, as the Klan leader described calmly and confidently how he had built up the most visible and

frightening extreme right-wing organization Canada had seen in years. I knew that McQuirter's boasts were not empty: between 1980 and 1982 there had been a flurry of Klan activity across the country. In Halifax, Moncton, Montreal, Toronto, Hamilton, Vancouver, Victoria and in many smaller cities and towns, the Klan's message had been heard. It was broadcast in interviews on dozens of radio and television shows, featured in newspaper stories, scrawled on billboards, and printed on thousands of pamphlets and newsletters.

The KKK also had less subtle ways of spreading its creed. Cross burnings lit up the night skies in southern Ontario and B.C. Racial violence took its toll; beatings in subways and bars, firebombings of houses, harassment and intimidation of Klan opponents. Before this wave of Klan fever was over, six Klan members would be charged with public mischief and one Klan organizer and his wife would die in a suspicious fire. Two Klan members would find themselves in American jails and another in a Caribbean prison for an attempt to topple a Caribbean state. McQuirter himself would be convicted of conspiracy to overthrow a foreign government. He, along with two other Klan members, would also be convicted of conspiracy to commit fraud and murder.

A number of extreme right-wing groups popped up from the late 1960s to the mid-1970s. They bore different names but shared a virulent racism, an appetite for violence and, often, the same leaders. A direct line could be traced from the Canadian Nazi Party to the Canadian National Socialist Party to the Edmund Burke Society, the Western Guard, the Nationalist Party, and finally to the Ku Klux Klan.

In the mid-sixties, William John Beattie made headlines as the noisy leader of the Canadian Nazi Party. A six-foot-tall man who wore his dark, straight hair across his forehead in imitation of Hitler, Beattie literally maintained that the Nazi dictator was the best thing to come along since Jesus Christ.

His party caused a riot in 1965 at Toronto's Allan Gardens when 5,000 people pro-

tested a Nazi rally. Beattie was later arrested and convicted of public mischief for attempting to paint swastikas on selected homes and sites in the Toronto area.

Beattie was "constantly getting material from the American Klan," according to Max Chikofsky, a private investigator. A lot of Beattie's money came from European Nazis and fascists now living in Canada and from right-wing emigre Hungarians, Latvians, Serbians and others.

"Some of these people have been fascists for 25 to 30 years; why should they stop now?" says Chikofsky.

After Beattie's jailing, a German immigrant named Martin Weiche took over the party in 1967 and renamed it the Canadian National Socialist Party. But the organization soon lost what influence it had and continued to exist in name only.

Leadership of the fascist movement fell to the Edmund Burke Society, created in the fall of 1968 by two young Torontonians, Donald Andrews and Paul Fromm. Fromm, a teacher, became a treasurer of the federal Progressive Conservative party's Metro Toronto organization in 1981. Other active members of the Edmund Burke Society included Martin Weiche, the National Socialist Party leader, and two Torontonians sympathetic to Nazism, Jacob Prins and Armand Siksna.

The Edmund Burke Society, named in honor of the British conservative thinker, was ostensibly a more cerebral right-wing group than its overly Nazi predecessors. But it did not take long for it to prove itself true to fascist form. In 1971, the group violently disrupted a meeting at the University of Toronto where Quebec labor leader Michel Chartrand and lawyer Robert Lemieux were speaking in the aftermath of the 1970 imposition of the War Measures Act. Society members beat, clubbed and kicked several members of the audience, spraying some people with a Mace-like irritant. Three attackers were arrested. In November, 1971, Edmund Burke society members attacked an anti-Vietnam war march; two more were arrested.

In 1972, Andrews replaced the Edmund Burke Society with a more openly racist—and more violent—group called the Western Guard. For most of the rest of the decade, the Guard gained notoriety for vandalizing synagogues, the homes of prominent blacks and progressive bookstores by painting swastikas or smashing windows.

Sometimes the Guard's violence was directed at people. In April, 1974, for example, a Western Guard member attacked two people at a film showing sponsored by an African liberation group. The Guard member was sentenced to 28 days in jail for common assault.

In June, 1975, 30 Guard members started a fight in a Toronto television studio where a black musical group was performing. The band leader was struck by a metal pipe and other musicians were severely beaten, while Guard members flashed the Nazi salute for the television cameras.

Ideologically, the creation of the Western Guard was significant because, while previous extreme right-wing organizations had been primarily anti-semitic and anti-communist, the Guard combined these standard Nazi fares with a strong dose of



PACIFIC TRIBUNE PHOTO

Klansmen demonstrate in front of Vancouver bookstore in 1982.

white supremacist, anti-black ideology. It was upon this marriage of ideas that the new Klan would be built.

Organizationally, the Western Guard was important to the Klan as a breeding ground for fascists, a training school for many people who would go on to have connections with, or top leadership posts in, the Canadian Ku Klux Klan. Klan officials would later boast that 25 per cent of its members came from the Western Guard.

Among the key players on the 1970s Toronto fascist scene:

• **Don Andrews**, through the Edmund Burke Society and the Western Guard, dominated the extreme right-wing stage in Toronto for most of the decade and became a sort of godfather to many of the present-day organizers of the Klan. "Many of them were my lieutenants in the Guard," he boasted. Of Serbian descent, Andrews came to Canada as a child with his mother after the Second World War.

Andrews, by his own admission, received money from right-wing sympathizers in the Serbian and other Eastern European immigrant communities. "I'm not upset if you call me a fascist," he once told a reporter.

In his six years as Guard leader, his penchant for violence seemed to be matched only by his political and organizational cunning. As a candidate in Toronto's mayoralty race in 1972, he polled 1,916 votes. Running again in 1974 on a white power ticket, he came in second in a field of eleven, with close to 6,000 votes. Andrews' political career did not come to an end when he was sentenced in 1978 to a brief jail term and forbidden to associate with the Guard. He went on to found the Nationalist Party of Canada and, in 1980, would attempt a merger with the newly-formed Canadian Ku Klux Klan.

• **John Ross Taylor**, a veteran Nazi from the 1930s, was a Guard leader with official responsibility for propaganda. (Taylor was involved in other political formations before signing up with the Western Guard. He had earlier set up the National Order Party, but in 1965 the government terminated his use of the mail for distribution of American neo-Nazi and other anti-Semitic literature.) Taylor ran for the Western Guard in the 1972 Toronto elections.

When Don Andrews was forced to dissociate himself from the Guard in 1978, Taylor assumed complete control of what was left of the organization. Despite repeated legal proceedings against him, Taylor and his Western Guard group refused to disconnect a white power telephone "hotline" which played tape-recorded messages of anti-semitic and anti-black hate propaganda. In 1980, Taylor was finally sentenced to one year in jail and the Western Guard was fined \$5,000 for preaching race hatred over the telephone. He spent two months in hiding before turning himself in.

• **Wolfgang Droege**, another Western Guard activist, played a much more crucial role in the reborn Klan. Born in 1949 in Forchheim, Bavaria, Droege became a committed Nazi while still a boy. His father was in the German air force during the Second World War and even after Hitler's defeat "his sympathies always remained

true" to the Third Reich, Droege recalls. Droege's grandfather, with whom he spent much of his childhood, was a close friend of Julius Streicher, a Nazi and confidant of Hitler who was hanged for war crimes in 1946 after the Nuremberg trials.



Toronto Klansmen offer salute to 1981 demonstration

Droege came to Canada when he was 13, though he once returned briefly to Germany and tried unsuccessfully to join the army there. While in Germany in 1967, he attended meetings of the neo-Nazi National Party, led by Adolf van Thadden. Back in Canada, Droege drifted from job to job as a copper smelter operator and printing apprentice. In 1974, he met Don Andrews and joined the Western Guard.

"I decided to take my part in reshaping and saving my racial destiny. Like a misplaced warrior, seeking to find a place in a . . . decadent environment, I felt I had finally found my true calling."

In May, 1975, he painted white power slogans along the route of an African Liberation Day march in Toronto. He was subsequently convicted of mischief and damage to private property, for which he was sentenced to 14 days in jail, and assault against a Toronto newspaper reporter, for which he was fined \$100.

• **Jacob Prins**, like Droege, was a long-standing fascist sympathizer from Europe. He originally fought against Hitler's army when it invaded his native Holland, but soon became a collaborator. He regrets his brief anti-Nazi activity: "I betrayed myself and my country. I had killed Germans. I regretted it ever since and maybe that's why subconsciously I try to make up for it."

Prins, a former professional wrestler who stands over six feet tall, was a bodyguard for Canadian Nazi leader William Beattie. Though over 50 years of age, Prins went on to be an active (and arrested) member of the Edmund Burke Society and the Western Guard. A fanatical anti-Semite, Prins once wrote a letter to a newspaper columnist insisting that the Nazi extermination of 6 million Jews during the war was a hoax. Prins was one of those fined in 1969 for the telephone "hotline" transmitting anti-Semitic messages. Over the years he also accumulated charges of violence, theft and break and entry.

• **Martin Weiche**, another man in his fifties during the Western Guard's heydays, shared Droege's and Prins' enthusiasm for the Third Reich but in addition was able to make a direct contribution to Hitler's rule, as a pilot in the German air force. "Today,

I like being called a Nazi," he says. "You get used to things."

After he came to Canada in 1951, Weiche made a small fortune in real estate and comfortably installed himself on a large estate on the outskirts of London, Ontario. He took over the Canadian Nazi party from Beattie in the late 1960s, but confessed that there were "just some remnants left, a loose connection of people".

In 1974, Weiche, though not a lawyer, conducted the court defence for a Western Guard member named Thomas Reade who was charged with a violent assault. Weiche had befriended Reade, a 240-pound ex-motorcycle gang member, when the latter was released from prison in 1970 and made him his personal bodyguard. He provided Reade and his wife with an apartment and helped them get back to what Weiche called "normal society" by getting Reade involved in the Guard. Weiche would go on to become a friend of the Klan and it was on his lawn in 1980 that the first modern-day cross burnings would take place.

• **Armand Siksna** was another Western Guard member who would move on to the Klan. Born in 1944 in Riga, Latvia, Siksna was raised by parents he described as "anti-communist conservatives". His father owned two turpentine refineries and supplied the Germans during the war; Siksna's uncle had a stake in two banks and belonged "to a right-wing fascist-inclined organization," according to Siksna.

Siksna moved to Canada in 1957 and worked in numerous jobs. A confirmed anti-communist, he joined the Conservative party but soon found it "was not really right-wing enough for me." He eventually joined the Edmund Burke Society and then the Guard when he "started to realize the importance of racism — the preservation of our race."

Siksna recalls: "I had come to the conclusion that I am a true Nazi — and that is the most beautiful and the most noble philosophy of all the political philosophies that have ever existed on this earth."

Siksna was on the executive of the Western Guard and he ran in several municipal and provincial elections. His main contribution seemed to be constant run-ins with the law. As a Guard member, he faced charges for the defacement of property by affixing hate posters. He was accused of the theft of a typewriter when he worked as a security guard at a warehouse, and when police raided his apartment for evidence he was charged with violating the propaganda law because Nazi and Klan material was found there.

(Some of Siksna's confrontations with the law were more comical. In 1980, he was convicted of fraudulent misuse of a credit card and received a suspended sentence of eighteen months. This card, which he had found on the floor of a store and attempted to use, was a demonstration card made out to "Mrs. Happy Shopper").

• **James Alexander McQuirter** was attracted to Don Andrews' organization while still in his teens. His background was different from that of his fellow Guard members, many of whom seemed to have inherited their fascist leanings from their European families or experiences. The eldest of five children, McQuirter was born in May, 1958, and grew up in what he

described as a "liberal, middle class" home in the Toronto suburb of North York.

At "about 14 or 15" years of age McQuirter, through his own readings, became convinced of the inferiority of blacks and Jews and started to try and win his friends at York Mills Collegiate over to his beliefs: "I was always a conservationist. When I was going to high school, I was interested in the whales and seals. Then I started reading about some of the population statistics of the white race. 'We're a dying species. I used to talk to other conversationists about this, but they weren't interested — it was all racist stuff to them. But at the time, I wasn't a racist. I just thought, well, gee, everything should be protected. So I was forced to look at different groups, so-called right-wing fanatical groups. I was interested in what they had to offer, what their solutions were." McQuirter's parents apparently did not take too kindly to their son's new ideological bent, and he was told by his parents not to talk about the race question at home. "Today, I don't see any of (my parents) very much," he said in one newspaper interview. "Let's say they don't agree with me."

Andrews was instrumental in fleshing out the style and substance of the young McQuirter's right-wing politics. "I remember McQuirter coming to my house in the early days when he was about 18," recalls Andrews. "He used to come into my back yard and we would discuss organizational and political things. McQuirter didn't really know how to speak to the press all that much because he didn't have much background knowledge on political, international and other racial matters. So we would chit-chat and I would give him some pointers on how to answer some questions."



Alexander McQuirter

The Edmund Burke Society, the Western Guard, the Canadian Nazi Party, the Nationalist Party of Canada; Taylor, Andrews, Droege, Prins, Siksna, Weiche and McQuirter: the foundations had been sunk, the builders assembled, for the latest reincarnation of Canada's Klan.

Julian Sher is a Montreal journalist now working for CBC Radio. *White Hoods*, his first book, will be published later this month by New Star Books of Vancouver. This is the first of two parts.

Solidarity Times

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Julian Sher, and several
Sidney Australians.

Like the rest of B.C., the staff at Solidarity Times spent the week on the edge of our seats as the province teetered toward general strike. We were also on our toes, shoulders to the wheel, nose to the grindstone, etc. It was a dizzying experience.

In one of our more level-headed moments, our Roving Reporter revved up the news chopper and landed in Kamloops. As well, loyal correspondents in Kelowna and Terrace came through with tall and short tales from their respective centres of the universe. In the Big Smoke, our Fearless Scribe scuttled down to Downtown East to find out if there was any truth to those terrible things they're always saying about DERA and its undaunted organizer. There wasn't.

In more leisurely moments, Debbie Wilson ducked Under The Gun to discover the theatre group behind the Headlines. We also thumbed a few books and listened to the lyrics of a hit that's gone bonkers. On the more serious side, we secured rights to publish excerpts from Julian Sher's forthcoming book, *White Hoods*, a factual account of the KKK in Canada.

Meanwhile, an ebullient corps of volunteers — Maryanne, Tami, George, Pete, Michael, Steve, Linda, Brian, Scal, Willis, Joe, Mary, Candy — bundled off thousands of copies of the last edition to points far and near (furthest was the CUPE convention in Toronto) and the staff pondered its fate at meaningful meetings ("They're a drain," declared entertainment editor John Mackie, who was not entertained). We decided not to become another Jim Pattison Company.

Next issue will be on the streets Nov. 9. The deadline for advertising, letters and Get Happy! notices is, as always, the Friday before publication.

Solidarity Times is a politically independent weekly newspaper that supports the aspirations of Solidarity Coalition, trade unions, workers, women, ethnic minorities, native people, the handicapped, pensioners, social service recipients, gays and lesbians, tenants, defenders of human rights, environmental and peace activists, consumers, students, artists, and religious people seeking a socially relevant church. It is published by a non-profit society and is not the spokesperson or official organ of any organization.

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EDITORIAL

BERMAN

COMMON SENSE

Who pushed it to the brink?

Whether or not British Columbians find themselves in the midst of an unprecedented general strike this week or are the beneficiaries of a last minute reprieve, the question remains: Who wanted this confrontation?

The answer, at least from the point of view of the trade unions and community groups who make up the Solidarity Coalition: Almost no one.

No doubt there are a few hotheads on either side of the fence who think that a general strike is an adventure. But for the thousands and thousands of trade union members who voted for job action and for the additional thousands of people in community groups who pledged their support, it is a certainty that even the prospect

of a general strike was not a matter approached lightly.

Certainly, the reluctance of Solidarity to bring the conflict to the level it has reached was obvious to anyone who took the trouble to notice. The coalition used every legal channel available to people deeply disturbed by the direction of Premier Bill Bennett's legislation: demonstrations, discussions, petitions — and it did so peacefully and with dignity.

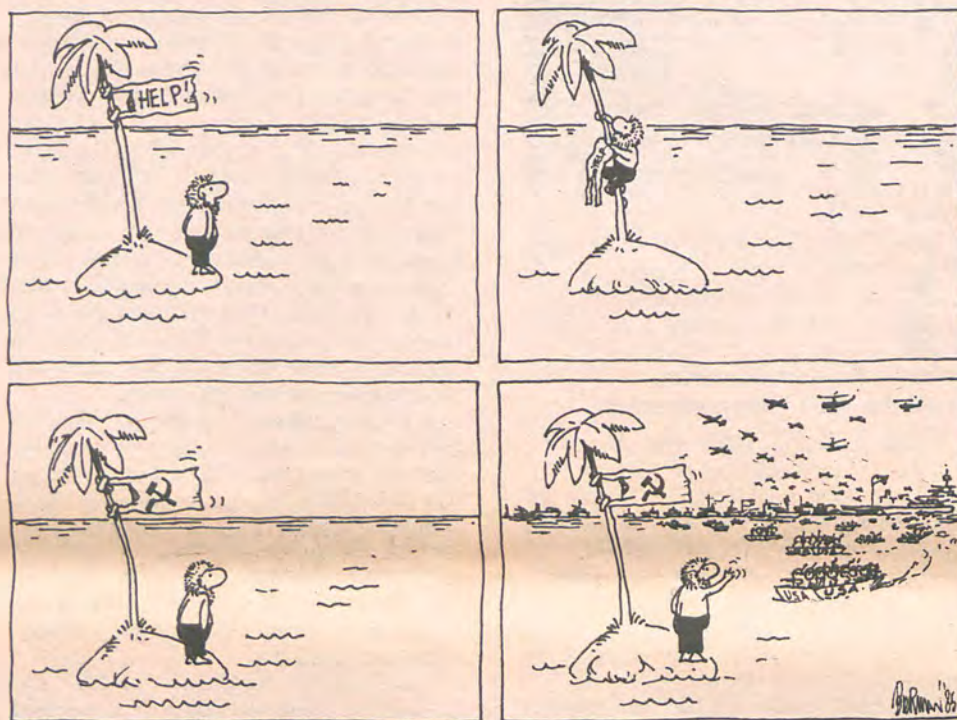
What would drive ordinary citizens (for ordinary citizens they are, patronizing claims to the contrary notwithstanding) to such a fateful undertaking, especially in already difficult economic times? Were they greedily demanding money or

privilege? Not at all. Were they unreasonably insisting on power? There is no evidence. Instead, we heard a community's teachers say they were worried about the fate of education, civil servants declaring that the elimination of social services posed a danger, trade unionists protesting the abrogation of rights that are constitutional, and citizens of all political hues raising an alarm at the extremity of a government's program. We're not talking about a "rag-tag army" or a dismissable horde of partisans as did those in government and much of the media during these last four months. We're talking about — in a literal sense — the people of this province. Not all of them perhaps, but a number sizable enough not to be waved aside by mere political rhetoric on television, or premature obituaries published in the daily press.

Yet, again and again, the issues were trivialized, reduced to patronizing complaints about protesters' intransigence, or buried in the back pages of the big city rags. It was as though the concerns might go away if the authorities insisted often enough that they were unimportant.

At issue, finally, is the insistence of a political party that gained a slim majority in last May's election in the name of "restraint" to impose a program that would substantially change the fabric of life in this province, and produce few perceptible economic benefits in the process. Although some have talked smugly of the self-interest of the protesters, it is not self-interest at stake, but rather the erosion of rights that people have come to take for granted only because they fought for them for decades.

It is not self-interest to say that the measure of a community is how well it cares for those not fully able to protect themselves. This is the great divide that has brought us all closer to the brink than any of us wanted to be.



Sweaters nice touch in general strike

By Stan Persky

If you've never been in a general strike, don't feel shy; almost no one else has either.

Flooded with questions from our readers about proper etiquette during a general strike, Solidarity Times turned to advice columnist Ann Landers' radical brother, Stan Landers. Landers, a 42-year-old, balding, pudgy, unemployed psychologist living in Vancouver's East End, is the author of *General Strike Etiquette: The Complete Guide*.

"Of course, people are worried about what to wear during a general strike," said the soothing Landers. "I recommend casual sportswear. Blue-collar bowling gear is acceptable. If you have 10 years' seniority, sweaters are a nice touch. Office-efficient slacks and blouses are fine for women. No designer jeans, please. It gives the public the impression that you're bargaining over wages and not simply trying to save your jobs. If you're a male negotiator and required to wear a necktie, make sure you loosen the knot and undo the top two buttons of your shirt before appearing on camera at 3 a.m. to announce no progress."

Landers warned that health can be a big problem during general strikes. "There's an enormous amount of running around and loss of sleep during all-out labor confrontations," he said. "I advise people to stock up on vitamin C — yes, most drug stores will remain open, so don't hoard — and Visine to combat overdoses of TV watching as you're waiting for the latest no news bulletin."

"B.C. general strikes during the rainy season create a temptation to rush out and buy an umbrella as you dash between the emergency childcare centre set up by the woodworkers and your picket post. Personally, I think umbrellas are rather tacky and not visually effective on television. You're probably better off to borrow some bright yellow raingear from an unemployed fisherman. If you're being televised and the rain is running down your neck, it makes viewers imagine what Bill Bennett would look like if he had to stand outside in a downpour wearing only his blue suit."

The major danger, however, according to the well-mannered Landers, is mental health. "Watch out for panic and guilt. The main thing that happens during a general strike is that newspaper editorialists try to make you feel guilty by daily thundering that you are irresponsible and wrecking the recovery. If you must read newspapers, it's best to do it in groups so that you can recite aloud the most hysterical editorial phrases blaming you for the confrontation and laugh at them with your friends. As for wrecking the recovery, don't lose sleep over it, the whole thing is a myth."

"In fact, I'd advise you not to read business press newspapers at all. Urge your strike committee to shut down the daily press. Their absence will give you a few days of truth. If you have to read something, read Solidarity Times (and don't forget to subscribe)."

Television poses a slightly different

problem, Landers claims. "With the newspapers, it's a guilt trip, but TV is visual excitement. That means efforts to stampee you into panic. You can be sure they'll find someone claiming that their 96-year-old grandmother is not being properly attended to all because of you, the nasty strikers."

"Just keep your head during these heart-wrenching scenes and pass the Kleenex. In fact, nothing of the sort has ever happened during a general strike. The strike committee will ensure all emergency services, food will be delivered, and no one will pull the plug on your TV. You might want to pick up a few extra Duracell batteries to make sure your ghetto blaster doesn't fade during the final days of negotiation. During a general strike life goes on quite normally, only it's slightly more real."

But what if the general strike is averted at the last minute? Landers has encountered the problem numerous times. "Yes," he sighed, "it's known as almost-general strike depression. The best thing to do is to buy a T-shirt that says, 'I Was Almost In The General Strike of 1983' and go to Toronto for a week or two where friends will fawn with envy over you."

A related problem is post-general strike blues. "Win or lose," admitted Landers, "it's a problem. If you win, then post-partum counsellors will be glad to comfort you. If you lose, just keep dreaming of a better world," concluded Landers as he popped a handful of Smarties into his mouth.

Put it in Writing

Welcome J.P.

First we had the giveaway privatization of *Beautiful British Columbia* magazine which was shocking enough.

Then we discover that B.C. Hydro is doing a free mailing of subscription forms for the now privately-owned company. What's more, subscribers are asked to send renewal cheques to the government. More under the table dealing?

What can be next?

How about new signs at all border crossings: Welcome to Beautiful British Columbia, a Jim Pattison Company.

Geoff Peters
Vancouver

News Plan

Enclosed please find our cheque for a subscription. Congratulations for doing something that needed to be done.

Because we have believed for a long time that political, social and economic conditions will not improve until we have an alternative media we are overjoyed to see someone make a start. Permit us to tell you what we, as readers, would like to read:

- Important events of the previous week as news reports rather than as individual opinions;
- News of what happened in the legislature during the past week not as witty essays but as straight-forward reporting;
- Reports on those people and groups not covered in the Sun and Province;
- World news which you don't get in the dailies;
- General informative articles on: social welfare and

medical programs in Europe; unions in Scandinavia; comparative information on Russian and American arrangements; giveaway programs to multinational corporations in Canada.

I am glad you are only a weekly. I wish the Sun and Province were only monthlies.

Bill Bell
Grace Bell
Vancouver

Great Times

Solidarity Times looks great. It's such a pleasure to read a publication full of articles that conform to many of my ideals and politics.

I am enclosing a cheque for my subscription. I will also be recommending to our local union executive that we subscribe to the paper.

We need an alternate press in this province and I wish you success with this venture.

Christine Micklewright
Brotherhood of Railway and Airline Clerks
Vancouver

O Grenada

How much or how little socialism would it take to bring the U.S. Marines into English Bay?

Arlington Farnsworth
Vancouver

Bad friends

I hope that you can succeed in interesting at least 15,000 readers to subscribe.

However, it is my opinion that the question of continuing the Times beyond the period required to defeat the current back-to-the-dark-ages legisla-



tion is debatable.

As a member of the executive board of the Independent Canadian Transit Union and a member of the NDP, all my energies are concentrated on having the passed legisla-

tion rescinded and the rest halted.

I do not think that Operation Solidarity or Solidarity Coalition should undermine the official opposition, the NDP, by putting out a paper beyond the period that a general strike ends this legislation and the present government is defeated.

I am sure that many NDPers are greatly involved with the coalition, and I would not want to see them reduce their input to the NDP by concentrating on extending the Times to a weekly paper.

In this particular instance, I hate to be negative about what is probably a very good idea.

If you have many friends like me, you will not need any enemies.

Terrence Hanna
Vancouver

Immature

I appreciated many of the articles in your newspaper, but I call attention to the promotional copy on the back page of your first issue. I take exception to the implication that only those who did not vote Social Credit "...believe in workers' rights, women's rights, the rights of the elderly," etc. I find the

reference to Bill Bennett as "you know who" an immature response to challenging social problems of a provincial and world-wide nature.

Solidarity Coalition could represent a cross-section of British Columbians, but only if the organization does not alienate those of a different political persuasion than the editorial staff. The coalition has the opportunity to give creative leadership only if it encourages us all to lay aside our partisan policies and focus on the issues which unite us.

Leanne Smith
Nanaimo

Write in

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 of the writer (name and address will be withheld upon request). Solidarity Times may edit letters from brevity, clarity and legality.

Quashed in Quebec

Your newspaper is a welcome addition to our mail from B.C. We recently moved to Montreal from Vancouver and have tried in vain to follow the events in B.C.

We would like to address three issues: news coverage in general, women's content in the Times, and the unsolidarity-like remarks of Jack Munro.

The English media in Quebec appears to be boycotting any and all news of Operation Solidarity. When the media talks about the government layoffs, they never mention the methods being used by the Socreds, they only talk about economic restraint. The rally on Oct. 15 rated a photo and a small article mentioning a marcher yelling obscenities at the Socreds.

The French media has been even more abysmal. In talking with Quebecois acquaintances we have learned that they assume the restraint program in B.C. is similar to the one here in Quebec. They are not aware of the firings without cause, elimination of the Human Rights Branch, cutting of services, etc. Your newspaper will help the problem in B.C., but what about outside the province? We need to build support outside of B.C. as well.

The second issue concerns the limited

coverage of women in the Times. There were no reports about Women Against the Budget and a general lack of info concerning women and how the budget is hitting them. It would also be good to see more articles written by women. This in no way should be taken as a criticism against the men who are working hard on the Times now.

The third issue concerns the remarks of Jack Munro which were carried on CBC-TV. Women's groups and others have always been afraid that trade union support will last only so long as trade unions are being attacked. Within the trade union movement people have been concerned about the unity between the B.C. Fed and the Confederation of Canadian Unions. Are we now seeing that these fears and concerns are coming true? If Women Against the Budget organizes some action around a "local issue" will Jack Munro condemn them as he has the Pulp, Paper and Woodworkers of Canada in Prince George and on the Island? When do local issues become everyone's issue, only when everyone is directly involved? When will this provincial tunnel-vision stop?

Susan Mullan
Lori Nelson
Montreal

NOVEMBER 2 VANCOUVER

"The Murder of Auguste Dupin" by playwright J. Ben Tarver, at the Queen Elizabeth Playhouse, 649 Cambie, until November 26. For info call 683-2311.

Pacific Cinemateque presents "L'Avventura", in its post-war Italian series, 7:30 p.m., 1155 West Georgia. For more info call 732-6119.

NOVEMBER 3 VANCOUVER

Pacific Cinemateque is showing "Zero de Conduite" and "L'Atalante" in its history of French cinema series, 9:30 p.m., 1155 West Georgia. For more info call 732-6119.

LANGLEY

"Barefoot in the Park", a comedy by Neil Simon, begins tonight at 8:30 p.m., and runs until Nov. 6, and then from Nov. 10-13 and Nov. 17-19, at the Brookwood Hall, 4307-200th Street. Students and pensioners \$3, other adults \$5. All tickets \$5 on Fridays and Saturdays. For reservations call 534-2967.

NOVEMBER 4 VANCOUVER

Benefit concert for the B.C. Civil Liberties Association featuring the Purcell String Quartet, 7:30 p.m. at Christ Church Cathedral, 690 Burrard. Tickets \$6, available at Sikoras Records, Duthie Books, Octopus Books and the association office. For more info call 872-5823.

Vancouver Folk Festival presents Queen Ida and the Bon Temps Zydeco Band, 8 p.m., Commodore Ballroom. Tickets available at Black Swan Records, Octopus East, Vancouver Folk Festival office and all VTC/CBU outlets.

Toronto singer/songwriter Arlene Mantle performs Women's, labour and protest songs at La Quena, 1111 Commercial Drive. Tickets \$3. For more info call 251-6626.

Swing Jazz, June Katz and her favourite Jazz Quartet perform from 10 p.m. to 1 a.m., Classical Joint, 231 Carrall St., today and tomorrow. For more info call 689-0667.

"Terrace Tanzi — The Venus Flytrap", a play by Clare Luckham, at the Vancouver East Cultural Centre (Venables and Victoria), until Nov. 26.

"Bye-Bye Brazil" at 7:30 p.m., and "Black Orpheus" at 9:20 p.m., Vancouver East Cinema, 7th and Commercial, for two evenings. For more info call 253-5455.

Pacific Cinemateque shows "The Milky Way" (La voie lactee) at 7:30 p.m., and "That Obscure Object of Desire" (Cet obscur objet du desir) at 9:30 p.m. in its Luis Bunuel Tribute, at 1155 W. Georgia. For more info call 732-6119.

NOVEMBER 5 VANCOUVER

Irish Pub Nite, music and dancing with Mickey Madden and Johnny McCafferty, 8 p.m., at the Irish Centre, 771 Prior St. Sponsored by the Irish Prisoner of War Committee. For more info call 873-0788.

Lowry Olafson and Russel Shumsky perform original songs on the marimba, bass and percussion, 8 p.m., La Quena, 1111 Commercial, \$2.

A two-day open house to meet the crew of the anti-nuclear ship Pacific Peacemaker. Slide show and entertainment. The ship is docked at the Granville Island Marina.



"Okay, if it'll make it any easier for you, I'll drink the glass of water while you talk."

NOVEMBER 6 VICTORIA

Benefit for Aid to Nicaragua includes the film "From the Ashes," 7:30 p.m. at the Fernwood Community Centre, 1240 Gladstone. The admission is one tool, piece of equipment or other goods in good condition for shipment to Nicaragua. For more info call 386-5695 or 385-2720.

VANCOUVER

Jazzoids perform with Bill Clark, Hugh Fraser, Mike Lent, Glena Powrie, Don Powrie and Dan King, 10 p.m. at the Classical Joint, 231 Carrall St.

The Festival Concert Society presents "Quintet West," a woodwind ensemble, 11 a.m., Queen Elizabeth Playhouse, 649 Cambie St. Tickets \$1.50. For more info call 736-766.

NOVEMBER 7 VANCOUVER

Abel Gance's epic 4-hour film "Napoleon" runs for two nights at 7:30 p.m., Vancouver East Cinema, 7th and Commercial. For more info call 253-5455.

NOVEMBER 8 VANCOUVER

Donny Clark, performs at 10 p.m., Classical Joint, 231 Carrall. For more info call 689-0667.

Pacific Cinemateque and the cultural section of the French consulate general present a special film premier of "Maria Chapdelaine" (1983), 8 p.m., Robson Square Cinema.

NOVEMBER 9 VANCOUVER

"Flamenco" with Carmelita, gypsy flamenco dancer, 10 p.m., Classical Joint, 231 Carrall St. For more info call 689-0667.

"Three Brothers", a film by Italian great Francesco Rosi, 7:30 p.m., Vancouver East

Cinema, 6th and Commercial, for two nights.

"Rocco and His Brothers" of the post-war Italian cinema series, 7:30 p.m., Pacific Cinemateque, 1155 W. Georgia. For more info call 732-6119.

BLATHER

Don't start the revolution without us.

This is the place to publicize your meeting, demonstrations, club, semi-secret cabal, party, poetry reading, concert, wake, petition, art show, or 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.

Get Happy and Get Serious are bulletin boards 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 Get Happy, Solidarity Times, 545 West 10th Ave., Vancouver, B.C. V5Z 1K9. Deadline is noon the Friday before the issue you want to see your announcement in. We reserve the right to edit for space.



'Under the Gun' cast tours B.C. until December

DAVID COOPER PHOTO

GET HAPPY!

GET SERIOUS



WEDNESDAY VANCOUVER

People's Law School is sponsoring a "Taxes for Peace" class, including an update on the test case for diverting your military taxes to the peace tax fund, 7:30 p.m., Carnarvon School, 3400 Balaclava (at 16th). For info and registration call 734-1126.

"Voyage of the Pacific Peacemaker," a documentary anti-nuclear film, 7:30 p.m., Marineview Chapel, 41st and Crown. Sponsored by the Marineview peace and justice group.

THURSDAY VANCOUVER

Film: "Voyage of the Pacific Peacemaker," 12:30 p.m., Langara Community College auditorium, 100 West 49th.

Slide show on a nuclear-free Pacific and history of the Pacific Peacemaker, 3:30 p.m., Langara Community College, 100 West 49th.

Provincial Solidarity Coalition meeting, 7 p.m., IWA Hall, Commercial and 12th.

A mock political prisoner from Prisoner of Conscience week



FRIDAY VANCOUVER

Dr. Norman Alcock, physicist and founder of the Canadian Peace Research Institute, speaks on "What Price Peace: Why we need peace education," 7:30 p.m., John Oliver Secondary School, 530 E. 41st. For more info call 733-0141.

BURNABY

B.C. Human Rights Coalition administration committee meeting, Canadian Farmworkers Union office, 4730 Imperial.

SATURDAY VANCOUVER

An Evening in Solidarity with Peru with panel discussions, songs, poetry, food and a dance afterwards with "Communique", 6 p.m. to midnight, 870 Denman. Sponsored by the Committee for the defense of human rights in Peru. For more info call 291-0019 or 879-3246.

SUNDAY VANCOUVER

Conference on Women, Work and Cutbacks focuses on human rights and employment, 9:30

Get happy! as San Francisco comedians Fran and Charlie leave us in stitches with their hilarious look at the holocaust, on Friday, Nov. 18, 8 p.m., at the Kitsilano secondary school auditorium, 2550 West Tenth Ave., in Vancouver. Ducats are \$7 for the working, and a mere fin for the rest of us. There's free on-site child care. For information call 734-5393 or 253-0412.

Get Serious the next day at a Living in the Nuclear Age: Despair and Empowerment workshop, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., at 2150 Maple St., Vancouver. Pre-register by calling 734-5393 or 253-0412, or simply arrive early. Both events sponsored by Women Against Nuclear Technology.

a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Robson Square Media Centre. Free. Call in advance for child care at 224-9102 (evenings). Sponsored by Vancouver Association of Women and the Law.

Slide show on nuclear-free Pacific and the history of the Pacific Peacemaker, 1 p.m., Unitarian Church (W. 49th at Oak).

MONDAY VANCOUVER

Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition meeting, 7:30 p.m., BCGEU Hall, 4911 Canada Way.

"Can I Be Sued and What Happens if I Am?", a People's Law School class with Brian McCloudlin, 7:30 p.m., Canadian Memorial Community Centre, 1811 W. 16th, at Burrard.

Training session for canvassers in the door-to-door fundraising drive to raise medical aid for El Salvador, 7 to 9 p.m., La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr. For more info call 255-0523 or 255-4868.

NEW WESTMINSTER

Film: "Voyage of the Pacific Peacemaker," 7:30 p.m., NeWest Library, sponsored by Public Education for a Peaceful Society.

TUESDAY VANCOUVER

Gary Wilson gives a free class on estate administration, including the forms and procedures entailed in administering an estate, and tax implications, 7:30 p.m. tonight and tomorrow, Fraserview Library, 1950 Argyle (near 54th and Victoria). To register call 734-1126.

NEW WESTMINSTER

Fr. Jim Roberts, Renate Shearer and Dennis Cocke speak on the implications of the Socreds' legislation, 7 p.m., Spencer School, corner of 2nd St. and 6th Ave.

WEDNESDAY BURNABY

Burnaby Solidarity Coalition meeting, 7:30 p.m., Burnaby Central High School, 4939 Canada Way. If your organization has members living in Burnaby and you haven't been represented at past meetings, please send a delegate.

VANCOUVER

Slide show on a nuclear-free Pacific and the history of the Pacific Peacemaker, 7:30 p.m., Bayview Community School (6th and Collingwood).

Labor history lecture on "Workers on the Prairies in the 20th Century," 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., AQ 3150 at Simon Fraser University. Allen Seager lectures.

Facing the freeze on the fruit farm

Special to The Times

KELOWNA — The chilly winds rolling off Okanagan Lake do more than serve as a reminder that the cobblestone sidewalks of this jewel city of the Interior will soon be covered in snow. They are also a forwarning of yet another winter of economic inactivity and high unemployment.

For a local economy based on fruit and sea monsters, the recession has not been kind.

Never mind that the economic downturn has put the brakes on one of B.C.'s fastest growing regions and taken an unhealthy bite out of its commercial and industrial tax base.

Now Premier Bill Bennett, the area's MLA, is putting the restraint boots to government services in the Okanagan.

Economic development in the region has been virtually non-existent for the past two years. Empty storefronts reflect the signs of the times as bankruptcies continue to climb.

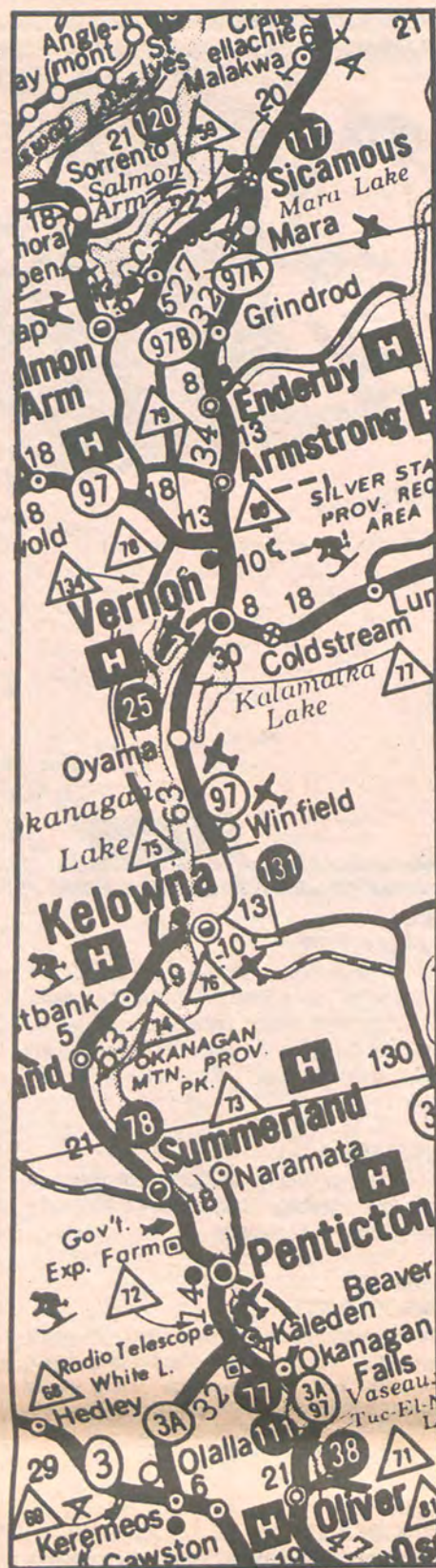
Construction projects are as rare as sightings of Ogopogo.

The Okanagan fruit industry — the backbone of the economy — has not only suffered from high production costs and low market values, but also from unseasonable weather which has destroyed cherry crops two years in a row and forced many orchardists to sell the farm.

Tourism, the region's other stalwart, has declined by about 30 per cent since its banner year of 1981.

While local forest companies have managed to avoid the massive layoffs experienced elsewhere in the province, the manufacturing industry is only hanging on by its teeth — operating sporadically, with layoffs and recalls dictated by the uncertain market.

Unemployment in the Kelowna area



hit 20 per cent earlier this year and has been flitting just below that level ever since.

Adding to the winter gloom is the financially-troubled ski industry, which ordinarily has been relied on to fill the employment gap between summer tourist seasons. As with most other B.C. resorts, Big White Ski Village — the largest of the three major Okanagan facilities — has been forced to cut back on seasonal workers to stay at arms-length from its creditors.

Although few doubt the Okanagan will once again prosper, the government's restraint program has clouded the timing of that recovery.

The premier's Okanagan South riding has been hit severely by his belt-tightening measures.

Planned reductions in provincial cost-sharing formulas with B.C. municipalities will mean millions of dollars in additional costs to developers and taxpayers in Kelowna and the Central Okanagan Regional District. When taken from an already weakened tax base — which forced the city to bring in its own restraint program months before the province got into the act — future revenue for the city will be even more scarce.

But education and health-care services have been the areas hardest hit by restraint. Both the Central Okanagan school district and Okanagan College have seen their operating budgets slashed repeatedly since that fateful February day in 1982 when the government first began to chop funding. The result has been program and service reductions, as well as frustrated teachers and administrators.

The school district has taken most of the heat from Victoria. Despite recognition from the education ministry for its good fiscal management and low per-pupil costs, the district has been in a perpetual money mode after being instructed to reduce its budget three times in the past 18 months. Another \$2.5 million will have to be cut within the next two years — beginning in January — to meet the ministry's newly-imposed budget guidelines.

As a result, the district is looking at eliminating up to 70 teaching positions by 1986. Balancing the books will be made even more difficult if the district is to increase its pupil-teacher ratio to 19 by the same year, as also requested by the ministry. Currently, the district's ratio is set at 17.

The government's actions have left the district grasping at straws in an effort to keep its head above water. Last month, the Central Okanagan was successful in becoming the first district in the province to obtain charitable status from Revenue Canada. The district hopes public donations will help save some threatened programs and services.

In the middle of the funding con-

troversy are the teachers, who last year received a three per cent wage increase after first having a five per cent arbitrated settlement rejected by Compensation Stabilization Commissioner Ed Peck.

During the 1982-83 school year, the 800-member Central Okanagan Teachers' Association gave up three-and-a-half paid non-instructional days, allowing the school district to meet a previous budget cut and avoid layoffs.

That action came even before the ministry decided to legislate the elimination of those paid days all together throughout the province this year.

In a part of B.C. with one of the largest elderly populations and a growing role as a regional referral area, health services have also been spread thin by government restraint.

Kelowna General Hospital is busting at its seams with acute and extended-care patients, usually running above 100 per cent occupancy. The waiting list for elective surgery has averaged about 1,600 since 30 beds were closed and 45 full-time equivalent staff laid off in June, 1982.

Bennett blasters building steam

Special to The Times

KELOWNA — Something's stirring in Bill Bennett's backyard.

Almost four months after the first mourners infiltrated the garden party at the old Bennett homestead, and ten weeks since the city's biggest demonstration ever paraded the downtown streets, Kelowna's anti-legislation forces continue to grow.

In the past two months varying factions in the community have drawn together under the Central Okanagan Solidarity Coalition.

The group has just taken part in the province-wide petition campaign, which coalition Chair Terri Davis estimates received about a 70 per cent positive response rate from local residents.

The coalition began its petition blitz earlier in October with a march through downtown Kelowna by more than 100 members, ending with a ceremony at the base of the W.A.C. Bennett Memorial Clock.

Future plans might include "some consumer action," Davis says.

Although Bennett won a landslide victory in his home riding in the May 5 election, Davis maintains that residents in the Okanagan South riding are "very concerned" with the way in which the government is bringing about restraint.

However, she adds there are "many people who are still afraid to speak up — and in this day and age, that's very distressing."



Happy Motoring



Astrid Davidson



Megan Ellis



Alicia Lawrence

BEV DAVIES PHOTOS

No place for complaints

By Debbie Wilson

It is a late October night at the status of women office in an industrial section of Vancouver. Inside is a small circle of women and three speakers arranged in soft chairs around a subject badly skewed by planned legislative changes: sexual harassment.

Public sector workers now fear that because of the expanded powers to dismiss workers in Bill 3, women could be fired for simply complaining about harassment on the job.

Rape victim counselling centres and other women's organizations now have no effective place to refer women who call about sexual harassment.

The human rights branch, with only two employees left in its Burnaby office, is backed up with complaints.

There is sadness and the counting of losses at this evening meeting, but it is not a wake. And that alone is remarkable.

Megan Ellis, a worker at the local Rape Crisis Centre, said organizations like hers are less and less able to meet the expectations of women calling about sexual harassment since human rights workers were fired across the province in July.

"Women call and ask, 'Well, what can I do about it?' Sometimes they just want someone to give an external confirmation that they are going through this — to have an injustice

acknowledged as an injustice.

"So our role was one of counselling and quick validation of those feelings and then a quick referral to the human rights branch. That is, until July 7.

"About three days after the budget came out I got a call from a woman who worked with another woman in a small retail outlet. The boss had installed a two-way mirror in the bathroom. They pieced the facts together because he went into a locked room every time they went to the bathroom."

She had filed a complaint with the human rights branch in March. Since then she has received one letter. So Ellis tried to help her find some other way to settle the matter.

They tried the public health department. They were too busy.

They considered criminal charges. Assault charges did not apply to her case, while the fine and jail sentence of a summary conviction, her other option, seemed an inappropriate remedy.

At the crown counsel office she was told they were reluctant to take on "minor" cases like sexual assault. In any case, she had to speak to police to lay charges, she was told.

"Which is true," said Ellis. "You have to go to the police station and lay a charge with some guy who is about six feet two and who won't come up to the counter so you have to shout across the room . . ."

Fired human rights worker Alicia Lawrence said women should still file complaints with the human rights branch, despite the shortage of staff to handle claims. She said Labor Minister Bob McClelland still has a responsibility to answer human rights complaints — and to answer them within a reasonable period of time.

Under the new Human Rights Act (not yet passed by the legislature) a group or trade union can no longer file a sexual harassment complaint, Lawrence said. The woman harassed must file alone. That means her testimony will not be verified by other women in the workplace, a practice which has aided many harassment claims, she said.

When Astrid Davidson, director of women's programs for the B.C. Federation of Labor, first started working on women's issues in the late 1970's she said, there weren't many women involved in the labor movement. There certainly wasn't very much organization. But now there are more working women and they won't easily part with the rights they have won, she said.

"I'm quite certain they're not going to win," Davidson said of the government's plans. "Basically we're in fine fighting form and that's something that has never happened before in history."

Ministry urged to slow the pace

By Trish Webb

KAMLOOPS — The Tranquille Institute for the Mentally Handicapped suits its name in appearance only. Nestled between foothills and the shore of Kamloops Lake it presents a facade of calm against the animosity created by its high command.

Institute employees are still waiting for resolutions to issues which sparked a 21 day occupation July 20.

Minister of human resources Grace McCarthy has drawn fire from Tranquille workers and associations for the mentally handicapped.

In June, the B.C. Association for the Mentally Handicapped demanded that the government follow their own policy promoting the integration of institutionalized mentally handicapped people into the community. McCarthy insisted the four year old policy was producing results: resident patient populations have dropped at all three B.C. institutions since 1977.

They have dropped, but not fast enough, said BCAMH. More time and

money is needed to expand community facilities, answered the minister.

Even consumer advocate Ralph Nader jumped on McCarthy during an address to the annual BCAMH conference in Vancouver. She later admonished him for "talking through his halo."

But everything was turned around by the July 7 budget announcement that government property would be sold off, including the land owned by the Tranquille Institute. Suddenly community integration of Tranquille residents was accelerated. The ten year program announced in 1977 became a two year race to create enough space for almost 800 patients in facilities already filled to capacity.

Many residents of the government institutions are severely or profoundly retarded, meaning they lack basic life skills like the ability to feed, clothe or go to the toilet by themselves.

Psychiatric workers at Tranquille say the process of helping severely mentally retarded people reach their

potential is a lengthy one and requires support from schools, industry and residential neighborhoods. They fear, given the government's attitude toward employees at Tranquille — severance, early retirement and job redeployment options included in the BCGEU contract have been ignored — that the patients will fare little better.

The risk of inadequate care and facilities now has local and provincial associations calling for a slow-down of the integration process until communities can handle the responsibilities of an onslaught of special-needs individuals.

Tranquille Manager Terry Prysianziuk claims that the new schedule for moving patients out of the institute was not motivated by budget-cutting considerations.

"We estimate that it is going to cost at least as much to provide services in the community as in Tranquille. It will be hard to get a sense of the economic impact of decentralization, but we at the ministry are not approaching it as a method to cut costs," he said.

Trouble

From page 2

now. CUPE members are going to defend their jobs and, in the present situation, withdrawal of services is the only way," said the successor to CUPE leader Grace Hartman, who retired last week.

As the talks dragged on toward the end of the week, BCGEU director Jack Adams reiterated his union's pledge that it wouldn't sign a settlement guaranteeing seniority in layoffs and recalls unless the same policy applied to all other public sector unions. "It's got to be an agreement that's applicable to the majority of the public sector unions," said Adams.

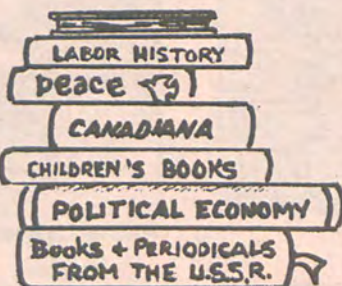
On Friday, Oct. 28, the news blackout was lifted briefly, only to reveal that a settlement was not yet in sight, despite the presence of Premier Bennett's chief adviser, Norman Spector, at the bargaining table. That was the day BCGEU announced the results of its month-long strike vote: 87 per cent in favor. Union president Norm Richards served 72-hour strike notice immediately after the vote, clearing the way for a strike at midnight Monday, Oct. 31.

Meanwhile, the B.C. Federation of Labor announced plans for a court challenge to Bennett's Bills 2 and 3, citing the Ontario court judgement earlier in the week. The Fed's Kube said the Ontario ruling shows "basic collective bargaining rights cannot be removed arbitrarily without violating freedom of association."

The next morning, B.C.'s teachers weighed in with a strike vote of their own: 16,162 teachers — nearly 60 per cent of those voting — said they were in favor of strike action to defend their rights. "Teachers feel they have been

pushed to the wall on some of these issues and they are now prepared to take action that they've never taken before," said BCTF president Larry Kuehn. "Nov. 8 is the date selected by Operation Solidarity for the education sector. It will include not only teachers but non-teaching employees in schools and also in colleges and universities."

Over the weekend, newscasters counted down the hours as negotiators continued talking late into the night against the Halloween deadline. The rest of B.C. waited to learn whether it would be trick or treat.



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Headliners Reid Campbell, Karen Darcy, Nettle Wild and David Diamond

DAVID COOPER PHOTO

Local players under the gun

By Debbie Wilson

In a dimly-lit room, a woman sings an odd tune in a fine frail voice. It rises and falls in slightly Oriental tones.

She makes sensual motions, drawing both hands to her hip pocket; rubbing her thumbs and forefingers together in that "big money" gesture as she sways on stage. And the words: "You can do many things here that you can't do at home/Or-din-air-ee restrictions they just don't apply."

It is incongruous language for what is a plainly seductive act. But she is in the White Velvet Lounge of the Manila Hotel. And this is the vocabulary of desire for the men there; foreign businessmen drawn by the promise of cheap labor and vast markets in the Philippines' free trade zones.

"This place is a paradise for your investment," she croons.

Or so goes the story. Actually she — actor Karen Darcy — is in a Vancouver church basement, in overalls and a T-shirt; unlikely togs to be serenading corporate big shots anywhere. This is a rehearsal for "Under the Gun," Headlines Theatre's latest marriage of play and politix.

It's unusual meat for theatre-goers. But the troupe estimates that most of the audience it attracted for its first production — "Buy, Buy Vancouver," about the city's housing crisis — had never seen live theatre before.

By now the show is on the road for nearly 60 exhausting one-night stands in church basements and community centres and union halls across the province. They aim for accessible entertainment, and shows have always been done on a pay-what-you-can basis.

But two weeks ago they huddled around a long plywood table, reading through the second rewrite of the fifteenth rewrite of actor/producer Nettle Wild's dialogue between a Canadian businessman and an American agent debating investment prospects. It is set

in, of course, the White Velvet Lounge.

Their methods are unorthodox. Instead of producers and directors wandering godlike around the set, cast members prepare the different parts of the plays. Then together, they read through and criticize, play through and remark again, play through again and change first the script — that sacred scroll of traditional productions — and only then the pacing, the inflection.

It's no treat to anyone's ego to have a script thrashed over and over again. The writing isn't even finished when the show hits the road.

Headlines Theatre comes by its name the hard way. If Philippines president Ferdinand Marcos is assassinated while they are touring, or if cruise missile testing is prohibited by Canadian courts, they will have more to worry about than getting to the local hall in Spuzzum for the night's show.

Says Wild: "We consider it a luxury to be able to not have to change our script for a week so we can really learn our lines."

After its successful run with "Buy, Buy Vancouver," several groups approached Headlines with new project ideas. Project Ploughshares suggested a show about disarmament, and last March, after 14 months and countless hours of research, travel, writing and consultation with groups like Toronto's Cruise Missile Conversion Project and the local Filipino community, they opened quite a different show.

Wild found the whole disarmament issue "too amorphous." But when they looked at how the arms race influences third world economies, says actor producer David Diamond, "suddenly we could deal with the issue as part of our own economy instead of because we're going to blow ourselves up."

"You can say to people: So you don't have a job. Well, why not? It's not because MacBlo doesn't have enough work; it's because they're

moving their operations to the South Pacific where they can use dirt-cheap labor. They keep the labor cheap because of the arms race.

"The biggest task with this play was to make links. And it was also the hardest because nobody else was doing it."

They focused on the Philippines in "Under the Gun" because of Canada's growing involvement in Pacific Rim countries. But when the show originally opened in March, says Diamond, "people were coming up and saying: (he half-shuts his eyes in mocking condescension, 'But where are the Philippines?'"

The assassination of one opposition politician changed all that. Still, Canada doesn't share the high profile for its role in the little country where foreign industry produces goods with \$1.50 a day labor kept quiet by big guns. "Canada wears her white gloves very well in the Philippines," says Wild. "Because her involvement is in 'foreign aid' and 'development' funding."

Diamond interjects: "And nobody in the world is going to say something against 'development.' Unless you look at what it is."

They developed a story line about Sylvia, a Canadian woman who works in a factory, loosely based on Litton Industries of Toronto, which produces guidance systems for the cruise missile. In a second, parallel story line, Peter Goodman, vice president of the same company, markets surveillance systems in the Philippines. She meets, and eventually aids, cruise missile protesters at the factory gates. He finds Manila's streets churning with demonstrators enraged by the opposition leader's assassination and he finds the military everywhere, even in the factories.

Both of them come to realize their place in the arms race; she quits her job; he gets a bodyguard.

Church Directory

First United Church

320 East Hastings St.
Sunday Services:
10:30 a.m. & 7:00 p.m.

St. Paul's Roman Catholic Church

381 E. Cordova St.
Sunday Masses:
9:00 a.m. & 12:30 p.m.

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Bonkers Man

B. Jay Roberts Says It All In Two Minutes And Eighteen Seconds

By George Stanley

TERRACE — He was singing a country ballad in a Whitehorse pub, when suddenly his voice disappeared. The sandy-haired, light-voiced country-Western singer, who had been playing Variety Club benefits for cancer victims for years, had become one of the victims himself. Cancer had hit B. Jay Roberts where he lived — in the vocal cords.

Today, five years later, B. Jay is back on the road. Sitting at a table in the Terrace Hotel pub sipping a beer between sets, he confides, "Getting

SHAKE & POP

cancer was the best thing that ever happened to me." The new voice is deep, and rasps slightly. The new vocal cords are made of plastic.

"I was an arrogant son-of-a-bitch back then," he says. "I thought because I was doing all those charitable things, that I was God. Now I know I'm just his friend."

B. Jay Roberts is a country singer whose repertoire consists of Hank Williams, Buck Owens and Willie Nelson standards, with a few gospel songs thrown in. But he is rapidly becoming known in B.C. for a little item of his own composition, a two minute and eighteen second political novelty song, released on his own Twin Country Music label, called 'Bonkers.'

Everyone can get a little crazy / But something's really wrong with poor old Gracie / And it can't go any longer / Cause Billy and the Socreds have gone bonkers.

'Bonkers' is selling at the rate of 5,000 copies per week; ten per cent of sales go to the Variety Club. (The title comes from Human Resources Minister Grace McCarthy's remark that Ministry employees who objected to mass firings were all 'bonkers'.)

On a rare warm October night, the Terrace pub is packed. B. Jay and his band, 'Surefire,' strike up the peppy intro to 'Bonkers,' and as B. Jay swings into the chorus, an enraged local NEED program organizer stands at the edge of the dance floor waving his arms and making obvious but inaudible sounds of outrage.

There goes Kaiser Billy / he's way

out of control / Followed by the Socreds / who stuck us in a hole.

The objector finally gets into an altercation with two huge telephone workers, a beer is thrown, and the TWU hoists him to shoulder level and carries him upstairs to the street.

At a benefit performance for Terrace's Soup Kitchen the following Sunday, two small girls, obviously delighted, chant the final couplet of the chorus:

Everyone who's bonkers should be put in a zoo / Or else they'll make a monkey, a monkey out of you.

"Terry Fox," B. Jay tells the benefit audience, "has to be the greatest Canadian. He taught us all what guts really means." Of his own change of heart he says, "What really turned me around was when they did a benefit for me. That knocked me out. Twelve bands



B. Jay tellin the truth in his backyard.

portant, and eighteen hundred people in a hall in Victoria, and I thought, 'somebody loves me.' Maybe I ought to start loving people too, instead of just putting up a front."

B. Jay surprises the crowd by singing 'Help Me Make It Through the Night' in English, and then in his own French translation. He trails his extra-long microphone cord up the aisle as he addresses the resonant French phrases intimately to women and children in the audience, then returns to the stage to do his new song, 'Selena,' a moving contemporary spiritual. Both Waylon Jennings and Canadian Dick Damron have shown interest in 'Selena' for future albums. (Twin Country Music will release B. Jay's own version in January.)

B. Jay Roberts' career as a country singer seems definitely on the upswing.

But in B.C. he's becoming known as the 'Bonkers' man, and it seems to both please and puzzle him. Please him, because his motive in writing the song was not really political, but human. He's been there, and he knows. He sincerely cares about the people who will be hurt by the cut-backs.

But his new found fame also puzzles him. "What kind of a town is Burns Lake?" he asks. "What about Cranbrook? Can I sing the Bonkers song there?" (In Cloverdale — "Bob McClelland country," he calls it — he had to stop singing it.) His new Terrace friends tell him not to worry; a man who really loves people like B. Jay does will get his message across, and make the people learn to care.

Lyrics Sue Pacific/Konnekta Publishing.

Is Albanian Fiction Interesting?

By Ralph Maurer

Traces of Magma: an annotated bibliography of left literature, by Rolf Knight. Draegerman, 360 pages, \$12.

This book has no business being any good, but it is. If I told you I had a list of 3,000 proletarian novels by 1,500 authors from 90 countries ranging from Albania to Mozambique to

PULP ON PAPER

Yugoslavia, would you give me twelve bucks for a copy?

But *Traces of Magma* turns out to be fascinating, mostly because it's a product of one of B.C.'s most interesting minds. Twenty years ago author Rolf Knight, who's been driving a cab lately, was emerging with his Ph.D. from the anthropology department of Columbia or some such highbrow university. But he wanted to change the world, so he threw away an academic teaching career to write. His work since — *A Very Ordinary Life*, *A Man of Our Times*, *Stump Ranch Chronicles*, *Indians at Work and Along the No. 20 Line* — has been provocative and im-

charged and marred by Knight's furious and uncompromising anger.

When I heard that Knight was working on a book about fiction, I was curious and puzzled. It turns out, though, that *Traces of Magma* isn't as far removed from his previous books (all serious works of history) as you might suppose. The dark corner of our past he illuminates with *Magma* is not that of working class fiction but of working class life.

"If the realm of literature should not be taken for actual history, neither should most schoolbook histories or public affairs documentaries," Knight writes in his introduction. "Often the fictional works are the only ones which deal with the everyday lives of ordinary people caught up in and acting to transform the particular conditions around them."

He describes left novels as those "which provide a progressive social critique of whichever society they happen to emerge from. In addition, there is a special effort to include titles by authors who stemmed from or were part of the working class and peasant worlds about which they wrote."

This book is valuable because it says something that isn't said often enough: that the lives of "ordinary" working men and women are as interesting and important as those of the Great Men

Who Make Things Happen (and can afford to commission the biographies that prove it). It's also valuable because it turns our attention to fiction, a subject generally ignored by "serious" leftists.

Finally, *Traces of Magma* is valuable because it's interesting reading, far more interesting, than the first paragraph's description makes it sound. What makes it so interesting is Knight's broad view. *Traces of Magma* shows that Albanian, Mozambiquean and Yugoslavian fiction is actually pretty interesting. The section on the U.S.S.R. is larger than that for Britain, and Soviet fiction is shown to be a lot more sophisticated than boy-meets-girl, boy-loses-girl, boy-attains-production-quotas-and-gets-girl-and-new-tractor. I should have known that, of course, but given the complete unavailability of recent Soviet fiction here, it's surprising to read how rebellious and individualistic a lot of it is (a lot of that rebellion gets expressed as hatred for the bureaucracy).

There's more, much more, in Knight's book of literary lists. Since Coles won't touch this one, to get a copy you might have to send \$12 plus a buck for postage to Draegerman Publishing, 139 South Glynde, Burnaby V5B 3J3. I'll be surprised to hear any complaints.



BEV DAVIES PHOTO

Philling Up With Mister Smith

By John Mackie

Phil Smith is notorious for changing his mind, arguing black is white and sitting still for the approximate time a hummingbird takes to flutter its wings. If times differed he might still be yacking it up in university, debating the obscure merits of illustrious tomes like Lloyd Bridges' *Mask and Flippers: The History Of Skin Diving* with, say, Aristotle's *Politics*. As things stand, he has turned his considerable energies to what he dubs "the Phil Smith concept."

"I love the big riff," explains Phil, donning the budding rock star garb of

SHAKE & POP

the Phil Smith concept. "The big riff is one of the reasons for living. When I hear a great Led Zeppelin or Blue Oyster Cult riff, real bone crunchers, well, what can I say, it just sends a primal shiver down my spine!"

Hmmmm. Phil, it seems, has dedicated himself to reconciling two polar opposites — brains and heavy metal music — through Corsage, a band that's making a wee bit of a reputation for itself around the city for its live gigs and its songs on Phil's debut LP, *The Phil Smith Album*.

But Corsage is only one arm of a four-pronged assault evidence on the album. The Phil Smith concept also includes dreamy keyboard pop (via Blanche Whitman) a rebirth of the Doors

(Jimbo and the Lizard Kings) and even some 1979 post-punk punk-pop (Wasted Lives).

"I don't understand how you can categorize music like hockey teams, with one at the top and one at the bottom," Phil says, defending his somewhat eclectic taste buds. "Everything has its own validity. You can like comedies and you can like soap operas. Each of them are good or bad within themselves."

This explains a man who turns everything upside down in his own personal quest for nirvana. Growing up as a budding poet in North Vancouver, Phil was the guy who had tons of Bob Dylan and Led Zeppelin bootlegs. A smart guy who thought Blue Oyster Cult really were the eighth wonder of the world. A rock and roll schizophrenic.

Then along came punk and Phil plunged in, face first. He ran the Simon Fraser University radio station and wrote a wild series of articles for the student newspaper, the *Peak*, where he insulted everyone and anyone and praised punk to the skies. And every issue there would be at least two or three letters to the editor calling for Phil's head on a platter. The Buzzcocks' Pete Shelley and Magazine's Howard DeVoto became Phil's new messiahs and legend has it that, after listening to the latest Bob Dylan album, *Desire*, he yelled "Boring!" and flung it out the window, frisbee-style. Always a bit of an excitable fellow, I can recall going over to the house he shared with local music entrepreneur Bud Luxford and watching in disbelief as Phil played us a load of singles on his stereo — only he would never let a song play for more than 15 seconds before he'd bap another one on.

His writing career continued in *Snotrag*, the local mimeographed punk

magazine and terminated with *Public Enemy*, the *Georgia Straight's* short-lived new wave offshoot. He entered the performing arena with Wasted Lives, who were no great shakes as a live act but who left behind one of the funniest songs of all time, Wirehead, on the *Vancouver Complication* album of local punk/new wave bands. "No more pain, there's a wire in my brain," sang Phil, and then future-Buddy Selfish guitarist Colin Griffith's whipped into a spine-wrenching blur of notes.

Thankfully, Wirehead has been resurrected, in better fidelity, on Phil's new record. It's so ridiculous, it's divine.

Wasted Lives didn't last too long, and Phil shifted his glasses towards learning the recording process, a facet of the music biz most of his contemporaries ignored in their quest to produce art. Phil's bands may not be as contrived as Prism or Lover Boy, but neither are they spur-of-the-moment trendsetters. Everything is thought out.

"Performance is performance, you know," says Phil. "Some people confuse onstage and off. I don't. The difference between Corsage and Lover Boy? Well, Lover Boy does what they do really well and I think Corsage does too — there's probably a lot of similarities. I'd rather have one Lover Boy than a million bands of avant-garde garbage like Bauhaus."

To help realise the potential of each song, Phil has stocked each band with local luminaries. Blanche Whitman features ex-Dishrag Scout Fairlane, ex-Buddy Selfish bassist Bob Petterson and former U-J3RK5ers Rodney Graham and Kitty Byrne. Corsage features current Payola drummer Chris Taylor, former-Subhuman Ron Allan on bass, and, most importantly, ex-Pointed Stick Bill Napier-Hemy on guitar. It's his work that really stands

out on *The Phil Smith Album*: the solo in I'm Nothin' is worth the price of the album alone. Even when he's just playing a simple rhythm, as on I'm Not For Sale, I'm Sold, off the first Bud Luxford LP (in another Phil band, the Snow Geese), he has a feel for the guitar which is really quite beautiful.

We can expect to see Corsage playing around Vancouver a little more (including a spot on the *Vancouver* show), and Phil says a new Blanche Whitman project is in the works. Finally seeing his efforts on vinyl has given new impetus to somebody who already had ants in his pants. Don't be too surprised by anything Phil attempts; he's got a new scam every ten minutes. Among these was a project that didn't pull off two springs back; recording the Rick Springfield hit Jessie's Girl as a novelty tune, Gretzky's Girl.

"That was one of the great tragedies of my life," says Phil, watching dollar bills fly out the window. "We had the song all ready to go, drunk out of our minds at the top of the Daon building, meeting with millionaire lawyers who were gonna back us — everything looked like it was gonna go until the Oilers got dumped in the first round of the playoffs."

Brushing aside such a colossal bummer, Phil plugs on, searching for that elusive footpath to glory. "I don't do this so I can sit in a closet and listen to my records — I want people to hear them. We've got labels interested in Corsage, but we're never gonna change our basic style of music. How can you, you're not gonna fool anyone. I'll never do the club circuit — I've never played over 65 minutes on stage in my life. I couldn't do it . . . I'd be bored, tired . . . you know that I put out onstage. I never have to force myself — it just happens. I guess you could call me the Ernest Ainsley of rock and roll!"

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