

Solidarity Times



Christine
a drive-in
scream/15

War in toyland

By Debbie Wilson

Hey kids! Here's a game just like you saw on TV!

From the makers of G.I. Joe, play the Cobra Battle Game. "Knock out the enemy base," advises the box, by firing "soft foam rockets" at your enemy. Just like a nightly news broadcast from Lebanon!

and sophisticated designs," says the proud company. It's just like the U.S. Army's truly lethal Chaparral missile system.

Hasbro has the SkyStriker XP-14F. The real world has the F-14A Grumman Tomcat Fighter jet.

G.I. Joe's "Cover Girl" is included with the Armored Missile Vehicle (Wolverine) and its dozen removable missiles you can elevate and swivel. But "Cover Girl" is clearly the star.

'They have waited a long time for advanced technology jets.' It's here in a plastic model kit, a bomber with Cruise missiles.

Or imagine you're the lucky kid with the 24-and-a-quarter inch B1-B Bomber model kit from Monogram, with 17 Cruise missiles. "They've waited a long time for advanced technology aircraft to relieve the now legendary B-52," boasts the box. "And here it is... ready to patrol the skies as a deterrent to possible hostilities around the world."

War toys are so realistic this Christmas it's possible to find their real life counterparts in the Jane's series, the internationally recognized authority on military hardware.

Take the G.I. Joe line from Hasbro Toys of Montreal, the superpower of military playthings. They have a PAC/RAT (Programmed Assault Computer All Terrain) Lance Launchers, "modern army action weapons based on the army's most advanced

Says Hasbro: "Cover Girl finds that she must work against her beauty to prove herself. She's compelled to learn and master decidedly unfeminine disciplines. Her self assurance and stunningly good looks reduce most men to stuttering fools."

The packages are strangely sterile. The blazing guns and exploding shells are there, but no blood, no bodies and no enemy in sight.

For that stuff, says 11-year-old Erin Gladders, you have to read G.I. Joe's comic book series. There, G.I. Joe characters battle the enemy, usually COBRA terrorists, in Alaska, Afghanistan, Africa or the North Pole. Figures like mercenary Major Bludd, "a ruthless kind of character", are developed. A bit of military history

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Kelf Davies tries out new toys.

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

PEOPLE AREN'T SUPPOSED TO CRY

Down on skid road

By Trish Webb

She sits on a bar stool among friends, engrossed in conversation. From time to time people walk up and whisper in her ear. Money changes hands. A man brings her a folded newspaper, says a few words and goes to another part of the bar.

Julie makes her living on skid road, sometimes in Vancouver, sometimes in Winnipeg, occasionally in Edmonton. She sells drugs to support her heroin habit and to eat. Other women on the skids sell their bodies, and some steal. Most of them have been in and

out of prisons and psychiatric hospitals.

"I used to do odd jobs. When I tried to stay sober, I'd do jobs like house cleaning and that, and when they found out that I did some time, they wouldn't hire me no more because I wasn't bondable. That was the only thing that I

could do. I never really tried hooking because I never thought I could do it," she says.

Julie's life has been a series of foster homes, juvenile detention centres, prisons and poverty. She grew up in Manitoba and Ontario and she remembers a lot of drinking. Most of the time she and her 12-member family shared a small house in the worst part of town.

"I started drinking really heavy when I was about 12. I went to school up to Grade three. I started going into

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Fledgling newsweekly folds; see you some other Times

This issue marks the end of Solidarity Times.

The paper's staff received a phone call Dec. 13 from B.C. Federation of Labor secretary-treasurer Mike Kramer informing them Operation Solidarity would no longer fund the fledgling newsweekly.

The decision was reached at

an Operation Solidarity meeting that day.

No other details were available at press time.

Subscribers will receive a letter shortly.

A short history of the newspaper appears on the back cover.

This Week

Quiet solution sought

By Stan Persky

Premier Bill Bennett's determination to fire teachers in 1984 has become an "obsession" based on ideology rather than economics, B.C. Teachers Federation president Larry Kuehn charged Dec. 6.

It was the beginning of the fourth week since the so-called Kelowna settlement on Nov. 13 ended a massive public sector strike mounted by the Solidarity Coalition of trade unions and community groups opposed to Bennett's controversial "restraint" budget.

One issue, however, hadn't been settled at all. What to do about the three days of school missed during the teachers' protest, and what to do with the \$12 to \$18 million in unspent wages? The teachers want the money used to prevent firings slated for Jan. 1. The Socred government wants the teachers to make up the lost class time.

When Education Minister Jack Heinrich announced on



Solidarity leaders and government officials sought a quiet way out of the education controversy. Maybe homework was the answer.

Nov. 30, just before flying off to a West German education conference, that the province's school boards had until Dec. 15 to come up with a plan for forcing teachers to make up lost time, the crisis was on again. The B.C. Federation of Labor, meeting in convention when the edict was issued, voted unanimously to take job action if any teachers were fired as a result of the government refusing to recycle the unspent money.

Last week, however, the rhetoric cooled, and both sides sought a quiet way out. In response to a weekend offer by Labor Relations Board chairman Stephen Kelleher to hold a get-together to compare notes on the Kelowna deal, Bennett said Dec. 5, "I think it might be useful to have a meeting and talk about those things that were discussed." But Bennett didn't back off from plans to "downsize" B.C.'s teaching staff. It was

that stubbornness which led Kuehn to argue that "he has this obsession to fire these teachers, which is crazy in a province with 14 per cent unemployment."

Meanwhile, school boards around the province were racking their brains and tickling their computers to come up with a plan in time for Heinrich's Dec. 15 deadline to avoid losing the unspent funds. The Nanaimo school board, headed by B.C. School Trustees Association president Joy Leach, was the first to do so. It proposed teachers work an extra eight minutes a day from January to June to make up the three days.

B.C. Teachers Fed vice-president Pat Clarke responded that it was a scheme "essentially asking teachers to work for free," and called the proposal a political action to save face for the government. Nor were other observers impressed. Province editorialist Jack Clarke scoffed at the notion that "with an extra eight minutes you can cram more into the kids' craniums at the end of a long day."

While Bennett called the Nanaimo plan "an interesting possibility," other school boards were trying to find answers to more important questions. At the Dec. 5 Vancouver School Board meeting, where controversial Socred board chairman Kim Campbell stepped down to devote more time to law articling, representatives of the Sikh community protested government plans to slash funding

for English as a Second Language programs as "short-sighted, discriminatory and irresponsible." Said Mota Singh Jheeta, president of the Khalsa Diwan Society, "We are frankly at a loss to understand the rationale for the proposed cuts."

By mid-week, the focus shifted to other venues. In Vancouver's West End, worried tenants trudged through the season's first snowfall in the Lower Mainland to attend meetings protesting rent hikes as high as 100 per cent in the wake of the government's elimination of rent controls. Tenants living in buildings owned by Zen and Aquilini, hit by the largest increases, decided to form committees to work through the dying Rentalsman's office.

At the University of B.C., where an \$18 million shortfall caused by government cutbacks prompted the school's administration to suggest hiking student fees by 126 per cent over three years, university president George Pedersen told his shell-shocked faculty that UBC was facing its most serious crisis since the Depression. Even the Sun editorial noted that already "fewer British Columbians go to university than do Ontarians, Albertans and Manitobans," and wondered if we were facing an "ignorant society."

While inhabitants of ivory towers and West End high-rises looked for cash to make ends meet, that same day at the posh Whistler ski resort, See page 14: **HOMEWORK**

\$18 MILLION *

- That's the amount of money the B.C. government didn't spend on the salaries of teachers and support workers from November 8th to 10th.
- Bill Bennett agreed to leave this money in the schools.
- Teachers don't want this money to go to pay increases for themselves.
- Teachers don't want it in their pockets as pay for working extra days.
- Teachers want it to be spent to maintain the services to students provided by the 600 education workers who face termination.
- But Bill Bennett has broken his agreement.

LET'S ALL SEND A MESSAGE TO BILL BENNETT
WE'VE HAD ENOUGH CONFLICT
IT'S TIME FOR UNITY IN B.C.

* Figures estimates only.

A Message from the B.C.
Teachers' Federation



NEWS

MONTH-LONG CAMPAIGN

Fightback slated for chopped CIP

By Brian Jones

Community groups have targeted December for a month-long campaign against the provincial government's decision last summer to terminate an employment program for handicapped and unemployable people.

Support for the Community Involvement Program is being mustered by the Solidarity Coalition and CIP Fightback, a coalition of community groups and social agencies. They want the government to reinstate the program, which paid people \$50 per month to do 20 hours of volunteer work with community, church and other groups.

CIP Fightback has planned a "Day of Action" for Thursday, Dec. 15, when they will hold a rally at Vancouver's Robson Square.

"It's important for poor people to be supported by not-so-poor people," says CIP Fightback spokesperson Sue Harris.

Besides encouraging people to send letters and telegrams to human resources minister Grace McCarthy, CIP Fightback is also trying to involve other groups around the province in the fight by sending out information packages and lists of resource people, says Harris.

"This way the CIP local groups can really understand the issue," she says. "The issue got a bit clouded because McCarthy came out and said the program was not successful."

CIP was officially terminated Aug. 31, but people who had contracts may work until March 1984, says Harris, when the government plans to start a new program. CIP Fightback did manage to convince McCarthy to honor existing contracts, but many disabled and "unemployable" persons have still been cut off CIP, Harris says.

"They're (the government) acting totally illegally as far as we're concerned," she says. "People are unable to get on it (CIP), even though they are eligible."

The government's planned new program is inadequate because it excludes unemployable people, says CIP Fightback.

"We want both handicapped and unemployable people to qualify for CIP," says Harris. "This government thinks it will save money, which is garbage. How do you put a dollar figure on somebody's health and happiness?"

Each month more and more people are being cut off CIP as their contracts end, says Harris, and already the consequences are being felt.

"We know of at least two cases of attempted suicide," she says. "This loss has made them go over the edge a bit. Losing a job is a big loss, whether you make \$50 or \$500."

But one man who was cut off CIP is going to court Dec. 21, arguing that the program is "still legally on the books," says Harris.

"If he wins, that means the program still exists. It will mean that she (McCarthy) has acted illegally."

NICARAGUA

Peace tools shipped to Sandinistas

By John Mackie

One Fraser Valley farmer gave \$10,000 cash. An anonymous donor matched it. A retiring doctor donated medical supplies. Others chipped in desks, photo supplies, school supplies, medicine, tools and tractors. It's all on the way to Nicaragua, courtesy of the Canadian public.

Over \$1,000,000 worth of money and implements has been collected in the Coalition For Aid To Nicaragua's "Tools For Peace" boat program. This is the third year of the program: the amount collected has risen at an astonishing clip, from \$69,000 in 1981 to \$125,000 last year.

"Despite US and CIA propaganda against Nicaragua, a lot of people in Canada are getting the true story about the positive changes in Nicaraguan society," says Coalition steering committee member Harvey MacKinnon. "It's a popular government, a pluralist society, and the people are making great gains. There has been a 600 percent increase in health spending since the revolution in 1979, and education has also risen more than 300 percent."

MacKinnon, a veteran fundraiser, feels the amount collected is extraordinary, given the recession and other factors which normally work against projects like this. It's generally harder to raise money for international projects, he says, particularly when it's in a non-emergency situation (i.e., there hasn't been a disaster like an earthquake or flood or there isn't a major war.)

"One of the reasons people work hard for Nicaragua is that people realise that the government is providing the



It hasn't always been all smiles for B.C. Hydro workers currently on strike against the Crown corporation. They've been on strike since Nov. 25, and the main issue on the bargaining table is that old stumbling block — an exemption to Bill 3, the Public Sector Restraint Act. Hydro workers are not the only ones having trouble getting an exemption. The Canadian Union of Public Employees fears they will have to make major concessions when they try to negotiate their exemption, and already Operation Solidarity is threatening to fight another battle over Bill 3, this time to support Hydro workers. Meanwhile, the unions involved are asking Hydro customers not to include the stubs from the bills when paying them.

environment where development can actually occur," he says. He says the success of the project is due to the work of hundreds of volunteers in BC and a few thousand across the country.

Anyone interested in further donations can contact the Coalition through Oxfam at 2524 Cypress, Vancouver, phone 736-7678.

'RESTRAINT'

Return Bennett booklet to sender's home

Wondering what to do with that "restraint" brochure the provincial government sent you? The Solitary Coalition has a suggestion.

Send them to Premier Bill Bennett's Kelowna home with "unsolicited mail" written on the outside. The address is R.R. #1, Pritchard Drive, Westbank, Kelowna, V08 2A0.

"It's really scandalous that they would use taxpayers' money for this," says Patsy George, Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition spokesperson.

"In the booklet they call myths facts, and facts myths."

The coalition asks that people do not open the envelope before sending it back "where it belongs."

WAB CONFERENCE

Women prepare new strategy against budget

By Muriel Draaisma

A feminist community group will launch a two-pronged attack against what they call the provincial government's recent assault on social services.

Women Against the Budget decided at its Dec. 11 conference in Vancouver to develop a program of action dramatising the budget's crippling effects on women and children, and to try to educate the general public and drum up more support for their group.

Other suggestions from the 50 women at the conference included more neighborhood leafletting and door knocking, and fostering contacts with other active women, even those in the Social Credit party, to widen WAB's base of support.

"We must reach out to new people, to isolated women, and rebuild the momentum that we lost," said WAB's Sara Diamond.

Many WAB members, sporting Operation Soldout buttons, expressed bitterness and dissatisfaction with the Kelowna agreement reached Nov. 13.

"There's been a phony separation of labor and community groups. Those guys (in Operation Solidarity) don't represent union members anymore than they do us," said WAB member Jean Rands.

"Even though the mobilization was great, it was heading for defeat because nobody challenged the myth of restraint and we weren't really asking for what we wanted."

Members decided to list the actual social services needed by women and to hammer out a position on the restraint issue. They discussed adopting an offensive strategy to fight the firing of social workers, instead of continuing their defensive stance.

They also passed motions calling for concrete action to prevent the closure of Vancouver's Transition house, which is scheduled to be either privatized or closed by March 31; a wake comparing human rights in B.C. with that of Orwell's world in Nineteen Eighty-Four; and a "budget university" designed to educate communities about Socred policies and its restraint program.

The group also plans to shoot videotapes.

"There's a whole lot of subliminal advertising in the budget, and we thought we should explode the idea of restraint," said WAB member Nora Randall.

WAB members promised to support other job actions and

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NEWS

Women

From page 3

to continue fighting for the rights of trade unionists as well as feminists. "We must not let the Solidarity Coalition hold us back by its inactivity," said Diamond.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Cosmetic changes feared

By Keith Baldrey

The B.C. Organization to Fight Racism has called for militant action to force the provincial government to accept alternatives to its planned human rights legislation.

Although Labor Minister Bob McLelland announced last week his government would likely withdraw Bill 27, the Human Rights Act, and replace it with an amended act, the BCOFR is not hopeful of any major changes to the legislation.

"We'll believe it when we see it," said Tim Stanley, a BCOFR spokesperson. "It's a good sign he's going to withdraw Bill 27, but per-

sonally I'm not very optimistic. I suspect a few cosmetic changes will be made."

About 70 delegates to BCOFR's annual general meeting in New Westminster Dec. 10 repeatedly called for tough action to fight the government budget measures and what they see as "the rising tide of racism" in this province.

"Only unyielding resolve on our part will insure that the offensive legislation is withdrawn and our rights restored," BCOFR president Charan Gill told the meeting. "We are working to defend the little protection we had under the Human Rights Code prior to the government's attack which was launched on July 7. A consultation process which was agreed to in Kelowna is of very limited value."

Gill warned if the government does not accept alternatives to its existing plans, "We must be prepared to mount another challenge to it — in the form of a general strike if necessary."

Stanley said after the meeting past experience with the Social Credit government shows they mostly ignore suggestions for better human rights legislation in the province.

Stanley referred a govern-



Music and speakers entertained 400 people who braved cold to attend human rights rally at Robson Square Dec. 10.

ment-commissioned report by Vancouver lawyer John McAlpine two years ago, which he said included specific changes to the Human Rights Code. "There are substantial changes suggested in that report, but the government has never seen fit to implement them," said Stanley.

Instead, said Stanley, the government introduced the Civil Rights Protection Act, which he says is a "useless piece of legislation."

"Our lawyers say that act is absolutely useless and unenforceable."

Wages dip

When International Woodworkers of America tentatively accepted a contract last week providing no wage increase in the first year of a three year pact, they weren't the only ones to do so.

Average wage hikes in B.C. plummeted to 0.9 per cent in November, according to figures released by the Employers' Council of B.C. Average increases over the past 12 months have dropped to 4 per cent. Those are the

lowest figures recorded since the council began collecting pay statistics more than a decade ago.

Employers' council president Jim Matkin expressed satisfaction with the phenomenon. "People want to keep their jobs," he said. But B.C. Federation of Labor secretary-treasurer Mike Kramer charged that an "unholy alliance" of big business, government and the media "has conducted a campaign of terror and fear against workers," resulting in pay packet increases far below the rate of inflation.

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BAIT FOR THE 'LANDSHARK'

Paying rent without controls can hurt

By Tom Hawthorn

The Radiator Hospital is one neighbor, Martin's Worm Factory another. Coleco, the computer stork for all those Cabbage Patch Kids, has an office across the street.

Morell's Pure Foods is four doors down. No one has ever seen food at Morell's, pure or not. A huge drum marked "butterscotch flavor" was once seen in the back alley.

It's a grey, grim industrial neighborhood, where the few houses are crowded by tall walls of ashen cinder blocks. At one of those crowded houses, a scene was played that is becoming all too common at the first of each month.

It came with a knock at the door, like most bad news. It also came with a lawyer — more bad news.

D.J. took the sheets from the lawyer's pink hand. She was served Notice 855019.

Notice 855019 was crammed with small print. It made for an imposing document. One part did stand out:

"Current rent: \$330.

"Rent increase: \$320.

"Total: \$650."

D.J. recognized this. "Ah, yes," she thought to herself. "This is the end of rent controls. It is the new beginning for the free economy of supply and demand, during which the Fraser Institute has promised us consumers a break on rental costs through competition." D.J. was well-versed on the subject.

Now, this is no tragic tale, with crippled widows tossed onto the snowy Christmas streets by mustachio'd landlords. Nor is it one of disastrous financial hardship — hardship yes, disastrous no — for my friends at the

house are either students or employed.

In fact, they were paying \$660 rent on the same house just a few months ago. But they did a little researching, discovered the rent was way out of line of rent controls, and had the sum rolled back to its legal level. The Rentalsman ordered they live rent-free until the \$9,600 in excess rent was paid back.

Notice 855019 cuts that time in half. As for the Rentalsman today, the July 7 budget left him in limbo.

Take the rent increase notice. It announces that "for all practical purposes, rent controls have been dropped." The 10 per cent hike ceiling is gone. But don't despair, suggests the notice, for not all the rules are gone. (Among the supposedly reassuring list of rules still in effect is such trivia as "rents must be rounded to the nearest dollar.")

More seriously, the Rentalsman can conduct a review if the current rent is below \$500, and the increase more than 15 per cent. But there's a catch — you have to gather information on rents being paid for comparable residences in the neighborhood, which tenants rights groups say means tough door-to-door slogging.

Let's go door-to-door. The "landshark," as the residents call him, happens to own the house next door. There is only one other house on the block. The next closest homes are in residential settings. It's going to be tough to compare.

Even the number of rooms in the house is disputed. The landlord says 10, counting a tiny alcove at one end of the kitchen and the stall-like toilet

See page 18: RENT



MARK VATNSDAL GRAPHIC

Co-ops defend flip side of story

By Trish Webb

Under fire from private developer critics, defenders of co-op housing are telling their side of the story.

Doug Dennis, a manager at the Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation in Vancouver says criticizing co-operative housing schemes because they house a few middle- and upper-income families is narrow view.

A CHMC study of social housing programs released in November sparked an outcry from private developers who recommended an end to co-operative housing subsidies.

But Dennis says an end to subsidies would effectively stop almost all housing development in Vancouver.

"Over the last 10 years very little rental housing has been built without tax advantages or subsidies," Dennis said. "The break-even point for new rental accommodation in Vancouver is about \$1,000 per unit. That's what it costs to pay mortgage and operating costs, but the market can only support \$450 per month."

Much of the criticism of co-operative housing comes from the Housing and Urban Development Association of Canada, which claims non-profit and co-operative housing



Private developers hate them, tenants love them — co-ops create controversy.

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

funded by the CMHC serves the "underserving."

Highlights of a recent HUDAC paper, "Social Housing and Subsidized Co-operatives: Benefit or Burden?" were featured prominently by the local daily press, which found architects and other highly-paid professionals living in co-ops.

But Inner City Housing Society con-

report distorts figures and focuses on the negative aspects of the CMHC study.

"Most government spending on housing goes to the private market, be it homeowners or investors," says Khouri. "Co-ops accounted for \$34.8 million out of a total of \$997 million in direct spending in 1980. When you include the hidden subsidies, co-ops ac-

count for one-half of one per cent of all direct and indirect subsidies."

The CMHC study found that in 1981, 70 per cent of co-operative housing residents earned less than \$10,000 annually, and that 91 per cent of co-operative housing benefits went to families with annual incomes of less than \$20,000.

See page 18 CO-OPS

Rape Relief crisis centre a survivor

By Debbie Wilson

It is sometimes difficult to tell whether the women operating Vancouver Rape Relief are staffing telephone lines or front lines.

They were first in line to lose government funding. They have had the triumph of surviving the nearly two years since then (thanks to vigorous fund-raising efforts), tempered by the tragedy of watching other members of their rape crisis centre coalition fold in Prince George, Terrace, Victoria and Powell River.

Rape Relief members now believe that they were the test case for the recent funding raid which cut or killed grants to nearly every women's organization in the province. "The government got away with cutting us off," says collective member Joni Miller.

The government locked horns with Rape Relief over access to confidential files and a questionnaire apparently designed to compile a profile of a typical rape victim. Rape Relief refused to comply with the government's demands and in February 1982 the province pulled its grant.

The fund-raising fervor which enabled the group to buy a house for a women's shelter before funding was cut has continued to pay the bills. The big old building shows evidence of renovations underway with volunteer labor. Donated bread, bedding, and other items help keep the house stocked.

The main and upstairs floors, secure behind solid doors with sturdy locks always bolted, house up to ten women and children escaping war at home. Some stay overnight; some, a couple of months. There is no limit to the length of their stay.

In the basement Rape Relief offices Miller sits in an unfinished room near the telephone crisis line. She says now, as she said two years ago, that the funding fiasco was more than a matter of filling out forms and forking over files.

"What they didn't say up front was that as a coalition of rape crisis centres we were becoming pretty noisy, pretty strong. They didn't like how we were dealing with women," she says.

"They wanted us to pat women on the back and say 'there, there, dear,' and take her to the police station and say 'you've had your one rape and it won't happen again.' They didn't want us to rebel against the conditions that caused the rape in the first place.

"What they're doing is they're cutting off funds to anyone they see as being in political opposition to them."

Pam Moodie, a collective member the past 10 months, says they do take women to the police station if that's what the woman wants to do. But they also let her know there are alternatives to legal action. She might poster the neighborhood with a description of an attacker, place a newspaper advertisement or distribute leaflets at his work place. It removes a rapist's anonymity, she says.

Some women choose to confront the rapist with a group of people. Says Moodie: "It's a woman saying to a man that it's not okay and all these other people think so too. In the legal system a woman rarely gets an opportunity to say that.

"Most often men are very intimidated by a crowd of women. They're not accustomed to women demanding that they change their behavior. We've had men call us after a postering and apologise, basically."



Pam Moodie of Vancouver Rape Relief staffs the crisis line.

BEV DAVIES PHOTOS

The crisis calls come in more frequently than before, averaging about three a day. Callers more often include talk about money problems; about having difficulty feeding and clothing themselves. Rape Relief workers face their own financial troubles along with a growing workload. For example, the cars they use to attend calls can not always be counted on to run.

The dozen women in training at Rape Relief House — some who were onetime residents at the shelter themselves — work shifts tending the 24-hour crisis line with more experienced collective members. Still, most members of the collective work 40 to 60 hours each week and none draw a paycheck there.

Moodie says their work "becomes

the major force in our lives."

"Our focus is not how to fix the hurt this minute, but how to change it. It is important to know how the court system works and how to get medical attention. But we also teach each other how to explain to a woman how she's not at fault, and how to explain to a woman why the man who raped her wasn't convicted."

By Trish Webb

The Women's Shelter Society is struggling with bureaucracy. None of the public agencies it needs for funding think it's a bad idea; they just think it will take time and a lot of number-juggling.

The society is trying to develop a housing project and support services for street women in Vancouver. Its plan includes temporary and long term housing, drug and alcohol treatment, health programs, cultural, spiritual and recreational activities, a cafeteria, a laundry and child-care facilities.

They have approached the City of Vancouver social planning department and the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation for funding, and various government agencies and community organizations for program development.

While it is possible to lease city-owned land, there is no suitable property available for the project because the society wants a large space downtown where most street women live.

"They want an awful lot of space for the program," says social planner Shirley Chan. "The proposal they brought to us wasn't economically feasible. They have to make the numbers work."

Shelter society faces red tape maze

Many women ask for special help

Because CMHC can only fund the housing part of the proposal, the Shelter Society must obtain commitments from the other government agencies involved in the program before the housing corporation can give it any money.

"We believe it will take too long to get the other agencies to go ahead in time for our 1984 budget allocations," says Jane Hopkins, a CMHC officer. "The housing part of the proposal could be done if the society scaled down to housing only, but then they wouldn't get all the space they need for the rest of it when it does come through."

Miriam Azreal has worked in Vancouver's downtown eastside for five years. She thinks the area's homeless

women will not survive without help. Working on a federal grant, she and other women from the Shelter Society circulated questionnaires to 100 women in the area last summer.

The survey showed a large female population in poor living arrangements, which moved frequently and had spent time in jails. Eighty out of 100 respondents said they used alcohol, or drugs, or both. Most said they wanted to live in a place that restricted weapons and drugs.

"Without intervention, some of the women downtown won't survive for another three years. There is a disproportionate number of murders in the downtown eastside, and a lot of the victims are homeless women," Azreal said.

WE'RE GETTING SMALLER PIECES OF A LARGER, UNPAID PIE

PAYING OFF THE INTEREST

By Stan Persky

More than five months after Premier Bill Bennett sandbagged them with the July 7 budget, British Columbians are still puzzled. And for good reason.

How, in one breathtaking move, did Bennett and his finance minister, Hugh Curtis, manage to: 1) increase provincial spending by 12.3 per cent, 2) produce a \$1.6 billion deficit, 3) run up the B.C. debt to a whopping \$13 billion, 4) slash social programs to ribbons, and 5) successfully get the whole thing labelled an act of "restraint"?

Analysis

Part of the Sacred propaganda coup can be attributed to the noise level. In the midst of the 26-bill barrage that gave rise to the Solidarity Coalition, there was little opportunity for the usual sober estimates that normally accompany government book-cooking.

Now, with the help of a budget study done for the Times by Capilano College economist Ken Moak, it's possible to explain who's getting smaller pieces of a larger, but largely unpaid for pie.

Whatever else might be said about the 1983 Sacred budget, the government, says economist Moak, "was not practicing restraint in the traditional sense." Restraint, in ordinary usage, means holding back, spending less. The government didn't. Total expenditures for this year were estimated at \$8.4 billion, a 12.3 per cent jump over last year's \$7.5 billion budget. (Table 1 shows revenues and expenses for the past three years.)

If the government was serious about its oft-stated goal of reducing the inflation rate, it had a curious way of showing it. Spending was flowing at twice the rate of inflation. Yet the premier never appeared more earnest than when insisting workers should forego all wage increases — in effect, taking a 5 per cent pay cut.

This was also a government that chanted at every available opportunity, "there's no such thing as a free lunch." Yet, for the third year in a row, it was buying, but not paying, running a record \$1.6 billion deficit. Perhaps more shocking than the day-to-day deficit was the size and increase of the province's long-term debt.

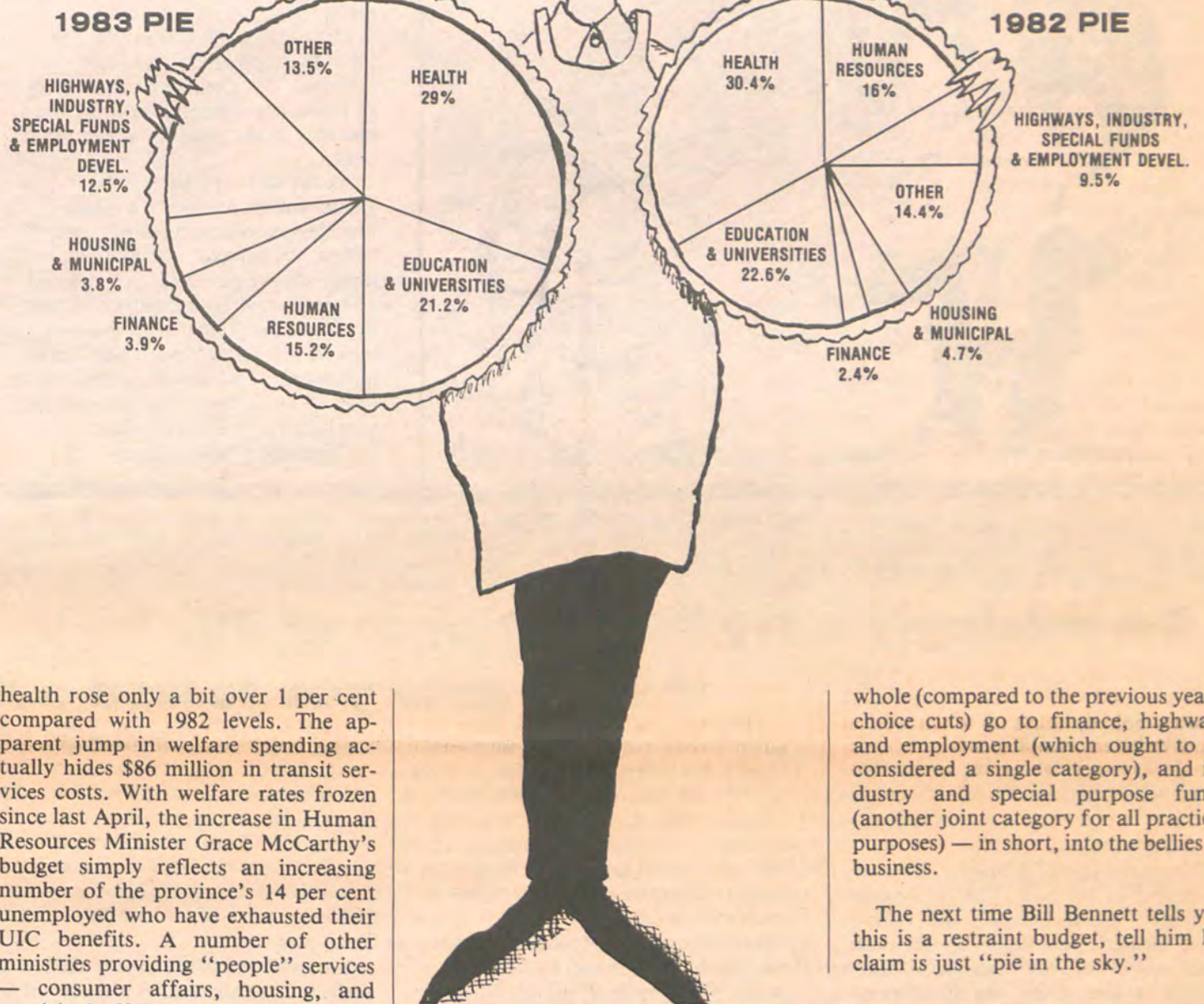
The debt is the place where the government records money it's spent that doesn't show up on the annual balance sheet. This sleight-of-hand is achieved by permitting crown corporations to borrow money on their own, money that isn't included in the annual deficit. Expenditures for dams, northeast coal development, and rapid transit are conveniently hidden there.

From 1976, when Bill Bennett took office, to the present, the provincial debt has more than tripled. It was \$4.2 billion in 1975, when a short-lived NDP government left office. This year it's jumped nearly \$2 billion over the 1982 figure of \$11.3 billion to \$13.3 billion. As a percentage of the gross provincial product, 1983's debt amounts to 27.3 per cent, the highest figure in more than a decade.

Okay, so it's not restraint. But what is Bill Bennett spending taxpayers' money on in 1983? (Table II shows what's being spent and how it compares to the previous year.)

At first glance, it simply looks like everybody's getting something. In fact, once inflation is taken into account, real dollar spending on education and

counted), municipal affairs and housing — the people-nourishing portions of provincial sustenance. But bigger pieces of the pie as a proportion of the



health rose only a bit over 1 per cent compared with 1982 levels. The apparent jump in welfare spending actually hides \$86 million in transit services costs. With welfare rates frozen since last April, the increase in Human Resources Minister Grace McCarthy's budget simply reflects an increasing number of the province's 14 per cent unemployed who have exhausted their UIC benefits. A number of other ministries providing "people" services — consumer affairs, housing, and municipal affairs — saw their budgets slashed.

So where are the dollars really going? Explains Ken Moak: "Increases in the budget were largely contributed by interest payments on the debt (that's the 88 per cent increase in finance), employment creation and training programs (often highway jobs, now listed as 'employment development'), public works projects, resource industry development, transit financing (buried in welfare), and high technology industry attraction (some of this can be found in 'special purpose fund' expenditures)."

Restraint, concludes Moak, "was clearly defined as a reduction in government services and an expansion of financial assistance to public programs which would stimulate private sector employment and investment."

All of this becomes quite clear when we compare the 1982 and 1983 pies. For one thing, despite frequent government justifications of social service cutbacks and teacher firings on the grounds there's "no more money," the 1983 pie is bigger. But something funny happens once the pie gets cut up. As University of Victoria public administration professor Rodney Dobell puts it, the idea that the resulting slices reflect some restrictions on "ability to pay" rather than personal choice, political discretion, or collective priorities is absurd."

Smaller pieces of the 1983 pie go to health, education and universities, welfare (once the transit money is dis-

whole (compared to the previous year's choice cuts) go to finance, highways and employment (which ought to be considered a single category), and industry and special purpose funds (another joint category for all practical purposes) — in short, into the bellies of business.

The next time Bill Bennett tells you this is a restraint budget, tell him his claim is just "pie in the sky."

TABLE 1

B.C. Government Balance Sheet 1981-83*

	1981	1982	1983
Revenue	\$6.903 b.	\$6.541 b.	\$6.842 b.
Expenditure	7.087	7.519	8.445
Deficit	.184	.978	1.603

*Source: Ministry of Finance, "B.C. Budget 1983"

TABLE II

Expenditure by ministry (in millions) 1982-83

	1982	1983	Per cent increase
Legislation	7.1	7.6	7.0
Auditor General	3.1	3.2	0.3
Ombudsman	1.6	1.6	0
Premier's Office	0.7	0.7	0
Agriculture	81.0	81.7	0.8
Attorney General	311.6	33.2	5.9
Consumer Affairs	19.4	19.1	(1.2)
Education	1,314.7	1,406.7	7.0
Energy	23.6	25.6	8.5
Environment	85.5	82.9	(3.0)
Finance	177.4	333.5	88.0
Forests	232.8	242.6	4.2
Health	2,284.1	2,450.0	7.3
Human Resources	1,201.6	1,368.3	13.9
Industry	116.7	140.9	20.7
Government relations	2.5	2.4	(1.3)
Labor	57.7	58.9	2.0
Housing	104.2	100.3	(3.7)
Municipal Affairs	250.3	220.9	(11.7)
Provincial Secretary	247.1	259.8	5.2
Tourism	7.5	5.9	(20.4)
Highways	556.7	569.1	2.2
Universities	387.4	389.4	0.5
Employment Development	27.7	245.0	783.2
Special Purpose Funds	17.2	98.7	473.8
TOTAL	7,519.2	8,445.0	12.3

EDITORIAL

Roof falls in on tenants as rent curbs end

The human cost of Bill Bennett's "restraint" program again became evident last week.

That's when landlords, emboldened by the government conveniently putting the Rentalsman watchdog "to sleep," took a larger bite out of

tenants' incomes with the announcement of massive rent hikes.

In buildings owned by Zen and Aquilini, B.C.'s biggest and most notorious landlords, they were as high as 100 per cent above current rates. At Morris Wosk's Liberty

Investments' properties, the increases were held to between 10 and 30 per cent. Mr. Wosk will probably win a good citizen award for his show of "moderation."

Of course, in the commercial media there have been, and will be more, editorial apologies for the boosts, learned discussions of "market forces," and even a columnist or two leading the cheering as octogenarians are thrown out into the cold.

The excuses are disgusting; the hikes themselves are cruel and immoral. But perhaps in these days of rising neo-conservatism, the only morality is the price the market will bear.

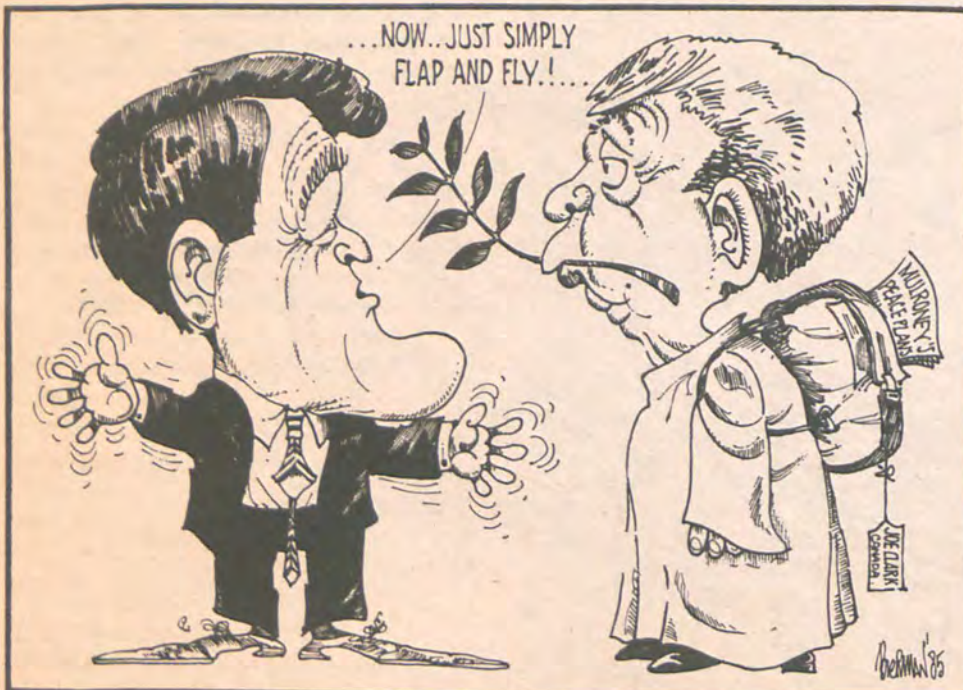
About all that's left of the Rentalsman's powers is a rather toothless mechanism called "rent review." Thanks to the Socreds, landlords are permitted increases of 15 per cent without scrutiny. Above that, and the Rentalsman may take a look to see if it's "excessive." Even that meagre power will be stripped as of June 30, 1984, if the government gets its way. No doubt, those landlords who hold increases to

between 10 and 15 per cent will be praised as humanitarians. Rentalsman Jim Patterson has already said as much.

The entire discussion is downright bizarre. Because of "restraint," workers are expected to settle for wage hikes well below the rate of inflation. But under that same "restraint" program, landlords are told the sky's the limit, and if tenants don't like it, there'll soon be no roof between them and the sky.

As the first snow of the season hit the Lower Mainland, we had elderly tenants in Vancouver's West End trudging through the slob to attend protest meetings. Some of them filed an appeal in B.C. County Court to argue the Rentalsman didn't have the right to approve increases in excess of 15 per cent. Small comfort, but that's probably the sole legal avenue open to them.

Perhaps the solution, as one tenants' advocate suggested, is "that tenants should take a lesson from the trade union movement and strongly consider a rent strike" where gouging occurs.



MEDIA PATROL

Surprisingly easy to start over at 72, if Pete gets you tossed out of your suite

By Lanny Beckman

Is Pete McMartin trying to punch 72-year-old Margaret Mitchell's lights out or is he just head over heels in love with capitalism?

You might know McMartin. He lives on page 5 of the Sun. That's Cityside columnist Linda Hossie's old apartment, located a few flights up from the mad judge in the basement, Les Bewley. When Hossie was called away on a journalistic scholarship last fall, the Great Rentalsman in the Sky guided McMartin — then of no fixed address in the pages of the Sun — to her choice piece of literary real estate. Since then, the noisy new tenant has become known for such antics as threatening to "punch the lights out" of people he's interviewed.

Margaret Mitchell isn't so well-known. She's a pensioner handicapped with arthritis who lives alone in a small one-bedroom apartment in Vancouver's West End. Thanks to the Socred restraint budget, her rent of \$184 a month is being hiked to \$375, an increase of 104 per cent. She will almost certainly be forced to move.

The image of this tragic, solitary woman about to be uprooted by a gouging landlord must call up anguish and outrage in anyone who knows her

circumstances. Not in McMartin. When he sat down to write her story last week, his eyes were dry as a bone.

"Call me cynical, call me unfeeling," he says, but Mitchell's \$184 rent in the West End is "blatantly unrealistic in today's economy. That a 72-year-old invalid lives there is not pertinent to the issue of whether or not there should be rent control."

Sorry, Mrs. Mitchell, the punk in the penthouse says rent controls have got to go, and so do you.

For all of his anti-social instincts, McMartin hasn't entirely abandoned Mrs. Mitchell. Out of the goodness of his artificial heart, he hopped in his car one day and drove out to the suburbs where he discovered . . . vacancies! And "reasonable" rents!

So knock off the moping, Mrs. Mitchell, and high tail it out to Surrey to snap up one of those cheap flats. If the move seems forbidding, just make a list and check things off one at a time: rent truck (be sure to get a driver's licence if you don't have one), move belongings (maybe Pete will hold up the light end of the piano you have on your back), settle in, make new friends, find new doctor, locate Canadian Arthritis and Rheumatism Society centre in Surrey, charm grocer into

helping you home with your bags . . .

You get the picture. And you'll be surprised how easy it is to start over at 72, especially when you'll be living in harmony with the sacred laws of the marketplace. Once you're all comfy in commuterville, wouldn't it be a nice gesture to send Mr. McMartin a little thank you note?

Margaret Mitchell's predicament is a perfect illustration of the theory that society's main function is to protect the strong from the weak. When she had trampled on her landlord's rights long enough, the Socred state (cheered on by the business press) loaded up its legislative shotguns. For starters, rent controls were blown away.

If that wasn't enough to put the lady in her place (while booting her out of it), she also has to face cuts in homemaker services and in the public health nursing program, hikes in bus passes, and in user fees for emergency and acute care, abolition of the renters' tax credit, and much more, courtesy of the government that brought you restraint.

At least, one can't accuse McMartin of only picking on Mrs. Mitchell. In the same paean to the elimination of rent controls, he also picks on Cecile and Joseph Schoenfeld, whose rent

goes from \$385 to \$600, despite having done all their own apartment repairs, as well as Blanche Derban, whose Barclay Street digs will cost \$420 instead of the current \$221, and Jacques Lusignan, whose \$242 bachelor suite will soon cost \$375 monthly. "Why don't they just move?" asks McMartin.

Ironically, McMartin's prescription for Mrs. Mitchell and the others might bear upon his own situation. He, too, is living beyond his means. The pit-tance he forks out to sub-let Linda Hossie's page 5 space is artificially low, a fraction of what she paid. Her columns showed a maturity and critical intelligence that his don't begin to match. He really ought to pack up and move to a neighborhood suited to his journalistic ability to pay.

Fortunately, the suburbs are crowded with papers which require only modest literary skills and almost no political savvy. If McMartin moved into one, say in Delta or Surrey, he'd occupy a "realistic slot in today's economy," and he'd be able to pop in on Mrs. Mitchell a few times a week to lend a helping hand.

In time, he might transform himself from a neo-conservative into the "cynical" and "unfeeling" human being he seems to want to be.

Solidarity Times

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Ed, Ron, Chris, Ron, Bruce, Linda, Neil
and Don

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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PUT IT IN WRITING

Teach'm to read

Lanny Beckman began his article (Times, Nov. 30) with the oft-quoted statement, "It's hard to figure kids out today." Well, I agree, but I don't think Beckman gets to the heart of the problem. He speaks on the one hand of students' "political docility," and yet provides quite extensive evidence that rather than being apolitical or docile, high school students today are very much political, even violently so.

Beckman suggests, "Some might have been egged on by right-wing parents, but more likely, they were the victims of seduction by the media." The phenomenon of conservatism among the current crop of high school students probably has much more to do with the quality of education they now receive. Teachers are being radicalized, in large part because they are under severe attack by the Bennett government. However, the students they teach are far removed from any serious experience of oppression.

As a teaching assistant at the University of B.C., I see students come to university with the most unrealistic understanding of not only their own abilities, but also the standards that prevail. My feeling is that if standardized reading and writing tests were given to all students entering university, the majority would be assigned a competence rating of Grade 8 or 9 equivalence. For the last 10 years there has been a serious concern on the part of parents and teachers that reading and writing skills have deteriorated. Little, though, has been done. Students are coming to university unable to employ the written standard. As well, they simply do not, and so, cannot read.

Beckman suggests students be given a political education by their recently politicized teachers. I'd rather they didn't. However, I do hope that teachers much more seriously tackle the problem of literacy in schools and insist upon genuine academic accomplishment. I hope also that they continue to resist a government that diverts public funds into private schools, and creates increased burdens on teachers by cutting not only auxiliary staff but also programs and teachers. High standards and a sound educational service can't be maintained on a shoe-string budget. Marcia Macaulay
Vancouver

Power-mad tryout

B.C. is only a testing ground for the attack of the ruling right-wing on the working



It isn't hard to figure out some kids today.

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

poor and their trade unions. If the power-intoxicated and revengeful Bennetomics succeed here to maul labor and erase 60 years of gains in one legislative session, then it won't be very long before other right-wing provincial governments and even the federal Liberals do the same. Remember the "5-and-6" program of Ottawa after the "7-and-8" program of Victoria not too long ago? The other governments are only waiting in the wings for the final results from B.C. Their knives are also sharp and ready.

G. Singh
North Vancouver

King Bill or Dickens

The misery which we are enduring today stems largely from King Bill's allocation, in these times of financial stringency, of \$126 million of public funds to a monument to himself. It is very doubtful, it is now understood, if Billy Bennett's Blister will ever pay for itself, for it has been computed that \$26 million yearly will have to be found for additional interest on loans incurred. The stadium is simply not paying for itself.

Again, billions more have been dumped on hare-brained mega-projects. High priced "experts" are imported into the province because our leaders do not believe in themselves — they must have others to do the thinking.

A community must live within its means. We are paying today for the frivolous dreams of our leaders. Mr. Micawber knew better. One wonders if any of the Victorian caucus ever heard of or read Dickens?

William Manson-Hing
Vancouver

Watson off on erotics

I am writing on behalf of Women Against Pornography, Victoria, in response to Scott Watson's review (Times, Nov. 16) of the "Sexuality and Seeing" show at the Unit Pitt Gallery.

By off-handedly opening the review with the comment that Unit Pitt is "Vancouver's most unkempt gallery," Watson sets the stage for unobjective and useless generalizations that are tossed out throughout the review. Need I remind Watson that a gallery does not have to look like something out of Architectural Digest to exhibit serious art?

Stating that the show is composed of "feminist art" and consigning all erotic art to this category are the type of generalization that serves more to confuse than clarify the issue. The show, in fact, contained more art that could be called "sexist" than "feminist." Furthermore, all current erotic art is not "consigned" to the auspices of feminist art, though I would concede that it shows the most

promise of producing non-exploitative erotica.

Watson further exhibits his lack of understanding the nature of erotica when he complains of the absence of male nudes done by women. Does he expect women to merely duplicate (in reverse gender) what male art has been repetitiously doing for centuries?

I must also object to Watson's put-down of vaginal imagery by referring to it as depictions of "cosmic vaginas." Would he also complain of an overrepresentation of "cosmic penises" or is he merely trying to cover up a case of male womb envy?

R. J. Pazdro
Victoria

Carrot for power

John Warnock's two articles on parliamentary democracy and how to make it work (Times, Nov. 23 and 30), settle on three rather trivial solutions to the problem: proportional representation, the use of initiative, referendum and recall, and petitions to force general elections. While Warnock's recommendations are, self-admittedly, offered in a spirit of realistic reformism rather than as a revolutionary alternative to Canada's existing political institutions, they unrealistically ignore the fundamental characteristic of Western democracies.

In all advanced industrialized societies of the Western model, the political process is largely identifiable with the effective bureaucratic use of power. The various parliamentary institutions merely serve to mask and obscure the fact that the electorate is governed by competing political elites, who generally espouse a left or right-wing orientation primarily as a carrot to grab control of the reins of power.

There are no easy solutions to this extremely disturbing general political situation, yet I feel we would be deluding ourselves if we do not recognize that the extent and depth of the political problem, defined as "making democracy work," is fundamentally a question of challenging the power elite.

One very hopeful sign is the marriage of the concept of a movement and a political party, as in the Green party-movement in West Germany today. This solidarity between ordinary people and their political party suggests, to me at least, that it is a model for genuine democrats to emulate. Hopefully, the spirit of the Solidarity Coalition can either infuse the B.C. NDP with this much-needed concept of movement, or cause it to emerge as a political party-movement in its own right.

Richard Clements
Vancouver

Junk the monarch

In recent letters to Lower Mainland newspapers, the Monarchist Association of Canada has wholeheartedly endorsed the Social Credit government's "restraint" program and, of course, their unprecedented use of closure.

This government has always waged a campaign of hatred against poor people, and it's merely a case of natural progression that this persecution has now escalated out of all proportion and must be halted if even a shred of democracy is to remain. The NDP recognized this fact and took appropriate action in the legislature.

The approval of the monarchist association is to be expected, defending as they do an institution infamous in the annals of history as oppressors of the poor and helpless. At a time when there are over three million people unemployed in Britain, and here the Bennett government docks \$50 a month off the allowance for the handicapped, the Princess of Wales is spending over \$10,000 a month on clothes! How can the monarchists justify this?

We've junked the British North America Act with all its unpleasant reminders of demeaning colonialism. Isn't it about time to junk the British monarchy as well?

J. L. Stewart
North Vancouver

PUT IT IN WRITING

Why we walked

I believe the Times has a great potential to assist the struggle against the July 7 budget legislation by providing information and a forum for discussion and analysis. That's why I'm a subscriber.

But I believe the Times is not doing itself or the Solidarity movement any good by declining to deal honestly with what occurred in Kelowna on Nov. 13. As the saying goes, either we learn from history or we are condemned to repeat it.

Those of us who walked support picket lines at Vancouver city schools in November helped pass out an excellent leaflet produced by the Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union. This leaflet summed up what we believed was happening. The leaflet quoted Art Kube: "If teachers and other employees in the education system go on strike, labor will demand changes in legislation on education spending and human rights before agreeing to return to work."

This is what we told passersby, picket-line crossers, and each other. This was why we walked on the line in the cold, cold rain. We weren't there for "consultation" and we weren't there just to help the B.C. Government Employees Union settle a contract dispute.

We were there because we believed the series of escalating strikes was the last and best method of forcing the government to rescind its budget legislation.

Yet the battle against the legislation was blunted — at least so far — by the leadership of our own side. When an end to the strikes was proclaimed Nov. 13, a number of important principles for which we were fighting were violated. Whoever heard of a labor dispute being called off without the people walking the line having a chance to democratically consider the details of the offer and have a chance to vote on it? What negotiator wouldn't be laughed out of the union hall if he returned to call off a strike on the basis of some oral promises?

On a TV newsclip I saw Solidarity leaders defend the Kelowna events on the grounds that promises made earlier were part of fight rhetoric, and that in the "real world" statements are often made which cannot be later honored. To me, a "real world" where promises are broken, trusts are betrayed, is a Sacred world.

I write this letter as a committed participant in the Solidarity movement. But as the B.C. Federation of Labor gears up to possibly support the teachers, what is to prevent the events of Nov. 13 from occurring again?

I believe the Times does not help itself or the Solidarity movement by rewriting history



and describing the Kelowna events as "the agreement with Solidarity" (Times, Nov. 30). It is good to promote unity and solidarity among all those struggling against the budget legislation. But the abandonment of what people were walking the line for is not an "agreement with Solidarity."

Nor is a failure to win retraction of all the offending legislation a victory.

Tom Wayman
Vancouver

I am a member of the Mid-Island Solidarity Coalition in Nanaimo.

At a coalition meeting recently, a discussion about the Solidarity Times came about. Several people spoke against the Times, and one person felt very strongly that the paper was not truly representative of people in Solidarity. These few dissenters were only a small

Times article was racist

I would like to ask some questions about David S. West's article, "Your Number, Please" (Times, Nov. 30).

Was the small man with a big voice Caucasian? Did the two women barricaded behind boxes of index cards have a national origin? What nationality or ethnic group did the following people belong to: the man who looked like a salesman, the soldier, the tattooed young man and his bleached-blond girlfriend? We have a long list of people here but no mention of their ethnic background. Yet constantly throughout the article we are told native people are present.

First, we are told, "The natives are patient and speak softly to each other." Later, we read, "a thick-lipped native is swigging from a bottle of wine..." Still later: "...a native family, the man muscular, long hair braided, a small tattoo amid the protruding veins of his arm. The woman is fat-bellied from beer and starchy food..."

How does David West know that the woman is fat from drinking beer and eating starchy food? Did she tell him?

Why are native people singled out of the line? Why is that group linked with booze in this article? Why did the Times not point out to West that his article was racist, and help him rewrite it in a non-racist way?

We are all racist — we have been trained well. Any time an article is written, we should examine it for racism. If we are writing we should ask ourselves, are there ways I am perpetrating stereotyped image of a group by singling them out?

One of the things that happens to minority groups is that they are constantly excluded from printed material or they are included in a stereotypical way. Therefore, we need to have our friends go over our writing and check for our unconscious racism. It will undoubtedly be present. Even after we have checked, some racist attitudes will still find their way into print. And when they do, we should be prepared to receive criticism. It's the only way we are going to learn.

Dorrie Brannock
Vancouver

Thank you for your well-

taken criticism. We accept it. And we're still learning—Ed.

The Vancouver Food Bank thanks you for recognizing the need to increase public awareness of the extent of hunger in our city, demonstrated by the story on our program (Times, Nov. 30).

Author David West saw the need to look at The Food Bank from the viewpoint of a recipient of food aid. This is fine, and it made for interesting reading. However, Mr. West made no attempt at contacting anyone from The Food Bank and perhaps getting the whole picture. If he had, he would have found out the food given to the needy is recognized by all to be a food supplement and not sustenance for an entire week.

Otherwise, aside from one or two inaccuracies inevitable in any story, it was effectively written, and hopefully your readers have reacted positively to the accurate descriptions of the ugliness and sadness of poverty.

David King
The Food Bank, Vancouver

minority, however. The discussion made it clear, however, that communications among the Coalition around the province needs to be greatly improved.

Personally, I think the paper is an extremely important part of the Solidarity movement. The Times, most importantly, must be a binding force. It must increase the "solidarity" of its people, and also articulate the concerns, goals and activities of Solidarity.

There should be constant and full communication between the Times and the various coalitions around the province to collect information on upcoming events, related newsworthy happenings, highlights of general meetings, etc.

I think you've got to tighten up the paper more. Don't let the articles get too big and rambling. Keep them concise and hard-hitting. In summary, I am fully supportive of the Times. I trust you will not let it die. Reach out if you need any help. We've got to make sure the paper remains truly for the people, and by the people.

Don Nordin
Gabriola

Party II?

In reference to your editorial, "As for doubts about who the political opposition is, all Bill Bennett has to do is call an election to promptly find out" (Times, Nov. 30), the NDP has not been a viable alternative for a long time, although "it has good people working for them." They have masqueraded (don't spot the socialist) and low-profiled themselves right out of existence. Since this isn't the climate to make B.C. Green, Solidarity should become a party as well as a movement.

Renee Rodin
Vancouver

Boy, am I sorry for taking so long to send you this money. I've really been enjoying the issues (and the issues in the issues).

I hope things such as money and energy are not in short supply for you so you will be able to keep up the good work. I've just been reading the Dec. 7 issue, and it's terrific.

Calvin Wharton
Vancouver

We want to hear from you. Solidarity Times welcomes letters, criticisms, comments about articles we've published, and brief analyses of social and political developments. Put It In Writing is a forum for Times' readers and we urge you to use it.

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

ON THE JOB



Nicaraguan teacher Darwin Juarez.

'A book in one hand, a rifle in the other'

Darwin Juarez was recently in Canada by invitation of the B.C. Teachers Federation as a representative of FOMCA, a coalition of Central American teachers. He spoke with Trish Webb.

Teaching in Nicaragua these days is difficult because it is being done under the conditions of a war. Teachers who are in the battlefield have to teach with a book in one hand and a rifle in the other hand because you have to be prepared for an attack from Honduras. In every school there is a refuge to protect children against the attacks.

Schools have been attacked and they have destroyed several. Two centres, the equivalent of kindergarten, were destroyed in rural areas. The counter-revolutionaries are always after the teachers. In the last five months they have assassinated 21 teachers. This year over 80 educators have been assassinated by the contras.

In the areas close to the battlefield teachers are armed. Not only teachers have weapons, but all the people. Because the Nicaraguan army is so small they wouldn't be able to defend the country. For that reason all the people carry weapons.

In these three countries, Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador, due to the repression that is taking place, over 1,000 teachers have been killed. Most basic rights of the educators have not been respected. Hundreds of teachers are now in jail. Thousands of them are in exile. Teachers in many locations are attacked by the security forces. Teachers' leaders have been forced to go underground. We had the case of one of the leaders of the Honduran teachers whose house was machine-gunned.

Educational materials are scarce. There are a lot of children in each school, so teachers have to teach large classes despite an education budget increase of over three hundred per cent. The number of students has doubled. We have been forced to increase expenditures in defense — that is affecting the areas of health care and education. There are different grade levels in the same classroom, but this is the only way we can do it in order to have the children in schools.

Even the schools in the cities have very scarce resources and we have too many students in one place. We have

cases of one teachers handling 70 students.

After four years of revolution, the number of teachers has increased 57 per cent. Under Somoza, with so many children not in the schools, there were unemployed teachers. To find a job as a teacher was very difficult. In spite of an increasing number of teachers there is still the need for more. And as a result, the government has created 10 new teachers' training centres. Also we've been training more teachers at the faculty of education at the University of Managua. We train the high school teachers there.

Hundreds of teachers were laid off under Somoza, and many were assassinated, put in jail, all because they were representing the demands of teachers. The answer from Somoza was he wouldn't allow teachers to organize. After the journey, we have the freedom to organize.

Our participation in government matters can be of the highest level. Teachers have representatives at the state council, which is the equivalent of parliament. And also we have representation at the government jun-

ta, which is the highest body of the government.

All the most important issues concerning education are not approved by the government without consultation with the teachers. To give an example, the curriculum and the textbooks are being done by teachers' representatives with the co-operation of the ministry of education.

Because of the difficult situation we are under, we believe that the main battle we are fighting now is the battle for peace. We are trying to stop the U.S. continued arming of repressive governments, the training of assaulters. Also we'd like to see that they withdraw the U.S. troops who are stationed around Nicaragua.

At this time we have, in the area, about 16,000 U.S. marines. FOMCA represents Central American teachers who support the peace initiatives of Nicaragua and call for the countries to resolve their own differences without interference of foreign countries. We ask Canadian organizations to demonstrate to stop American intervention in Central America.

Released FBI papers renew retrial hopes

Leonard Peltier's friends keep on trying

By Tom Hawthorn

"I'd like to go back," Steve Robideau told his audience. The only way to make sense of his story was to go back . . .

. . . Back to June 26, 1975, yet another day when red blood stained the prairie grass of the Pine Ridge Indian reservation in South Dakota. Only this time, white men's blood poured too.

A ferocious shootout left three men dead, one an Indian, the others FBI agents. The largest FBI manhunt ever was launched.

Four Indian men, all associated with the militant American Indian Movement, were indicted for the murders of the agents. Two, including Steve Robideau's brother Bob, were acquitted

by an all-white jury on the grounds of self-defence. Only Leonard Peltier was convicted — on what is today admitted to be false testimony — and is serving two consecutive life terms in Marion, Illinois.

Peltier's lawyers are seeking a new trial now that thousands of pages of FBI documents have been released through the Freedom of Information Act. An appeals court in St. Louis is currently preparing a judgement on whether to grant a hearing to determine if the information in the FBI documents warrants a new trial.

"That decision could come as soon as next week," Robideau said, "or as late as March. If it fails, then we have a

See page 12: PELTIER



American Indian Movement leader Leonard Peltier.

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Peltier's plight focus of book

From page 11

lot harder fight. But we're prepared to go to the Supreme Court if we have to."

The information meeting on Peltier's case, held in a concrete room in the bowels of Vancouver's Carnegie Centre Dec. 9, was a happy affair, a reunion of friends, family and familiar lawyers.

Theirs has been a long, frustrating, eight-year legal battle. They have won international support, but little action from American courts. Yet some recent victories are attracting attention:

Fifty Congressmen presented a brief to the appeals court in St. Louis supporting Peltier's request for a hearing.

Peter Mathiessen's book, *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, has renewed popular interest in the case since its release last spring.

As well, Robideau said some 6,000 of 18,000 pages from the FBI files prove what Peltier's supporters believed all along: the FBI conspired to convict him with perjury, fabricated and coerced testimony, and manufactured evidence.

Lew Gurwitz, one of Peltier's lawyers, told the 50 people at the Vancouver meeting: "If they give us a new trial, we'll hang them in the courtroom. If they don't, we'll hang them in the international forum."

Local lawyer Stuart Rush represented Peltier during an 11-month extradition hearing here, which resulted in his return to face trial in the U.S. in early 1977. Peltier had fled to Canada after the shootout.

"He was on the run because he was a marked man in the U.S.," Rush said. "The FBI had marked him for the

murder of those FBI agents."

Incredibly, Rush said, Peltier was extradited because of two sworn statements by Myrtle Poor Bear, who later renounced both and claimed to have been coerced by the FBI.

"When Leonard Peltier returned to face trial, the 'evidence' used to extradite him was never used — because they knew it would never hold!"

During Peltier's trial in North Dakota, the defence called Myrtle Poor Bear to testify on being coerced. The judge refused to let her take the stand, saying she was an admitted liar, an incompetent witness.

"There is a base hypocrisy in a system that will use those affidavits for one legal hearing, but not another."

"If Leonard Peltier had not been returned to the U.S., he would not be convicted. And he would have never got out of Canada without those affidavits."

The released FBI document show "how really base and black the evidence was, how conspiratorial were the gathering techniques," Rush said.

The government selected evidence, choosing not to release some ballistic test results. Those indicated the markings on shell cases found at the shootout did not match the firing pin of Peltier's alleged murder weapon.

Rush said he and Peltier had brought an application to the Law Society against the conduct of the prosecutor in the extradition. Another FBI document states there were three Myrtle Poor Bear statements, the prosecution decided the one which contradicted the other two was not to be introduced.

"The federal department of justice has never once objected to the fact that the Canadian extradition court was manipulated, lied to, and debased, said Rush. "What kind of government won't protect their legal system and won't complain to Big Brother in the United States?"

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'It's not like a serious war or anything'

From page 1

about conflicts like the Korean war is tossed in.

Characters who get knocked off in the plot never make it to plastic. The Russians made an appearance in early issues, but have long since been turfed from the story line.

"They were trying to get this anti-gravity device," says Erin.

Erin and his friends Keif Davies and Eli Roxburgh, both 12, don't follow the comic book plots, or the nightly news for that matter. They just mix up all the G.I. Joe and enemy COBRA figures together and pit them mish-mash in their living room battles.

"You just kind of make them fight," says Keif.

"It's not like a serious war or anything," adds Erin.

Aircraft fire has strafed the battlefield. Men lie frozen in a dying pose around a fortified tank position. Then . . . THE CAT! Keif drags it through the area, overturning the COBRA High Speed Sentry vehicle and the



G.I. Joe headquarters under gentle dusting of snow substitute.

BEV DAVIES PHOTO

MOBAT tank, leaving bodies and weaponry strewn in its wake.

There are no nuclear warheads made by G.I. Joe, says Erin. But sometimes, says Keif, when the game goes too long they just pretend they have nukes to get it over with.

Meanwhile, parents, teachers and anti-war activists are prodded to protest by the progressively more lethal equipment copied for kids toys. One Vancouver group planned to stray into the staccato of machine-gun fire in toy department to slip stickers on the little

boxes warning: "Think before you buy."

Eli doesn't think plastic toys glamorize real weapons and war. "These are neat," he gestures at the rubble. "War isn't so neat."



Photo Credit: Deborah Barndt

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Safe place

From page 1

foster homes at about 13, I guess. I was sickly a lot and spent a lot of time in hospitals.

I'd get out of hospital and school would be just about over so what was the use of going? They charged me with truancy and incorrigibility, and that's when I started hitting institutions. The first time I was sentenced to two years in a girl's home. I was still drinking and I got worse after that," she says.

Her first child was born in the girl's home, nine months after she was incarcerated there.

"I didn't know I was pregnant, I couldn't figure out why I just kept getting fatter and fatter," she said.

She ran away from the home and travelled to B.C. with a friend who had just broken out of jail. They lived together on the skids until he was picked up and she had to start fending for herself. At 14 she started using heroin and "blacked out" for a couple of years. She has no recollection of the detention centre she stayed in for two years.

Her second child, a girl, was born when Julie was 16. She says that she always wanted to have children and "love them and just be a housewife." Her daughter lives with Julie's parents. Her first child died.

"I had my dreams shattered at a very young age because of some bad things that happened to me. When I got hurt when I was young — physically, mentally, spiritually — I got bitter and hateful for awhile. I pulled away from my family mentally and when I got old enough to pull away physically, I did that, too."

Julie bears the scars of a dangerous life. Her face looks like she slept on a Venetian blind, her arms are striped with white lines that run through her tattoos. The pattern of abuse is repeated on her legs, chest and stomach. When she speaks her eyes never leave your face; she says she is looking for people who are sincerely trying to help.

"That shelter house that some of my friends are talking about, I think that would be a real good thing to have. From what I've heard about what they want to do with it, it would be a place where a woman could feel safe. It would be a clean place and if I didn't want to have a man bothering me, I know that there would be somebody there to help me.

"Maybe if they had one in the last couple of years, half of our girlfriends wouldn't have been killed this last year. They wouldn't be found in garbage bags or on the train tracks or bagged up in some alley. If it was their time to die, maybe they would have had a cleaner death or a normal one instead of being strangled or stabbed or whatever."

In a downtown bar, people are not supposed to cry, but Julie wipes her eyes with the back of her hand and stops talking for awhile. The man sitting next to her puts his arm on her shoulder and looks away.

When asked about other services for street women in the area, she says she has never heard of them. She is hoping the Women's Shelter Society gets to build its centre because she is losing her strength.

Homeless women spend their nights in bars hoping to find a place to sleep for the night and one by means or another get some money to eat and something to make life

easier. Julie is no longer young. Right now she lives in an apartment away from the downtown but she knows it is temporary.

"Right now it's the middle of the month and I'm scared to tell my welfare worker that I'm living in a clean place. If I don't tell him I'll be in trouble, and if I do I'm going to be in trouble, so I have to be prepared to go back down on Skid again.

"It's getting hard on me; emotionally, mentally I can't take it. My body's so banged up it wouldn't take long for me to just drain away, and that's without even taking a knife myself or a razor blade."

The Shelter Society wants to provide cheap housing on a long-term basis, as well as emergency shelter and rooms for rent on a daily or weekly basis. "Life-skills" training cooking classes, job-training, self-defense and counselling groups are part of its plan.

"I think if they don't open up this shelter they should put a few more garbage cans in the back alleys to pick up the bodies, or give us a special place in a graveyard. The cops tell the girls to get off the street and go home. Well, what home? They go and hide in the back alley and that's where a lot of them are killed, in the alley between Main and Columbia at Hastings street.

"You look on the street, there's 12 to 50 year old hookers down there. I think with the shelter place, the younger ones — I'm not saying there's no hope for the older ones, just that they must feel there's no hope or they would have been trying to get off there by now. But these younger ones, if somebody sat down and really cared enough to tell them the truth about the hurts that are about to come, it might save them."

Homework solution

From page 2

the chairman of the crown corporation bailing out the financially troubled recreation centre, announced another \$7.8 million would be poured into the ski village's unfinished convention centre.

Also in mid-week, a few moments were taken off to listen to the federal government promise in a parliamentary Throne Speech that the Liberals would try to do something about burgeoning youth employment, currently at 20 per cent.

In Victoria, Labor Minister Bob McClelland, tying up another loose end of the Kelowna deal, said Dec. 8 the government would allow its bill wiping out the human rights commission to die on the order paper. After consulting with Solidarity representatives for 20 minutes, McClelland rejected a request to hold public hearings on human rights, and instead he would only consult further with an advisory committee before bringing in a new bill at

the next session of the legislature.

At week's end, to resolve the education dispute, labor leaders Jack Munro and Mike Kramer met with labor board chairman Kelleher and top Bennett aid Norman Spector. They emerged five hours later only to have Spector say, "We've concluded that we've got no disagreement" on what was said at previous discussions leading to the Kelowna pact. Labor's Munro also appeared to see progress and called on everyone "to let things shake down over the next few days."

The teachers' federation's Pat Clarke said the next day, Dec. 9, "We think there's still a possibility for it to be quietly resolved, and that's what we're hoping for." Clarke was commenting on the latest wrinkle in school board plans to make up lost class time: assigning students extra homework. Clarke said extra homework was the "normal" way of making up lost time.

Since Education Minister Heinrich wasn't scheduled to return from Europe until several days after his self-imposed deadline, there appeared to be additional breathing space for continued quiet diplomacy.



BEV DAVIES PHOTO

Posties not giving up

They might have lost their battle to give the public a break on Christmas mail, but they're not licked yet.

The Canadian Union of Postal Workers is planning a major public relations campaign aimed at winning support when they tackle the giant Canada Post during contract talks next year.

And so far, despite losing the Canada Labor Relations Boards' decision over their planned 10-cent letters, the posties seem to have scored valuable points with the public in the exercise.

Leaflets outlining Canada Post's service cutbacks are also being distributed. CUPW's Vancouver local says their leafletting campaign is only the first step in an escalating series of actions. (The fellow at left is actually a member of the Letter Carriers Union of Canada, who have pledged their support for CUPW actions.)

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Scarface silly, Christine chilly

'Tis the season to be scary



Nasty garage owner Robert Prosky lays the ground rules out to Keith Gordon, who wants to fix up Christine, a car possessed by Satan, in his garage. Prosky gets his later, too.

SCARFACE
DIRECTED BY BRIAN DE PALMA
CHRISTINE
DIRECTED BY JOHN CARPENTER

By David Hauka

Just in time for Christmas, *Scarface* is the ideal family picture for this holiday season. Al Pacino plays a Cuban Santa Claus who travels through a fantasy landscape of pure snow highlighted by generous splashes of reds and greens.

Pacino's secret identity is Cuban refugee Tony Montana, who escapes from wicked Fidel's jails to seek fame, fortune and sexual fulfillment in the Land of Opportunity. Tony likes children and animals. He is generous to his family and friends. He is a good businessman, with a simple, down-to-earth way of speaking that everyone can understand. He is a white knight doing battle with the evil Mercedes-Benz dealer, Lopez, in order to rescue Elvira, the beautiful blonde Ice Princess. *Scarface* is a film packed with adventure and romance, a real "shot in the arm" for those who seek a bit of Christmas magic in this all-too-commercial world.

Simply put, *Scarface* is a bad movie. Poor or non-existent direction combined with TV acting and buckets of blood and bullets make the film both ludicrous and repulsive. Violence in film can be beneficial if used to make a point. Here it is merely sensational and gratuitous, a device used to stitch a bad screenplay together. The viewer is assaulted repeatedly, and for what reason? Certainly not to show how brutal the drug trade is.

Al Pacino is one of the screen's finest actors. His performance in *Scarface*, however, is an insult, not only to him, but to the audience. His Tony Montana is a cartoon gangster grabbing what he can of the American Dream with the subtlety of a shark in frenzy. Pacino tries to make the character work, attempting to build a complex man filled with contradictions. What he ends up with is a combination of Desi Arnez in *I Love Lucy* and James Cagney in *White Heat*. Pacino's past performance in *The Godfather*, Part 1 and 2, *Serpico* and *Dog Day Afternoon* were riveting; he gave the characters an "inner intensity" that consumed and

destroyed. As *Scarface*, he is lost in a sea of mediocrity.

Director Brian DePalma seems to have borrowed from all the greats in the making of *Scarface*. Coppola's fabulous crane shots, Antonioni's composition and Kubrick's black humor are present, but are slapped together like Frankenstein's monster. The film is filled with jerks and starts that result from an incorrect synthesis of shooting styles.

Long tracking shots serve not to place *Scarface* in a landscape or situation, but instead try to drive home in a ham-fisted manner a visual rendering of the American Dream. The Godfather Blimp flies by flashing the message "the world is yours!" to Tony's upturned face. Yes, it is, because Tony's just blasted his former boss, a policeman on the take, slapped his sister, and taken over the cocaine trade for Florida . . . in one night! Did I mention he gets the girl?

The women in *Scarface* are window dressing. Tony's mom thinks he's a bum. Won't have him in the house. His sister loves him. His wife, well, she goes where the power is. And that's it. The characters are as one dimensional as cardboard cut-outs. When Tony sees some guy with his kid sister, a strange buzz fills the room, his eyes glaze over, and, boy, that fella better watch out! His junkie wife walks out on him. Tony belches, observing that "she'll love me once she's had another Quaalude."

The advertising from *Scarface* has been ferocious. Millions of dollars have been spent since the summer telling us that "*Al Pacino is Scarface*." One can only imagine the powers that be at Universal Studios noticed they had an expensive dog on their hands. There are few options when this happens, one being a huge publicity campaign that will fool the public. There's an old adage about he who talks loudest . . . something about them

See page 16: **CHRISTINE**

1984

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Christine a killer

From page 15

having the least to say. As Tony Montana says to his hit man as his ex-boss cowers at his feet: "shoot this shit!" Pacino should have said that before production started.

* * *

While Scarface was supposed to have embraced the American Dream with a vengeance, John Carpenter's *Christine* is the American Dream with a vengeance.

The film is delightful. Carpenter renders a sentimental version of adolescence and high school that rings true. All the characters are cleverly portrayed and skillfully directed. We recognize the jocks, cheerleaders, wimps and greaseballs: if we were not aware this was "horror" film, we'd think it was an essay on growing up in America.

Introduce a 1958 Plymouth Fury possessed by the devil into this predictable arena and all hell breaks loose.

The notion that the automobile, the symbol of America's industrial might and high standard of living can be evil incarnate, is both uproariously funny and terrifying. A car is a possession. Something which indicates to the outside world your position in society. But what if the car possesses you? Molding you to suit its view of society. In a way, the machines of this century do exactly that, and Carpenter's verison of Stephen King's novel drives the point home.

Keith Gordon is brilliant as Arnie, the 17 year old class nerd who buys Christine. We watch Arnie transform from a klutz with glasses into the



"Ah'm Scarface, and ah'm maaaad!"

essence of really *bad* rock n' roll. The change is subtle at first, but reaches a roller coaster pace as the film reaches its conclusion. We see a tortured teen whose only friend happens to be the captain of the football team. An unlikely alliance, which is the rule of most adolescent films. But Arnie discards his friends as he works on Christine, restoring "her" to mint condition.

The fact that we bestow a character and an identity on an inanimate object at the film's outset illustrates the cleverness of Bill Phillips' screenplay and Carpenter's direction. The fact that the character is a woman, and a bad one at that, would seem to speak against the film, and I was prepared to slam it on that account alone. That was not the case. That the female form is used to sell material, and is associated with as an object to be possessed, is dealt with by the film. We watch the sexual pleasure of ownership portrayed with a fine cutting edge. Arnie gets lost in the fantasy of the open road and the power of the car.

John Stockwell plays Arnie's friend Dennis. He's a winner. Star football player and the apple of teenage girl

eyes, he is marked for success. His interest in Arnie is real. He likes the guy and finds something in him that transcends the locker room and machine shop. Stockwell performs like an All-American. The part could have been laughable, but instead it's likeable. His attempt to save Arnie reeks of early-sixties beach-movie solutions, but it is handled in such a way that it works.

Arnie's change of character allows him to do things that he could never do before. Leigh is one of them. The "new girl" at his school, Leigh is also All-American. Played by Alexandra Paul, she represents the only real threat to Christine. Arnie is torn between a real woman and a mechanical substitute. Leigh is clearly the sensitive type that can save Arnie from this nightmare, if only he'd let her.

Then there's Christine. Blazing red and completely beyond human understanding, this nasty bit of mechanical devilry gives her owners more than Detroit promised. There is always an object or creature in horror films that humans don't understand. These monsters disrupt society, exposing the nasty pock-marks in an unforgiving manner. Christine does nothing more than give Arnie the vengeance he wants. Something we all want, but it's down deep.

Christine walks a fine line between comedy and scare show. It does it well, with a tongue-in-cheek attitude that never gets in the way. For the most part, the violence in the film is implied. When it becomes graphic, it is effective, and actually frightening. The result is that we aren't numbed by its use. *Christine* is a film that deserves to be seen. There's nothing better for you than a good natured laugh and a little scare.

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PULP ON PAPER

CONTENDERS: THE TORY QUEST FOR POWER

BY PATRICK MARTIN, ALLAN GREGG, AND GEORGE PERLIN
PRENTICE-HALL, 254 PAGES, \$15.95

By Stan Persky

Whatever your political sympathies — redneck Tory or leftist-leaning New Democrat — it was one of the oddest events in recent Canadian political history.

Consider: the leader for seven years of one of the country's main political parties, briefly prime minister, choice of 50 per cent of those polled to win the next federal election, and recipient of the support of two-thirds of the delegates at his party's annual convention, announces a leadership convention, runs for the office again, and is beaten by a man who never held political office.

Contenders is the engrossing inside story of the political demise of Joe Clark (who was all of the above) and the Tory quest for a winner at the June, 1983 Conservative leadership convention. Written by a trio of insiders consisting of a journalist, a pollster and an academic, it is a blow-by-blow account of the unpleasant can-

paigned won by supposed-outsider, Brian Mulroney. For the most part it is a well-written, fast-paced, absorbing narrative of everything you always suspected but didn't really want to know about the Tory leadership hopefuls.

For most readers, the focus of attention will be on the winner Mulroney. What will we be getting for our money when we get Prime Minister Brian Mulroney, apart from his mellifluous bass voice and cartoonist's delight of a chin?

The PM-in-waiting provided few clues. As authors Martin, Gregg and Perlin write, during the leadership campaign, Mulroney "spent very little time talking about issues other than winning a general election and rewarding his friends." Nonetheless, the answer is relatively simple. What we'll be getting is the most right-wing leader of the nation since R. B. Bennett.

The real story of the convention is contained in Decima pollster Gregg's survey of convention delegates. In 1976, at the clam bake that elevated Joe Clark to the perilous post of Tory leader, 43 per cent of the delegates identified themselves as being right-of-centre within the Conservative spectrum. Seven years later, at Mulroney's ascension, 57 per cent of Tories present and accounted for declared themselves right-wingers.

When the paper shredder finished with the fourth and winning ballot, it turned out that three-quarters of leftist



The Chin flashes the winning grin.

(or "Red") Tories (a minority at the convention) had stuck with Clark; but three-quarters of the right-wingers had voted for Mulroney.

The one other important demographic wrinkle was the disproportionate number of youth delegates permitted by convention

rules. Pollster Gregg found that an alarming majority of them identified with far right-wing ideas. It was this clutch of Tory-Jugend who put Mulroney over the top.

Seen in that light, Mulroney's glib campaign phrases strike a somewhat more chilling note. He blasted the National Energy Program, saying it "resembled a 3 a.m. holdup of a gas station," promised to throw out civil service bureaucrats "with a pink slip and pair of running shoes," and vowed to arrest "the Swedenization of Canada."

Similarly, Mulroney's friendship with Conrad Black of the Argus Corporation and the Power Corporation's Paul Desmarais, who between them probably own half the country, provides an indicator of the values Mulroney is likely to defend. He also picked up the support of Amway Tories and also-ran Peter Pockington's legion of loonies.

The conclusion of **Contenders** is devoted to a longish explanation of how and why (and how nice that) the Tories have become the majority party in Canada. Fortunately, this dismal prognosis does not necessarily have to be believed for this surprisingly lively volume to remain readable.

Working great

WORKING

AT STUDIO 58 UNTIL DEC. 21

By Don Larventz

Jobs are seldom the material of plays and never before of musicals but **Working** is a musical that embodies the jobs that make our world go and serves them up in an exuberant and varied performance. Based on the best-selling collection of interviews by Chicago journalist Studs Terkel, **Working** takes us through the pride, anger and sometimes bitterness of working men and women looking at the place their work makes in their lives.

The songs by Craig Carnelia, Micki Grant, Mary Rodgers, Susan Birkenhead, Stephen Schwartz and James Taylor carry us along and the characters with a musical understanding, not just an opportunity to break into show-stopping singing and dancing. These men and women know what their jobs mean in the world. Despite the essentialness of all their work they know that the world gives them little credit for what they do and they all want recognition. But until that day comes they make sense of their lives and because this is a musical they sing about it.

There are no dull moments, no flagging of energy and no patronizing of the characters. What you see most clearly are the details of work, not romance, sex or cars (though these are present) and you end up applauding those who keep their lives intact despite the grind of their jobs.

The range of jobs is wide: the parking lot attendant with a marvellous jazzy style; the executive afraid of losing his job; the supermarket clerk keeping things moving along; the assembly line worker putting a dent every once in a while in his product to show that he

made it or the paperboy flipping his papers into bushes to see them shake. We are dangerously close to sentimentality but stay just this side of it.

But everything is not rosy colored. The housewife sings, with increasing bitterness, about the narrow mindedness of her life and the old-fashioned teacher complains that no one tells her how to keep up with the changing times she knows she is out of touch with. Most tenderly, the steel worker wants his son to grow up to look down on him — to become an "effete snob" — to show that the boy now has a better life.

This musical even has a union organizer. The son of the migrant farm workers grows up with the hardships of his parents and tries to improve his and their working lives by helping to organize the boycott of California grapes. The United Farmworkers of America have never been so tuneful.

There is a surprising lot of folksy philosophy in the play. These people know that their jobs make their lives; you are what you do. And what they want is recognition of their efforts — their names on the fortieth floor of the building that their work made. And they know they are not going to get it.

Catherine Caines has directed the play with a sure touch, getting a wonderful range of comedy and bitterness out of the performers. The large cast has no weakness in it and the performance demonstrates for those who did not already know that Studio 58 at Langara is a sure place to find exciting theatre. The talented performers are Shawne Davidson, Tim Healy, Chris Heyerdahl, Sid Jenner, Martin Jensen, Byron Linsey, Allan Morgan, Jill Moriarty, Jean-Marc Morin, Carol Morley, Lisa Randall and Suzanne Ristic.



All Morgan as a steelworker in **Working**.

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Co-ops under fire

From page 5

Inner City project coordinator Jim Woodward says while the study proves there are technical problems with co-operative housing, it also shows the

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subsidy program is performing the way it should.

"Co-ops are constantly evaluating the amount of subsidies available in relation to the tenants in the building and those on waiting lists," he says. "They have to balance those who can pay market rents with those who can't. It's much more difficult finding people who can pay than those who need a subsidy."

CMHC and provincial subsidies lower the "real costs" of \$1,000 per unit to a "market" price of \$450, the rent paid by co-op residents with middle or upper incomes. Other tenants pay \$300 per month, and lower income households are subsidized further by tenants paying market-rent rates.

Some low income tenants pay only \$150 each month, depending on the income mix of their co-operative.

Khoury says tenants with high incomes are a bonus to co-operative housing. "Higher income earners in co-ops provide valuable management and organizational skills which other social housing projects have to pay for.

"They help keep operating costs down that way, and they have a further incentive to keep costs down because they bear the brunt of increases. They have to pay the full monthly operating costs for their units."

Adds Woodward: "With co-op programs it's more like a political movement — it's national and well-organized. It's too high profile for developers."

Rent increase

From page 5

upstairs. The residents say eight, including the basement bedroom they

themselves built — with materials scavenged around the neighborhood — to meet the old inflated rent).

After the comparisons are made, tenants propose a new rent to the Rentalsman. Here's how a form attached to Notice 855019 describes the procedure:

"The Rentalsman will choose either the landlord's proposed rent . . . or the rent you propose on this application.

He will not substitute a third rent between the two. It is therefore advisable to propose a *reasonable* rent. . . .

"The central consideration used in making this decision will be whether the proposed rent is a reasonable market rent for comparable units that are not subject to the 10 per cent increase limit in a comparable area. A secondary consideration will be the rent required by the landlord to offset the effects of inflation in increasing the landlord's operating costs. The tenant's ability to pay cannot be considered in this adjudication."

Says Jay, a 29-year-old resident: "The deck is stacked against the tenant. You're tempted to suggest more than the place is worth out of fear that the Rentalsman will pick the landlord's figure. It's a gamble and I don't like the odds."

Jay dallied over her coffee. This little piece of real estate, far from the prime lands of the West End, was probably going to be 96 per cent more expensive in three months.

Out the kitchen window, blue arcs flashed. The air cracked with sounds of welding coming from across the alley — ccccc-kkkkkk! It was 1 a.m.



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GET SERIOUS

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 14 VANCOUVER

- Panel discussion on the labor movement in B.C., with speakers from the International Woodworkers of America, Hospital Employees Union, United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union, and the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers, 7:30 p.m., Fishermen's Hall, 138 East Cordova. For info call 291-3521.
- "On Guard for Thee: Shadows of a Horseman," part three of film series on Canada's national police, at 7:30 and 9:30 p.m., Pacific Cinematheque, 1155 West Georgia. For info call 732-6119.

THURSDAY, DEC. 15 VANCOUVER

- Lesbian and gay Solidarity Coalition

caucus meeting, 7:30 p.m., 686 West Broadway. For info call 682-9031.

SATURDAY, DEC. 17 VANCOUVER

- Don Rojas, press secretary to late Grenadian prime minister Maurice Bishop, speaks on recent events, 7 to 9:30 p.m., Robson Square Theatre. Sponsored by The Emergency Coalition and others.

SUNDAY, DEC. 18 VANCOUVER

- Report from southern Africa, with Prabha Khosla presenting slides on Mazambique, followed by The Nuclear File, a film on South Africa's nuclear capacity, 7:30 p.m., La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr. For info call 251-6626.

GET HAPPY

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 14 VANCOUVER

- Christmas fair featuring the works of lesser-known Vancouver artists, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m., Unit Pitt Gallery, 163 West Pender. Until Dec. 23.
- "Working," a musical based on Studs Terkel's book, 8 p.m., Studio 58, Langara campus, 100 W. 49th. Tickets \$4.50 and \$5.50. For reservations call 324-5227. Until Dec. 17.
- Michael Tebelak's "Godspell," 8 p.m., Queen Elizabeth Theatre, 649 Cambie. For info call 872-6622.
- Annual Christams night of music, 8 p.m., Magee Secondary School Auditorium. Tickets \$3. Reservations at 263-2321. Today and tomorrow.
- Leonard Angel's "Eleanor Marx," 8 p.m., Dorothy Somerset Studio, University of B.C. Saturday performances at 5 and 8:30 p.m. Reservations at 228-2678. Until Dec. 17.
- Carousel Theatre presents "Scrooge," 1 p.m. matinee and 8 p.m. performances, Waterfront Theatre, Granville Island. Reservations at 685-6217. Until Dec. 24.
- Inaugural exhibition of the Canadian Society of Marine Artists at the Vancouver Maritime Museum. Until Jan. 6.

BURNABY

- Children's choirs, craft demonstrations, story telling and more at traditional Christmas celebrations, all day, Heritage Village Museum, 4900 Dear Lake Ave. Until Dec. 18.
- Exhibition of 16th century German woodcuts, including series by Albrecht Durer, Burnaby Art Gallery, 6344 Gilpin St. Until Jan. 2.

THURSDAY, DEC. 15 VANCOUVER

- International Christmas dinner with foods and music from Argentina, Japan, Italy, U.S., India and others, 7 p.m., South Vancouver Neighborhood House, 6470 Victoria Dr. Reservations at 324-6212.

BLATHER

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.

FRIDAY, DEC. 16 VANCOUVER

- Unemployed Action Centre open house, 11 a.m. to 8 p.m., 138 East Cordova, second floor. For info call 688-9001.
- Bluegrass with 11th Hour Band, 8:30 p.m., Oddfellow's Hall, 1720 Gravelly. Tickets \$4.
- Acousticats play Latin jazz, 8 p.m., La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr. For info call 251-6626.
- Hitchcock's "The Man Who Knew Too Much," 7:15 and 9:30 p.m., Ridge Theatre (Arbutus and 16th). Until Dec. 22.
- Festival of Lights, 5 to 9 p.m., VanDusen Gardens. Tickets \$1.50, seniors and children 75c. Until Jan. 1.

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- B.C. Boys' Choir presents "Amahl and the Night Visitors," with international carols, 8 p.m., North Vancouver Centennial Theatre (23rd and Lonsdale). For info call 988-6744 or 985-5987.

NEW WESTMINSTER

- Vagabond Player's present children's musical "Nobody Loves A Dragon." Performances Dec. 16-18, 21-23, 27-30. Reservations and info at 521-0412.

SATURDAY, DEC. 17 VANCOUVER

- Flamenco with Greg Wolfe and Oscar Nieto, 8 p.m., La Quena, 1111 Commercial Dr. Tickets \$3. For info call 251-6626.

NORTH VANCOUVER

- Open house, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., North Vancouver city library, 121 W. 14th St.

SUNDAY, DEC. 18 VANCOUVER

- Children's film matinee "The Black Stallion Returns," 2 p.m., Ridge Theatre (Arbutus and 16th). Tickets \$2, \$3 for adults. For info call 738-6311.
- "The Kids are Alright," the Who featured

in C-FOX film series, 4:30 p.m., Ridge Theatre. Tickets \$2.99, proceeds to Children's Hospital Fund.

NORTH VANCOUVER

- B.C. Boys' Choir presents "Amahl and the Night Visitors," with international carols, 8 p.m., North Vancouver Centennial Theatre (23rd and Lonsdale). For info call 988-6744 or 985-5987.

SURREY

- Christmas celebration with story telling, crafts workshop and tools theatre, 1 to 3:30 p.m., Surrey Arts Centre. For info call 596-1515 or 596-7461.

MONDAY, DEC. 19 BURNABY

- Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," performed by Ross McKim Chamber Dance Theatre, matinee performances at 2 p.m. Dec. 19-24 and 26-31, James Cowan Theatre, 6450 Gilpin St., Century Park. Reservations at 291-6864.

THURSDAY, DEC. 22 NORTH VANCOUVER

- Christmas story time for 4 to 8 year olds, 2 p.m., North Vancouver city library, 121 W. 14th St.



Jack Nicholson gives Shirley MacLaine ulcers in Terms Of Endearment, this year's tearjerker. Highly recommended, but bring a box of kleenex.

Some of the scenes from the *Solidarity Times* . . .



Operation Solidarity pulls plug on *Times*

IT started Aug. 10, 1983 on the tarp-covered infield of Empire Stadium in Vancouver.

Some 45,000 protestors of the fledgling Solidarity Coalition had gathered to demonstrate against the right-wing legislative package introduced by Premier Bill Bennett's government on July 7. In the midst of a speech by handicapped association administrator David Vickers, Vancouver Municipal and Regional Employees Union president David Cadman greeted Stan Persky, a local leftist political journalist. "Now's the time to start a weekly alternative paper," Cadman suggested. And the idea for Solidarity Times was born.

Persky shepherded the scheme up the democratic ladder. A proposal for a 20-page weekly newspaper was approved by the Lower Mainland Solidarity Coalition in mid-September. Days later, the provincial Solidarity Coalition steering committee also okayed the plan. But it was Operation Solidarity — the trade union arm of the coalition — that held the purse strings.

On Sept. 28, as Solidarity was gearing up for a major "last chance" demonstration on Oct. 15, Persky met with Solidarity co-chair and B.C. Federation president Art Kube. "If you want a paper on the streets for the demo," Persky told him, "I need a decision in 48 hours." Two days later, Kube called. "Go ahead," said the trade union head.

The times went from a fuzzy idea to black-and-white reality in two hectic weeks. A hastily-hired staff met in a Vancouver East End house the first weekend in October.

Together, the group hammered out the conception of a weekly "pro-people" paper that would support the goals of the Coalition, trade unions, workers, women and a laundry list of social groups who rarely found the business dailies on their side. The

name was lifted from the VMREU Solidarity Times bulletin (subsequent issues of the feisty civic workers union's sheets were dubbed the "original Solidarity Times").

Within a week the staff was housed in offices at 545 W. 10th donated by the VMREU, and the first dollop of a \$45,000 start-up grant from the Operation Solidarity was covering the payroll. A stream of volunteers came in and took on long hours of driving, typing and slogging office work.

On Oct. 15, B.C.'s Social Credit Party held its annual convention in the Hotel Vancouver, 50,000 people were in the streets for the largest political demonstration in the province's history. So was the Times.

Readers of the 65,000 first issue press run (the B.C. Teachers Federation put up \$10,000 to make sure its 30,000 members each got a copy) could find stories about Bill Bennett, all-night legislative charade, satirical analyses of "restraint" and "recovery".

For the first time in 60 years, B.C. had a labor-sponsored paper. It seemed to reflect the new turn in trade union thinking that brought about an alliance with community organizations on broad political issues. The union movement, tired of being consistently hammered by the commercial media, appeared to have recognized the truth of the old adage that a free press belongs to those who own one. If organized workers wanted to get their message to the public, they would have to provide the medium.

For the next two months, and through nine issues of the Times they did.

When B.C. Government Employees Union hit the bricks Oct. 31, joined a week later by 45,000 education workers, the Times was on the picket line, delivering early morning copies to placard-bearing strikers at shut-down workplaces in Bur-

naby, New Westminster and points east and north.

As picket lines came down in the wake of an eleventh-hour Nov. 13 deal between Solidarity leaders and Premier Bennett in Kelowna, the times reported on the hotly-debated outcome.

Meanwhile, the Times was building a base. It had secured 1,750 subscribers, was selling 3,000 copies weekly on newsstands, several thousand more in bulk to community groups and trade unionists, and selling \$2,000 of advertising per issue. Its business staff was preparing a new promotional drive to secure the 15,000 subscribers the paper needed to become financially independent, and had sent a new funding proposal to Operation Solidarity.

On Dec. 13, it all ended.

B.C. Fed secretary-treasurer Mike Kramer announced that Operation Solidarity had rejected the Times' funding proposal and was pulling the plug on the paper.

At College Printers, where the staff and press workers were putting out the last issue of the Times, one last "30" (the newspaper symbol meaning 'the end') was written. This is it.

Is that the end of the story? We don't know.

We want a chance to discuss the future of the Times' subscribers and supporters and will host two meetings; one on Wed., Dec. 21 and one on Jan. 11. First item on the agenda: an alternative press in B.C. — and the Times.

If you're interested in the Times continuing and want to contribute money, it will be deposited in an independent trust fund and will be held until a financial proposal is submitted to donors.

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