A month of province-wide job actions that forced employers and the government to give HEU members more than their insulting “final” offer, thousands of HEU members converged on B.C. Place April 10 in a rally which showed that HEU members were united in their determination to win a fair contract.

Full details inside

PAGE 9
Members made the difference in contract fight

They failed to break their strike. They failed to improve blind arbitration on HEU. HLRA’s plans to impose a contract on HEU members ended with a settlement that HLRA has found hard to swallow. And worse, from the viewpoint of employers, HEU members were seen as the public face of the media and the government. During our job actions in April, management was forced to perform our jobs. They learned – the hard way – about the value of our work.

Our job actions were designed to put pressure on managers while allowing patient care to continue. In spite of the efforts of employers, the public saw that HEU’s demands were just and that HEU put patients first. We won a settlement that is superior to what employers were prepared to bargain. We have a pay equity plan that is a good foundation for our fight against wage discrimination. Now language on workload and team nursing opens the door for improvements in those areas.

The Provincial Executive believes that this settlement is the best that HEU can win at this time. But we will get ready to resume our struggle for full pay equity and full workload protection in the next round of bargaining.

Now we are turning to the challenge of winning better wages and conditions for HEU members working in long term care. We are also dealing with the challenge of bad closures resulting from the royal commission report and fighting federal government cutbacks to medicare. We are ready for these challenges. The struggle to put patient care first carried out a creative and smart job action strategy gives me confidence that health care workers are ready to take on and win these issues.
What we're up to

People and events around the HEU. If you have news for us — an retirement, an election, a rally, a vote or whatever — please, let us know.

HEU history

Project needs your help!

HEU has asked labour relations counsel Tracey Web, who assisted in the union’s communications department at the IGEU, to prepare a history of HEU in time for the upcoming convention. Would you add your memoirs, old photos, union button or anything else related to our union’s history? Copies of all materials may provide an insight into working conditions. Perhaps your facility has a photo archive. Web will be reviewing the union’s archives, interviewing union veterans and cranking out HEU’s history. If you have suggestions, please call her at 734-3431.

Union locals take time for health and safety

Despite the pressures of bargaining and job action, a number of HEU locals around the province took the time during April and May to prepare subcommittees for the Board of Directors.

The board held province-wide forums during May to discuss regulations needing updating. Turnouts were heavy and HEU members were well represented, both focused on problems of workplace health and safety.

HEU uncovers health bosses’ golf scam

HEU continues to review payments totalling $3,900 (R.C.)s at hospital offices with surprising results. HEU uncovered these facts from 1990/91 hospital statements:

- Brackendale and Coutry Club payments from Vancouver General Hospital jumped to $33,000; a 68 percent increase from the year before and more than double 1989/90 payments.

- St. Paul’s got into the golf club act for the first time.

Hospital payments to the Sunshine Coast Hospital Association doubled the 1990/91 total — was paid to Vancouver Lions, Lions and Britannia B.C. — and hospital payments to the Royal Columbian Hospital increased as well.

Royal Columbian Hospital president, James Farrow, was not impressed with the practice.

No comment from the golfing bosses.

HEU extended support to West Coast Domestic workers protesting a job action. HEU President Don Munroe spoke at a vote of union members with the reluctant endorsement of the HEU Provincial Executive.

Voting began May 25 on the settlement package, which was put together by special conciliator Don Munroe, and was continuing at press time.

Details of the Munroe package are on page eight.

Munroe was appointed April 24 by Labour Minister Mos Siloto after HEU rejected the Industrial Inquiry Commission report of Stephen Keeler and resumes province-wide job actions that had begun on March 31, one year after the last contract with HEU expired.

This collective agreement falls far short of what our members need and deserve in a health care agreement,” said HEU secretary-business manager Carmela Alvagato. "But our executive concluded that this settlement, which is an improvement over what HEU tried to impose, is the best we can achieve at this time."

HEU, for its part, refused to endorse or reject the Munroe report in the days after it was released May 14. HEU said it was concerned about the cost of the agreement and its effects on management rights.

HEU’s non-response to the Munroe report follows more than a year of stonewalling in which HEU refused to bargain and tried to get HEU to swallow insulting offers, even after HEU members had rejected them.

At press time, HEU announced it would recommend ratification because Victoria had promised to fund the contract in full.

During the April job actions in HEU facilities, HEU and its allies, organized by the B.C. Health Care Association, tried and failed to get Munroe to back down.

During this time, employers had the backing of 200 members from the NDF government in Victoria.

HEU members vote on final settlement proposal

A proposed settlement to the lengthy dispute between HEU and the Health Labour Relations Association in May. The deal goes to a vote of union members with the reluctant endorsement of HEU Provincial Executive.

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News

"As we fought both employers and government, the energy, creativity, and solidarity of mem-

bers has truly been amazing," Alvagato said.

The workplace will never be the same. We'll put all our new experience to good use, because tomorrow we started to organize for the next round of bargaining."

The continued militancy of HEU members was put on show on May 20 when HEU members at the UBC site of University Hospital walked out to protest the fact that they have had nothing but strife out of Munroe's settlement.

While Munroe extended the provisions of the HEU/HLRA master collective agreement to many other HEU facilities, including all long term care facilities covered previously under the HEU/HLRA standard collective agreement, he declined to put UBC site, Kensingtown Hospital and University of Victoria sites, on the books.

Mediator Vince Ready was appointed after the job action to determine whether the UBC site can be included in the HEU/HLRA master collective agreement.

HEU members of these facilities have separate agreements which are inferior to the master agreement in areas such as seniority, casual rights, classification, and layoff provisions.

Negotiations for HEU members working in facilities belonging to the Continuing Care Employee Relations Association (CCEA) and Pricers are set to resume in June with the assistance of mediator Don Munroe.

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Union demands WCB regs on workload

It’s time for Workers’ Compensation Board regulations to “encourage working women in the circle of workplace health and safety,” says the HEU, by being put into the area of patient care.

In a wide-ranging brief to a panel reviewing the WCB’s regulations, union secretary-business manager, Carmella Allavato, called for new regulations that reflect the reality of health care.

As it stands, she said, the greatest number of injuries are coming from accidents in patient care which the WCB ignores. The solution is simple: safe numbers of people to do the job.

“At the first three months of 1992, 191 enforcement orders were written in our 233 facilities,” Allavato said. “Of these, 121 were in the maintenance and trades departments, 59 were in the laundry, dietary and laboratory areas, eight involved committee functions, but only three were written on patient care issues.”

Allavato said that in the last decade, WCB claims for health care workers climbed, went to a higher rate than hours worked, that injuries are becoming more disfiguring, and that rates of injuries are skyrocketing.

Health employers estimate that injury costs equal the cost of 3,000 caregivers in the B.C. health system, she said, but refuses to tackle the workload crisis head on.

An American study showed that nursing aides, orderlies and attendants were 22 times more likely to have a back injury claim than a cashier. Uninsured practical nurses were 13 times more likely to have a back claim than a cashier, and registered nurses are five times more likely.

A study conducted at Gorge Road Hospital in Victoria showed that nursing aides were doing an average of 62.5 and half-lifts on each shift. With an average patient weight of 130 pounds, one shift’s lifts add up to more than four tons. The WCB called for new regulations for health providers, including:

• An end to lifting patients alone. Regulations should guarantee that health care workers should do patient lifts only in teams.

Health care workers are being asked to change, changed, cased, cursed and threatened. The bruises and scars eventually heal on the outside, but the internal psychological damage can continue for years,” she said. “Workers with patient violence. Allavato called for regulations that ensure that health care workers don’t work alone, that provisions for training and intervention services for workers dealing with violent patients.

Regulations must also ensure that workplace design reflect the needs of workers.

In one case, a third of HEU members working in a large hospital laboratory suffered from tendinitis because of a poorly designed work station. Allavato said regulatory limits for exposure to dangerous substances, heat and cold, ventilation, video display terminals, immunization and pregnant workers.

HEU’s submission came during province-wide hearings which will result in new WCB regulations.

HEU finds patient care source of most claims

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Gordon MacPherson served two terms as president

Gordon MacPherson, who served two terms as HEU president, died March 8, 1992 after a long illness. He was 61.

MacPherson was an HEU member since 1965 and worked as a diiner at Victoria General Hospital. He was a second term Member of the “Socialist” branch of the HEU for two terms from 1980 to 1984.

MacPherson headed the union during a stormy period which included HEU’s participation in the Solidarity Coalition fight against Social Credit restraint policies. HEU president Bill McDonald remembers MacPherson as a very open person.

“There was no hidden agenda with Gordon,” he said. “He always let you know where he was going to be, and he was the same. He had a good sense of humor, too.”

MacPherson was diabetic and suffered several periods of illness during his second term as president. He will be greatly missed by his friends at HEU.

Health unions urge overhaul of labour code

BC’s new labour law will have to deal with the growing ranks of women working in service industries whose pay and conditions are often unacceptable.

HEU Secretary Business Manager Carmella Allavato told a government panel reviewing the labour code that HEU (BCNU and BCMW’s) and the Health Sciences Association May 12 to 18 to join the submission of an 85-page brief on elements the unions want to see in the law that replaces the Social Credit government’s legislature.

Allavato appeared with B.C. Nurses’ Union president Greg MacLeod and Health Sciences Association executive director Peter Cameron.

The three unions called for changes in B.C. labour law, Allavato said women are now the largest and fastest-growing group working in the economy. Labour law must be seen as a tool to improve working conditions and not just a way of protecting harmony or encouraging investment, she said.

Pay equity legislation is needed to end wage discrimination against women, but such a law must cover all working women, unlike most pay equity laws in Canada. Pay equity must also be promoted through sectoral bargaining in the public sector, and through labour law changes that will remove barriers to pay equity, such as the “ability to pay” provisions of Bill 19.

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They're still at it!

By STEPHEN HOWARD

THEY'RE still at it! While B.C.'s health care bosses close beds, cut budgets and preach wage restraint in bargaining, they continue to take big pay boosts well beyond what the average worker receives, two separate union investigations show.

In contract talks health employers claim there's no money to improve their substantial offer to HEU members of 3.5 percent more for 1991/92 and just two percent more for 1992/93.

But, in the first investigation, the union obtained documents that show administrators have already taken increases on top of what's been offered to HEU at the bargaining table.

Four Health Labour Relations Association facilities have received approval from the provincial government's so-called Compensation Fairness Program for administrators' wage increases. Three of the approved boosts are for the same two-year period that a new contract would cover. Those increases ranged from 9.6 percent to 12.4 percent as the chart below shows.

HEU officials say they don't have the ability to pay a higher wage increase to health care workers. They've even gone so far as to calculate the job losses that would result from any improvement to their 3.5 percent and two percent offer.

But when it came to looking after themselves, ability to pay wasn't a problem. Senior administrators at the four facilities all swore statutory declarations that their hospital could afford the pay boosts.

Other documents show that the government-ordered salary freeze on top managers earning more than $70,000 may only be just a thaw.

Three hospitals have received formal approval from the Compensation Fairness Commissioner to break the freeze. Pathologists and radiologists at Vancouver General, Children's and University hospitals who earn more than $70,000 will get a healthy pay increase.

Royal Inland Hospital administrators in Kamloops went the creative route to beat the freeze. They gave themselves "workload bonuses" of up to $8,300. According to Alex Kornman, a senior official of the Compensation Fairness Program, the "temporary" bonuses are not considered part of a "permanent compensation plan" and therefore skirt program guidelines.

Fortunately HEU was able to expose the secret bonus scheme in early April by obtaining a copy of a confidential letter sent by Royal Inland's president to eight other hospital presidents.

In the second investigation, completed in January, the union updated earlier research and found more examples of the double standard in health care — big pay boosts for bosses and paltry ones for health care workers.

Between 1988 and 1991, health care bosses received three-year pay boosts of up to 69 percent (see chart) while former VGH president James Fleet earned the top 10/01/91 salary, pulling in more than $370,000, a $40,000 increase since 1988. He also received $54,000 in expense payments in 1990/91.

A number of HEU locals have also uncovered big pay boosts for administrators at their facilities.

**HERE'S WHAT SOME BOSSES WILL GET**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>1991/92</th>
<th>1992/93</th>
<th>2-Year Compounded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Port McNeill &amp; Dist.</td>
<td>3.93%</td>
<td>7.12%</td>
<td>11.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver General</td>
<td>6.85%</td>
<td>2.76%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tidbury Regional Hospital Laundry</td>
<td>5.20%</td>
<td>4.21%</td>
<td>9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Family Hospital (Vancouver)</td>
<td>8.89%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The women received a $144.25 monthly pay hike retroactive to January 1973. The ruling on LPNs paved the way for pay increases for HEU members in other categories. Housekeeping maids in Golden, Windermere and Revelstoke won adjustments of $88 a month to bring them up to the wage rates of men doing similar work.

By TRISH WEBB

HEU pay equity struggle began with action for LPNs

LOOK BACK

In April 1973, arbitrator D.R. Blair upheld the union's claim that 12 LPNs employed at Kimberley Hospital were victims of wage discrimination based on sex and directed that they be paid the same rate as others.

Later that month practical nurses in the extended care unit of Trail received the same award and on May 10, Blair applied the same award to 140 LPNs at Royal Jubilee Hospital.

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By August, 8,400 members of HEU's 13,300 members were eligible for anti-discrimination awards. The awards, retroactive to January 1973 were worth $37.50 per month for nearly all 8,400 women affected by the ruling.

Although the agreement reached between HEU and the minister of health said "adjustment to the pay rates shall be in the hands of the employees not later than December 31, 1973," many members got nothing until 1975.

A change in government meant HEU had to negotiate with Social Services minister Bob McClelland. The two parties reached an agreement, but HEU refused to allow payments until HEU members threatened a province-wide strike in March 1975. It was an important step in a battle that continues to this day.

THE TOP 10 WAGE HIKES 1988 TO 1992

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Facility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>90%</td>
<td>William Rogers</td>
<td>VP Operations &amp; Finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>Arthur Beadle</td>
<td>VP Employee Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>Ken Frye</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>Fred Inglis</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>James Pier</td>
<td>VP for Staffing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Sheds Frasergay</td>
<td>Director of Preventative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>Grant Robbere</td>
<td>Director of Corporate Relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>Kady Kloost</td>
<td>VP Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>Fernande Harrison</td>
<td>VP Property Care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>Allan Hubbard</td>
<td>President</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Hospital Financial Information Act

June 1992 • GUARDIAN
Bed closures sweep province

Meeting the Minister: Health minister Elizabeth Call (right) meets Provincial Executive members (left to right) Joe Fraser, Cindy Russell, Sheryl Rankin and Bill Macdonald during March 10 lobby for a fair agreement. Call promised consultation before implementation of Royal Commission recommendations.

HEU demands halt to layoffs, service cuts

HEU's proposals to protect quality care and workers' rights

1. Establish expanded community programs before beds are closed.
2. Establish labour force adjustment programs before layoffs occur.
3. Guarantee existing health workers will have first right to new jobs.
4. Move quickly to elect hospital boards to ensure real community input.

But by the time of the provincial budget in late March, Call warned there would be bed closures.

"This (commission) report recommendations suggested there should be up to 1,000 bed closures, but I don't know whether they will be that high," Call said.

By then, Call had appointed a 24-member advisory committee to consider the commission report and make its own recommendations by October 31.

In the meantime, bed closures are spreading around B.C. The budget warned that "there will be staff displacement from the hospitals affected and not all of the staff will be able to be hired on the community side due to different skill requirements."

And there is still no sign of the "labour adjustment strategy" promised in the royal commission report and the budget.

Hospitals received their budget allocations in April, and many received no increase for this year. Because of the impact of inflation, those zero increases meant that announcements of bed closures and layoffs followed the budget allocations, including:

- Prince George Regional Hospital: Closures of 61 of 285 beds and 100 layoffs, half of them HEU members.
- Prince Rupert Regional Hospital: Twenty-five of 77 acute care beds closed, and reduction of 27 full-time equivalent jobs.
- Mills Memorial Hospital, Terrace: Elimination of 10.6 full-time equivalent jobs by reorganizing pediatric and maternity units. Number of bed closures unstated.

At press time, several hospitals had reported zero budget increases but had not yet announced layoffs or closures, including Endochy and District Memorial Hospital, Queen Victoria Hospital in Revelstoke, Fort Nelson General Hospital, Fort St. John General Hospital, Dawson Creek and District Hospital, Louise Creek Community Hospital, Peace River Haven, Rotary Manor, Simon Fraser Lodge, Mackenzie and District Hospital, G.R. Baker Memorial Hospital in Quesnel, and Cariboo Park Lodge.

The HEU Provincial Executive is calling on Call to restore full funding to hospitals until the advisory committee reports and a plan is in place to transfer care into the community. Such a plan should have provisions to protect workers.

HEU member sits on review committee

HEU's representative on a 24-member ministerial advisory committee that is considering the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs says she and other committee members will raise the issue of budget cuts in B.C. hospitals.

HEU vice-president Melanie Iverson, an admitting clerk at Lady Minto Hospital on Salt Spring Island, said members of the advisory committee believe that bed closures should not take place before community-based services are ready.

The committee was set up in March and is charged with making recommendations on the commission report to health minister Elizabeth Call by Oct. 31. But the spring budget set the changes in motion with a wave of bed closures and layoffs.

"There wasn’t disagreement about the need to move beds out of acute care and into the community," Iverson said. "But everyone says they don’t want a repeat of what happened at Riverview, when patients were put into communities that weren’t ready."

"Services should be in place in the community before any closures take place."

While the advisory committee will not consider every commission recommendation, it will look at the major areas for change identified in the commission.

Health ministry bureaucrats have a strong role in the advisory committee's work, and Iverson said she wonders how effective the committee will be.

"But it’s important that HEU be represented, as we see how the Ministry of Health operates," she added.

Guardian • June 1992
Labour

UK workers organize to end discrimination against disabled

By TRISH WEBB

Some people just can’t rest a Peaceful.

When HEU members at St. Paul’s Hospital hit the bricks April 23, they got unexpected support from three British trade unions.

Alan Davies, Rory Heap and Gloria Foran from the National Association of Government and Local Officers (NAGLO) were in town for Independence ‘92, convention of people with disabilities.

“When we found out there was a dispute that we could support we came over right away,” Foran said.

They supported HEU’s fight for a fair collective agreement with a just pay equity settlement because most HEU members are women. Like women, people with disabilities face social and economic discrimination.

Davies and Heap are visually impaired. They lead their union’s disability committee, which directs policy on issues of concern to people with disabilities. Foran’s job is to provide research and other support to the disability committee.

“We see disability as a human rights issue rather than a welfare issue,” Davies said.

And trade unions have a history of social reform movements, so we see the trade union movement as not just interested in workers’ issues but also as a mechanism of social change,” he said.

Davies and Heap believe there are more people with disabilities than governments acknowledge. In Britain and Canada, the legal definitions of disability are much narrower than that of the World Health Organization.

Ninel Hoffman of B.C. Coalition of People with Disabilities says her group helps people deal with three different definitions of disability: Workers’ Compensation Board, Canada Pension Plan, Ministry of Social Services.

Fitting a definition determines which government agency provides financial support. HEU members who are hurt on the job may also meet criteria for long term disability payments.

Davies and Heap work to make sure their union responds to those situations in a way that helps the disabled worker.

They also direct their union’s position on disabled rights issues.

“We are interested in rights, not charity,” he said.

Britain does not have a charter of rights like Canada’s. But even Canada’s rights code is often unenforceable because discrimination can be hard to prove.

REAL MONEY: This $533,729.28 cheque is one B.C. Packers said it would never write - a Jan. 1992 down payment on a new pension fund for shorreworker members of the United Fishermen and Allied Workers’ Union. A tough strike in 1988 led to a commission which said the companies could afford a pension fund. Shore pension administrator Sandra Gertsh says the fund now stands at $1.75 million, proof that it pays to take a strong stand.

CLC tackles constitution, economic crisis

Up to 2,000 trade unionists from across Canada are gathering in Vancouver in June for one of the most important Canadian Labour Congress conventions since the Second World War.

Issues on the crowded agenda include:

• development of a national strategy to defeat the Tory government and stop the massive economic problems caused by the Free Trade Agreement

• agreement on a labour position on the Canadian constitutional crisis which meets the needs of Quebec workers as well as those from the rest of Canada

• agreement on a new constitution for the congress to ensure the maximal agency and accountability in election of the CLC’s top leaders; and

• agreement on a new president to replace outgoing president Shirley Carr.

The HEU is sending a full delegation to the convention, which runs from June 8 to June 12.

At press time, Canadian Auto-workers president Bob White appeared likely to be elected to replace Carr at the convention. White is committed to a tough fight against the Free Trade Agreement.

But none of the difficult issues before the convention will be settled without intense debate.

With Ontario unions facing the loss of hundreds of thousands of jobs, the economic crisis is paramount. For public sector unions, like HEU and the Canadian Union of Public Employees, the fight to defend Medicare is at the top of the agenda.

The Action Canada Network, of which HEU also is a member, is meeting in Vancouver on the eve of the convention. ACN is a national coalition of community, church and labour groups dedicated to defeating the Free Trade Agreement.

U.S. miners defend medical plan

About 120,000 retired coal miners in the United States face losing their health insurance unless the U.S. congress passes a bill that would restore funding to their threatened benefit fund.

Mining companies that employed 90,000 of the retired United Mine Workers members have either gone out of business or simply stopped paying into the benefit fund. The 300 companies remaining in the fund are obliged to pay for all the retirees, and the union fears that they will dissolve their bargaining agent, which would leave the retirees without health insurance and cause a wave of strikes in the U.S. coal industry.

Many of the retired miners are in poor health, suffering from black lung disease and other diseases related to their work.

Lack of medical insurance would be a shattering financial blow to these retirees and their families.

A bill is now before the U.S. congress which would tax all coal producers to pay for the abandoned retirees.

B.C. workers join CAW

The ranks of the Canadian Labour Congress and the B.C. Federation of Labour have been strengthened by the affiliation of a tough B.C.-based union including workers from occupations as distinctive as mining and the hospitality industry.

Members of the Canadian Association of Industrial, Mechanical and Allied Workers (CIMA) voted 82 percent to merge with the Canadian Auto Workers (CAW).

The move will help both unionsaye
TABLE 1 – HOW THE OFFER IMPROVED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employers “Final Offer”</th>
<th>Munro’s Report</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 4, 1992</td>
<td>$77.00 or 46¢/hr.</td>
<td>$77.00 or 46¢/hr.</td>
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<td>$77.00 or 46¢/hr.</td>
<td>$85.00 or 52¢/hr.</td>
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<td>$45.00 or 28¢/hr.</td>
<td>$50.00 or 31¢/hr.</td>
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<td>$11.00 or 67¢/hr.</td>
<td>$19.00 or 93¢/hr.</td>
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<td>$12.00 or 76¢/hr.</td>
<td>$19.00 or 93¢/hr.</td>
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TABLE 2 – HOW PAY EQUITY OFFER IMPROVED

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Employers “Final Offer”</th>
<th>Munro’s Report</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>April 16, 1992</td>
<td>1.5% of 8.2 million</td>
<td>2.4% of 13 million</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.5% of 8.6 million</td>
<td>1.2% of 7 million</td>
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<td></td>
<td>1.0% of 5.9 million</td>
<td>1.0% of 6 million</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4% of 22.7 million</td>
<td>4.6% of 26 million</td>
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WORKLOAD

Munro rejected HEU’s demand for a 45-hour work week. The proposals include a letter of intent to set up a province-wide union-management process to deal with workload problems. As well, new language in article 50 of the contract forces employers to give a response to workload issues raised by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Another change to article 58 requires employers to make sure there are sufficient staff to deal with violent or aggressive patients.

SENDING A MESSAGE

High turnouts at final offer rejection votes helped the union press for a better deal.

It’s not over yet

Long-term agreements next as HEU votes on HLRA contract

SPECIAL conciliator Don Munro’s recommendations for settlement of HEU’s dispute with the Health Labour Relations Association fell far short of HEU’s demands, but they are a big improvement over the offer that HLRA tried to impose on HEU members. Here is a rundown of the Munro proposals, which call for a three-year contract extending from April 1, 1991 to March 31, 1994.

WAGES

On April 1, 1991, all HEU members receive an across-the-board increase of $85 a month or 52 cents an hour. On April 1, 1992, all HEU members get an across-the-board increase of $80 a month or 31 cents an hour, plus a percentage increase of one percent.

For the year beginning April 1, 1993, there will be a wage reopener. Munro has imposed a binding mediation process which will take place within a limited time period if a wage increase has not been negotiated by April 1, 1993.

PAY EQUITY

For 1991, $75 a month or 46 cents an hour in pay equity adjustments will be paid on top of the wage increases to selected female-dominated classifications as proposed in HEU’s “final offer.”

As well, the bottom increment step is being eliminated in all classifications with increment steps, and everyone in those classifications will move up one increment step. These two pay equity measures for 1991 will cost employers $13 million. While this is significantly more than what HLRA offered, HEU had wanted pay equity adjustments to go to all members. For 1992, $75 million will be paid out in pay equity adjustments. These adjustments must be negotiated between the two sides, and the settlement proposal contains a clear process with deadlines for distribution of pay equity adjustments.

Beginning April 1, 1993, an amount of no less than one percent of the total wages of HEU members will be made available for pay equity adjustments each year until wage discrimination has been ended. A clear process has been set out to develop a job value comparison plan for pay equity adjustments. Although HLRA wanted a limited process that would end with this contract, Munro called for annual adjustments beyond this contract.

As well, the proposed settlement re-establishes the important principle of wage comparability with the B.C. Government Employees’ Union, which must be achieved by Oct. 1, 1994.

Parity is goal for long term care

HEU continues to press for parity with the master agreement and equal treatment as long term care bargaining resumed at press time. The union bargained with the Continuing Care Employee Relations Association June 3 under the direction of mediator Don Munro, who was appointed earlier in the year to help reach a settlement.

While HEU pushes for parity, bosses are still demanding major concessions like the $1,000 a year benefits rollback. Prior to the June 3 meeting, employers had promised to table what they called a framework for settlement based on the reports of Stephen Kelleher and Munro from the HEU/LRRA disputes.

However, the union expects that CEGBA will only use what it finds acceptable in the two separate reports and nothing else.

Additional bargaining dates with Pricare employers are being sought.

NURSING TEAM

As well, new language in article 50 of the contract forces employers to give a response to workload issues raised by the Occupational Health and Safety Committee. Another change to article 58 requires employers to make sure there are sufficient staff to deal with violent or aggressive patients.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Under the proposed terms of settlement, employers will provide Hepatitis B vaccine free of charge. Employers will also take precautions, including in-services, to limit the spread of infectious diseases.

Nursing Health and Safety Committees in the facilities will be strengthened.

CONTRACTING OUT

Munro did not improve protection against contracting out, but he recommends a joint proposal to the ministry of health for retaining, education and job security for workers displaced by movement of health care into the community.

RETURN TO WORK PROGRAM

Munro’s report contains a voluntary return-to-work program for disabled and injured workers. This program will protect qualified and injured workers, while permitting them to get proper rehabilitation prior to returning to work.

RETIREMENT

Employers who voluntarily retire at age 55 will be able to get a cash payout of unused sick leave credits and severance allowances.

Part-time employees will now have the option of joining the superannuation pension plan.

CASUALS

Casual workers who fill temporary job postings longer than six months will receive reimbursement for medical, dental and extended health benefits. Part-time employees will be able to use sick leave credits while on casual assignments.
We said we’re the heart of health care and our job action strategy proved it.

THE objectives were simple: pay equity, a fair wage, action on the workload crisis.

The strategy made sense: a grass-roots job action plan that put maximum pressure on the health care employers and minimum on the patients.

Twenty-nine thousand HEU members seeking a new contract with the Health Labour Relations Association combined the two this spring to fight an eight-week campaign for a fair contract that raised health employers’ plans for concessions and union-busting.

At Guardian press time, HEU members were voting on a government conciliators’ report that fell short of the union’s goals for justice.

But the job action mobilized and united HEU members as never before. They spoke with one voice, demanding the respect they deserve for the vital work they perform.

It was a fight that changed the union, empowering union members as never before. Here’s the story of our fight for fairness.

FIRST PICKETS: Tilbury Regional laundry workers Olivia Lee and Kim Lee were among the first to don picket signs April 15 in HEU’s fight for a new contract.

SPEAKING OUT FOR HEU: Union secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato and president Bill Macdonald, along with the entire Provincial Executive, were out on the picket lines every time they were set up during the job action. The union’s escalating strategy, which kept the all-out strike option as a last resort, confounded health employers and minimized impact on patients.

PAY EQUITY: The issue which rallied public support. Province cartoon by Bob Krieger.

FLYING OUR FLAG: These pennants were a feature of dozens of HEU members’ actions as the fight for a contract spread around the province.
"It was a perfect strategy. That was the strength of the job action."

Debbie Kerr, Fernie

WHEN HEU’s bargaining committee headed to the table with the Health Labour Relations Association in Vancouver Nov. 4, 1991 there was reason for optimism. The election of a New Democratic Party government just three weeks before had swept away a discredited Social Credit regime and its wage control program. The new government said it was committed to pay equity, protection of quality health care services and free collective bargaining.

But what HEU members hoped would be a quick and productive set of negotiations turned into one of the toughest confrontations in the union’s history.

The key to HEU’s success was the tireless efforts of thousands of local executive members and activists who developed and implemented a job action strategy that left health employers demanding government intervention.

Election campaign signs were still being taken down when health employers made it clear that they rejected the union’s goals of a fair wage increase, pay equity and action on workload.

Hospital bosses remained committed to sweeping contract concessions designed to accelerate the bed closures, lay-offs and contracting out begun under Social Credit. And they were convinced that HEU was too weak, divided and isolated to resist.

As far as Health Labour Relations Association was concerned, the election changed nothing. On Oct. 26, just nine days after the NDP victory, HLRA president Gordon Austin said, “I do not believe that an NDP government, when it looks at the economy in B.C., will be able to finance major wage increases for public sector employees.”

"The number of people interested in the union has gone up dramatically. We had a shop stewards’ meeting last week with 20 people and at least half were there for the first time. It’s great to see the new blood."

David Ridley, Royal Jubilee
Even though public sector wage settlements were running at seven percent, Austin threatened bed closures and lay-offs if health workers received more than two percent. And when HLRA's bargaining team met HEU Nov. 4, it refused to bargain, retreating even on issues where some progress had been made.

On Dec. 19 mediator Stephen Kellshler suspended talks in frustration. HEU's Provincial Executive, realizing job action might be necessary to force a settlement, decided early in January to conduct a province-wide strike vote. On Feb. 13, the HEU membership answered HLRA with a 78 percent strike vote.

But HLRA, determined not to bargain, applied to Industrial Relations Commissioner Ed Peck, for a new mediator. Peck's appointment of mediator Vincen Ready rendered any HEU job action illegal until Ready reported out.

HEU served strike notice Feb. 21, but HLRA's plan to dictate settlement terms to HEU members was already in high gear.

Seven days after Ready was appointed, Austin announced he was preparing a "final offer." If HEU refused to vote on the offer, Austin warned, HLRA might force such a vote under Bill 19.

Early on the evening of March 4, Ready delivered the "final offer" to HEU's bargaining committee and HLRA walked away.

It was a show of contempt that HLRA would regret. "Our employers are saying that we are second class public sector workers," union secretary-business manager Carmela Allevato said. "HEU will never accept this."

Provincial Executive members told a March 5 rally of more than 500 Lower Mainland local executive members that a strong rejection vote was critical to win a fair contract. And with Ready out of the picture, the door was open at last to job action.

The 78 percent vote to reject HLRA's final offer was a turning point in the dispute. Despite an all-out effort by health employers to stop the strike, HEU members went on the picket line.

"Job action was wonderful. It was very positive, cohesive action. We got lots of good feedback from BCNU members."

Elaine Pigeau, Terrace

**Police called, windows papered Boss declares war on workers**

During the April job actions, relations with hospital bosses were strained in many places, but few HEU members can match the bizarre stories that came out of Mackenzie and District Hospital.

The highly-paid administrator in the 12-bed hospital threatens to tow the vehicles of HEU members involved in job actions.

Then he called the RCMP when off-duty local executive members were in the hospital giving out information on the dispute. The police refused to get involved.

Management also suspended an essential services cook who refused to clean the previous day's dishes. The administrator locked HEU members out of the laundry and had the windows in the hospital laundry papered over.

As well, management followed HEU members working during the dispute, and issued rules forbidding HEU workers from talking to patients or fellow workers. The 18 members of the Mackenzie local had tangled with their administrator in early March, when he tried and failed to lock out HEU members who wore "Workload Overload" stickers.
"I must say I have never been as proud in 30 years in this union as I've been in the last 30 days."

Kathleen Anderson,
Lions Gate Hospital

But media commentators conceded that HEU's strategy was masterful.

Labour support for the union, including from the B.C. Federation of Labour president Ken Georgetti, remained solid.

On April 9, aware the union could not be isolated, broken or outflanked, Austin turned to Victoria for help. In a revealing interview with a Vancouver reporter, Austin said HLRA would probably call for legislation limiting the right of health care workers to strike. The only solution to the dispute, he hinted, would be "some form of third-party intervention."
HEU members demonstrated their resolve April 10 in a massive demonstration in downtown Vancouver. More than 5,000 workers from around the Lower Mainland came off the job to march in two columns to the Plaza of Nations where they conducted an exuberant hour-long rally. An Industrial Inquiry Commission report was rejected by the union.

HEU continued stepping up the pressure. The first picket line of the dispute went up April 13 at the Tilbury laundry in Delta. Mount St. Joseph workers picketed the next day and by April 23, picket action had hit major facilities in every region of the province.

In desperation, HLRA demanded that the NDP legislate the union back to work and impose a settlement.

On April 22, the union’s entire Provincial Executive travelled to Victoria meeting with labour minister Moe Sihota.

Sihota finally emerged from the premier’s office April 24 to announce the appointment of Don Munroe as a special conciliator to report on the dispute.

In the end it was the strength of the HEU membership, united in job action in every facility, which produced a new collective agreement. Along the way, the employer agenda was rolled back.

The new agreement was much less than HEU members hoped for and deserved, but it was far more than health employers intended to concede.

**HEU members stand up to media**

**Marches, letters meet biased stories**

HEU members got a quick education on how the media works when many newspapers and broadcasters highlighted complaints by patients and surgeons against HEU as hospitals closed beds to put pressure on the union.

HEU members wrote newspapers and phoned up hot line shows and TV stations to deal with stories and editorials on HEU job actions that they thought were unfair.

Members of the Peace Arch local marched to the Peace Arch News office to air their concerns about coverage in the newspaper.

"The way you listen to the news, you’d think everyone was dying in there," member Rick Russell told reporters.

Vancouver General Hospital members took to the streets to complain about a Vancouver Sun article which a surgeon blamed HEU for cancelled operations.

HEU members at Surrey Memorial Hospital got a correction to a Sun article suggesting that residents at the Shirley Dean Pavilion were suffering because of HEU job actions.

As the job actions went on, HEU won positive publicity, with columnists calling the HEU job action strategy "masterful" and criticizing government responses.
ON THE HILL: Shorncliffe local members Jean Scholefield and Christine Luster ready to meet MPs.

HEU members are carrying the fight to save our medicare system into every community and all the way to Ottawa.

Shorncliffe goes to Ottawa

When Jean Scholefield got a phone call asking her to appear before a parliamentary committee in Ottawa in less than 10 days, she thought there was some mistake.

But there was no mistake, and so Scholefield, a cook at the Shorncliffe long term care facility in Sechelt, flew to Ottawa with Christine Luster, a long term care aide.

The two HEU members made their first ever trip to Ottawa to speak on behalf of their local and health care workers across Canada about a bill before Parliament which will cut back federal funding to medicare, Bill C-20.

On the way, the two health care workers learned about the importance of speaking out as health providers, and they learned about Canada's political process.

HEU has been fighting to defend medicare since the union was formed. That struggle is becoming a national one now as HEU joins the Canadian Union of Public Employees to demand proper funding for our health care system.

Luster admitted later that appearing before the committee represented "a whole new level of stress." But the training she got in a course on chairing meetings, and the lessons Scholefield learned at last year's HEU summer leadership school, helped them pass the test.

Their trip started with a letter from the HEU provincial office requesting locals to write to the House of Commons Standing Committee on Finance asking to appear on Bill C-20. Many HEU locals, including Shorncliffe, wrote to the committee in the weeks that followed.

Two months later, under pressure because of the requests from Canadians to be heard on Bill C-20, the finance committee agreed to hold hearings on the hill.

In early November, an official at the finance committee phoned Scholefield asking the Shorncliffe local to appear before the committee 10 days later.

Scholefield, still not believing that she should be going to Ottawa, got confirmation from provincial office that the invitation to go to Ottawa at government expense was serious. Scholefield, the local's secretary-treasurer, called Luster, the local chairperson.

"When Jean phoned me up and said we were invited to go to Ottawa, I didn't believe it," Luster said. Here's what happened on their trip:

Day one, 2 p.m.: Luster and Scholefield's flight leaves Vancouver International Airport for Ottawa. They started the day driving from their homes on the Sunshine Coast to Vancouver, where they got a briefing on Bill C-20 before going to the airport.

On the flight to Ottawa, Scholefield and Luster work on their speech to the finance committee, using information gathered from co-workers and from HEU.

Day two, 8:30 a.m.: After a night's sleep in a hotel near Parliament Hill, Luster and Scholefield have breakfast and discuss the upcoming day's work.

10 a.m.: A quick tour of Ottawa, including views of Parliament Hill, and the homes of Governor General Ray Hnatyshyn and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.

Noon: Lunch in the Parliament Buildings followed by a meeting with Jim Karpooff, the New Democrat health critic in the House of Commons.

2 p.m.: In the public gallery of the House of Commons to watch statements by MPs and the daily question period.

Karpooff, the MP for Surrey North, stands up to salute the 30th anniversary of the first medicare system in Canada, which was brought in by the NDP in Saskatchewan.

By CHRIS GAINOR
HEU joins national campaign on medicare

Union supports protest organized across Canada by Canadian Union of Public Employees

HEU is joining with the Canadian Union of Public Employees and the Canadian Labour Congress in a national campaign to save medicare from cuts imposed by the federal Tories.

The Keep Medicare Healthy campaign features pledge cards to help save medicare and a two-hour television special airing on Vision Network on cable TV on June 18 at 6:30 p.m. and 9:30 p.m. and June 19 at 7:30 a.m. and noon.

Canadians are being asked to sign cards supporting medicare and urging Brian Mulroney to stop his government’s cutbacks. Cards have been sent to HEU locals.

“If the Tory agenda is allowed to proceed, our health care system will be unrecognizable within 15 years,” said CUPE president Judy Darcy. “The federal government is suffocating medicare by under-funding it to death.”

HEU is urging its members to join in the pledge card campaign, which began in late May. Local labour councils will hold sign-up campaigns for members of the general public.

The television special on medicare will feature well-known show business personalities. This campaign, which is supported by the Action Canada Network and the Canadian Health Coalition, is the latest effort HEU is supporting in the fight to save medicare from Tory cutbacks.

The latest Tory law to cut medicare payments to the provinces was rumbled through the House of Commons and the Senate after NDP members of parliament succeeded in forcing the government to hold special hearings on the bill.

BILL C-20, which extends the freeze on federal transfer funding for health care and post-secondary education, will lead to the end of direct federal funding for these programs.

When an earlier law, BILL C-69, was passed a year ago, many experts warned that the end of direct federal funding would jeopardize protection against extra billing and user fees contained in the Canada Health Act.

Although BILL C-20 is supposed to preserve the protections of the Canada Health Act, HEU and other groups that appeared before the House of Commons finance committee and warned that this bill still poses a threat to medicare throughout Canada.

The hearings by the finance committee, which rescheduled from the Canadian Health Coalition’s “Demand to be Heard on Medicare” campaign, in which groups across Canada asked to speak at the finance committee about BILL C-20.

While the major goal of the Keep Medicare Healthy campaign is to halt federal cutbacks to health funding, the campaign also calls for a set of reforms to strengthen medicare.

The campaign wants to maintain five principles of Canadian medicare: universality, comprehensiveness, accessibility, portability, and public administration.

As well, the campaign stresses the need to protect and enhance the rights of workers during changes in health care delivery, such as the shift to home care and community care as envisioned by the B.C. Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs.

CONDITION CRITICAL: National campaign protests Ottawa’s cuts in health spending.

June 1992 • GUARDIAN
Castlevie local stands up for residents

HEU members at Castleview local in Castlegar have been forced to take action to protect spiritual and cultural programs of importance to residents of Russian ancestry in their facility. When residents of the former Raspberry Lodge in Castlegar transferred to Castleview Care Centre over a year ago, the trouble began.

First the home menu was changed, sharply reducing traditional Russian diet. Twenty-six of 36 home residents are Russian. Then the administrator, Dianne Ramage, tampered with the traditional Russian music enjoyed by residents, limiting residents to three hours a week of music. Activity worker Sheila Dixon quit in frustration at the anti-Russian policies and a sharp reduction in her hours.

But after union protests, management agreed to provide some Russian food, modifying the traditional diet by using low-fat substitutes for butter and cream, so residents can enjoy their favourite foods at least once a week.

"The new diet seems to be acceptable to residents," said local chairperson Jean Hutchens. "The issue is pretty much resolved around here now."

Surrey local fights to save care unit

Union members and families of extended care patients are keeping up the fight to save the Shirley Dean Pavilion at Surrey Memorial Hospital. Beginning with a rally outside Shirley Dean Feb. 14, HEU has worked hard to secure a decision by the hospital's board of directors to close the facility.

Staff concerns over bed closures and lay-offs prompted a sit-in at Shirley Dean Feb. 25. Eight staff members walked off the day shift and demanded a meeting with hospital administrators. Surrey local union executives attended the sit-in along with those HEU staff.

Although the hospital tried to intimidate workers by disciplining them for their actions, HEU members continued to fight to keep the beds open. A postcard campaign gathered thousands of signatures from concerned citizens, relatives of residents and hospital workers. HEU members and concerned citizens presented a brief to Surrey council about the bed closures and asked for support.

So far the campaign is working. An article in Sur-


ACTION AGAINST CLOSURE: HEU Surrey local members gather around union staff Shirley Mathieson and Steve Polak to review latest management position during a Feb. 26 protest against employer plans to close the Shirley Dean Extended Care Unit. The hospital eventually agreed to keep the beds open and to re-allocate three workers fired for their role in the protest.

74 beds in Shirley Dean Pavilion now that those people have been moved some where else? I doubt it." Polak points to the empty towers at Van-


HEU delegate urges action on aboriginal rights

A full day after HEU Bella Coola delegate Doreen Clettamin finished her brief speech on aboriginal rights to the C.C. Federation of Labour delegates, trade unionists from around the province were still talking about her to express their gratitude and solidarity.

Clettamin, an alternate delegate, hadn't expected to be in Vancouver and she had not expected to speak. Nov. 26 when the issue of aboriginal rights came to the floor. But she went to the micro-


phone anyway and her comments moved the 800 convention delegates very much.

As she returned to her seat, they gave her a standing ovation and several wept openly.

"I'm a practical nurse," she said later, "and I've been working as a nurse's aide for 24 years, the last 13 years in my home community of Bella Coola. The day we had a community discussion I talked about what was happening to people who went to the residential schools.

"They were taken away and placed in schools for 12 or 13 years with no parental guidance, no family, no roots of any sort."

DOREEN CLETTAMIN, of HEU's Bella Coola local, was a standing ovation from B.C. Federation of Labour delegates.

"That's why so many have drug, alcohol and suicide problems.

"Since I moved home in 1977, 30 people have committed suicide in my community, all age groups, but mostly young people.

"They didn't have the help of parents or grandparents."

The residential school system left a terrible legacy which must be overcome, she said.

That's why she wanted delegates to support a convention resolution calling for "solidarity with aboriginal people."

The resolution also calls on the provincial government to "provide speedy, fair and neg-


lected settlements of aboriginal disputes and land claims."

Native people are looking forward to those treaties, Clettamin says, looking forward to the day when na-


tive trade unionists take their place on the convention podium as full participants for making sure the beds are re-opened for extended care residents.

"The last census showed that Surrey had a 30 per-

cent population increase in four years. There is no way they should close one bed in that hospital," Polak said.

There are 50 extended care patients in acute beds in Surrey Memorial Hospital and 200 more waiting to get in.

Sally Ann closes MS group home

Salvation Army management at New Westminster's Buchanan Court cast a cloud over the Christmas season by closing the facil-


ity, home to 10 residents with multiple sclerosis.

HEU members pressed hard to keep the facility operating but management closed the home in Novem-


ber. The building was only five years old, but did not meet the fire code.

HEU members continue to work at Buchanan Lodge, a related facility, but still regret the closure as a senseless bureaucratic boils-up.

"I don't think the people who had their lives scrambled by this bungling deserve some answer," wrote the Royal City Record, "as do the taxpayers who've footed the bill."
MAKING CHANGE

by LINDA MARCOTTE

THE phone rings. "Hello, End Legislated Poverty, this is Linda." I say. The caller is a reporter with the CBC in Edmonton, working on an article about welfare and single mothers. Can I find someone in Edmonton who would have the information he needs?

I call Freda, a welfare advocate with the Downtown Eastside Residents' Association (DERA), one of 37 groups in our coalition. She tells me what I'm looking for, we chat, and I just have time to look up some names of single parents in Edmonton. Pat, one of our staff, helped form a group to work on getting lunch programs in the low income schools there. A quick call back to Edmonton and that task is done.

I'm excited. Just last week a single mother in Chilliwack phoned and wanted to start a group out there. The same thing she thought of was great: S.M.A.R.T. - Single Mothers Are Really Tough.

The evidence of the work that keeps us whirling is everywhere. In this morning's mail see two letters from municipal councils who have passed our resolutions: • minimum wages should be raised to at least the same percentage of the poverty line as it was in 1975. This would be over $7.00 an hour; • the welfare rates should be raised to the poverty line; • the provincial government should let single mothers on welfare decide whether they want to stay home and be with their children full-time or work outside.

Several towns, cities, and groups have passed these. People can use them to talk about poverty in their area.

We have to keep information about poverty and social justice issues current. We speak to groups and keep active in national groups like the National Anti-Poverty Organization and Action Canada Network. We are funded by unions, churches and law groups like the Law Foundation and Legal Services Society, the United Way and others.

I often think I'm so privileged to be on staff here. Getting paid to do this work still amazes me. I've been a single parent since Steven and Melanie were one and three, and now they're teenagers. All those years, mostly on welfare.

I chose poverty on welfare over a slightly higher income working at a job outside. Melanie needed extra attention, having Down's Syndrome.

Looking back over those years, with bad or no housing (one summer we stayed with a friend), not enough money and overwhelming bone-tiredness, I wonder at myself - all the other work I did - to start a welfare rights group in Surrey, acted as an advocate for more than 30 people a month out of our home, and led the Poverty Games workshop dozens of times.

I was lucky, too. I didn't have any trouble with the law or have an addiction or health problems that would have forced me to deal with authority more than I did. While I was doing advocacy, I talked to many women whose choices of working on the street made sense after the hundredth harassment by workers at the welfare office. Stealing food is sometimes more dignified than waiting hours in a food bank lineup for stale buns and canned peas. Getting drunk or stoned is sometimes a vacation from an ugly reality.

I see myself come in here to the office or hear my voice on the other end of the line every day. Keeping your family together and healthy is almost impossible, and is impossible sometimes. The single parents we see who have the edge to start doing poverty usually live in public housing or housing co-ops, with the worry of high rents and crummy housing gone.

The memories I have of being on welfare are grim, pushing the two kids up this huge hill with five cases of empty beer bottles my new landlord had given me to cash in and get money for supper.

I can feel the rage and frustration as I write this, but the biggest memory, and the one that comes back to shake me, is shame. The hardest, most confusing time I spent here was trying to see myself as a worker deserving a pay cheque.

I feel the 10 years of welfare beat my pride and the trust I had in my thinking right out of me. To get it back was a fight. The support of friends was a big help. Another element to healing my self-esteem was seeing myself as part of the huge movement in Canada and around the world working to get justice for women, our children and poor people everywhere.

This is what I am lucky to see every day in single parents. The first step is to get together with others to share stories and get support and practical help. Then I see women change and grow, doing things they never thought they had the courage to do, meeting politicians and telling them what they and their children need.

I see single parents go through the process of working together, figuring out what's wrong, why and what to do about it. It's exciting to watch.

There are powerful consequences: feeling better and stronger so you don't blame yourself for your poverty; learning skills like writing and reading; organizing and running meetings; making radio and TV interviews; helping others go - it's very exciting.

Sometimes I take lower income people to one of the schools in Vancouver that have lunch programs. In a bustle of 300 children eating (of the 1,500 Vancouver kids who are fed a nutritious lunch every day, in a program that doesn't stigmatize the low income kids), I always feel so hopeful.

Single parent Linda Marcotte has learned she can fight poverty. She changed her life. Now she wants to change the whole system.

Linda Marcotte, End Legislated Poverty, low income people did this. We brought people's attention to the problem of poverty and worked hard to get kids fed. I'm reminded of a quote from Margaret Mead: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world: Indeed, it's the only thing that ever does."
Caffeine Break

More winners of the bad boss awards
At an American organization called 9 to 5: The National Association of Working Women, complexes the Bad Boss Awards. Some recent stories:

- A Chicago stockbroker saleswoman who asked her secretary to take his jacket home and wash it. When she refused, he said, "Why not? You don't have a college degree.
- One company president wouldn't give a worker a raise because he made more money than her husband, who also worked at the firm, and would "cause friction in the family."

At least one Tory tells it like it is
Asked to define, "competitiveness," Conservative MP Don Binnsen retorted, "The Canadian worker can either work harder for less pay or not work at all. It's pretty simple—that's what competitiveness means."

Our waiting lists not the longest
According to the British press, Mr. John Oates was less than impressed recently when his son, Dr. Anna Saunders, a retired eye specialist, was advised by the Royal Shrewsbury Hospital that they were ready to perform her cataract operation.
Dr. Saunders, aged 80, died in 1981.

Our ranks are growing
The number of Canadians belonging to unions rose from 16.5 percent last year to just over four million.

More than a 200 can be seen in the country who belong to unionized workforces from 36.2 percent.

This is the first increase since 1984, when union

Tortes kill hope of national daycare
They promised it in 1984. They promised it again after being re-elected in 1985. But last February the Tories killed the hope of a national child-care program.

Instead, they increased tax deductions for child care expenses, a move that will do more to create more day care spaces, and benefits rich Canadians more than poor.

In making his announcement, health minister Benoit Bouchard said that day care "is not seen any more by Canadians as the first priority for children." He says the top concern is for abused children and family violence.

But just two days after Bouchard bragged about the 18th, 263,000 children, were in licensed daycare spaces in 1988. The rest were being looked after, "by relatives, by the lady down the street, by older siblings, by any number of arrangements patched together."

The government's one move on daycare was to increase the tax deduction for child care expenses from $4,000 to $5,000. This may put a bit of money into the hands of working parents, but even on this point, it provides a greater benefit for rich Canadians than for poor.

That's because a tax deduction receives taxable income. Rich people pay a higher tax rate, so they save more tax from a deduction. A single mom making $25,000 will receive a child care subsidy of about $1,340 under the new plan. However, a two-income professional family making $150,000 will save $2,450.

Bouchard also said it was a question of funding child abuse programs or child care, and he chose the former. But critics say affordable child care is crucial for women trying to escape a violent situation.

"Child care is not a luxury," said advocate Glenda Shuman. "It's a part of the needs of a changing society where women are taking their place in the work force."

Deadlines coming for HEU convention plans
If you have a resolution or proposal for constitutional change you want discussed at the upcoming convention don't delay! Deadlines are looming for submissions to the 1990 Biennial HEU Convention Oct. 5 to 9.

Proposed resolutions must be ratified by a majority vote at a regular meeting of the sponsoring local and signed by the local chairperson and secretary-treasurer. Proposed resolutions must be received by provincial office before Aug. 30.

Constitutional amendments require ratification by a majority vote at a regular meeting of the sponsoring local. They must be signed by the chairperson and secretary-treasurer of the local and delivered by each, provincial office no later than Sept. 5.

Locals must also elect delegates to convention and submit credential form and registration fee to provincial office by Aug. 2. Each local will already have received a list prepared by the financial secretary showing the average membership for the local and number of delegates eligible to attend convention.

Delegates will receive a letter from the financial secretary regarding claiming expenses for lost wages, travel and accommodation.

The convention begins October 5th with delegation registration the previous evening. Proceedings are scheduled to end October 9. Delegates will gather at the Richmond Inn to determine the union’s direction and policy and elect members of the Provincial Executive for two-year terms of office.

HEU offers bursary aid
HEU is offering 13 bursaries for post-secondary study to members, their children and spouses for the 1990-1993 academic year.

The bursaries have a total value of almost $6,000, can be used at any post-secondary institution. They will be awarded to students who need financial assistance and demonstrate satisfactory academic standing.

Applications must be received by
Era ends with Gwen Parrish retirement at VGH
An era has come to a close at Vancouver General Hospital in May when HEU activist Gwen Parrish officially retired after 30 years of work and union involvement.

An activist since day one, Parrish served first as treasurer, then as local secretary-treasurer for 28 years. She was also a long-time member of HEU’s Provincial Executive.

Known as a quiet and unassuming leader, Parrish was a strong individual, a perfectionist who didn’t suffer fools easily. Later, she switched to the VGH local hosted a special retirement event for Parrish, where she was presented a commemorative plaque and given other gifts, including a new set of luggage.

Since she retired, Parrish has put her luggage to good use while on a lengthy holiday in Asia and Australia.

Edith Kassiones retires at Ponderosa Lodge
Ponderosa Lodge local activist Edith Kassiones is leaving her post with her usual sense of humour still intact.

Kassiones, who retired in March after working 10 years as a coxh, writes to say that she is "happily avoiding a call from Hollywood, CBC, NBC, ABC or some 115-year-old senior citizen in need of a beneficiary".

Kamloops LPN Audrey Seagoe ends long career
Royal Inland Hospital LPN Audrey Seagoe left behind a host of friends when she retired March 12, after 32 years of service at the hospital.

An HEU shop steward in the mid-1990s, Seagoe has been a health care worker since 1948. Active in a number of community organizations, her future plans include swimming up on all the things she’s missed over the years, like reading, getting her recipes in order, travelling and square dancing.

Little Mountain Place member will fish and travel
Fishing and travelling was Robert Medved’s plans when he retired May 31 after five years as a junior in the administration department at Little Mountain Place in Vancouver.

Who knows, Medved might be moonlighting off the bow right now.

Norman Dyble bids farewell to Olive Devaud
Maintenance worker Norman Dyble received a fond farewell from all his HEU sisters and brothers at the Olive Devaud Retirement Lodge in Powell River when he retired last November.

On disability since 1988, Dyble was a union activist who served in a number of leadership positions, including four years as shop steward.

"If I wasn’t for the union," he writes, "we would still be working for two-thirds wages." He plans to travel as long as his money and his health last.

Loogdarrin, Hermeno, retire at Windermere Lodge
Vendome Retirement Lodge housekeeper Bie Loogdarrin and caretaker Howard Hermeno both retired Jan. 2.

Well liked by fellow staff and residents, Loogdarrin plans to take a long vacation and relax, while Hermeno wants to do volunteer work at the lodge, located in Vancouver.

Jackson Manor retirees spend time with families
Two Jackson Manor local members also retired last year.

June King, a care aide at the Aldergrove facility since 1985 and a former local trustee, plans to travel and spend more time with her daughter in Brant.

Housekeeping aide Hennie Paul plans to spend more time with her family too.

Rose Haugsgaard was activist at 100 Mile House
"The stuff was terrible and I enjoyed working with them very much," says Rose Haugsgaard, who retired Oct. 31 after 15 years in the housekeeping department at 100 Mile and District Hospital.

Thawing worked hard for HEU, serving on her local’s salary committee and as conductor and trustee on the local executive.

She was active in the community as treasurer of the Lutheran Church. She plans to travel, golf and fish.

Audrey Seagoe gets commemorative pin from Kamloops local secretary-treasurer Ken Preuss.

Puzzle

The Environment Crossword

Across

2. The fee accounts for 1% of the country’s use for transportation
5. The colour of recycled coffee filters
7. The average Canadian household spends a time of this each year
9. The branch of biology that studies the properties and the environment is a study of
12. These chemicals are destroying the ozone layer (abbrev.)
13. The most fuel-efficient vehicles for travelling between cities

Down

1. Excess carbon dioxide in the atmosphere causes the effect
3. The average Canadian used litres of water a day
4. A complete system of plants, animals and the environment
6. It takes 2,000 litres of oil to make one of these; each one uses 10,000 litres of gas in its lifetime
7. This third R of waste management
10. The product made of this are making a comeback
11. Alternative to paper towels
13. Throwing the ink out of used paper
16. Grow without synthetic fertilizers, pesticides or herbicides
17. The most fuel-efficient cars on the road are a
18. Public transit accounts for of the country’s use for transportation
19. This colour now means environment friendly
24. Canadians are the world’s biggest per capita users of
25. A green alternative to regular non-biodegradable powders is ordinary
27. The earth’s sunscreen
28. Alternative way to dispose of kitchen and yard wastes
30. The colour of recycling
31. All energy comes from it
33. World supplies of this popular fuel will be depleted by 2020
35. This could be the fourth R of waste management
36. Eaves packaging; key in

20. Rainforest going containers to a local school or daycare
21. Modern technique to get the back of the oil
22. How you can reduce 25% of an older home’s heat loss with a few tubes of
25. Reuse: give your old closes to a local school or daycare
26. Raw has made Halifax harbour rise of the most polluted bodies of water in Canada
29. Commuters can save gas and money by forming a car
30. The blue program is North America’s largest and most successful recycling effort

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Management wages soar
HEU heard lots of speeches about a lack of money for hospitals. But the administrators who made those speeches found money for themselves.

New bed closures
In spite of promises to consult with health care workers, the provincial government is proceeding with Royal Commission recommendations.

Fight for fairness
HEU's struggle to win a fair contract culminated with job actions through April, followed by a proposed settlement from special conciliator Don Munroe.

Saving medicare
The federal Tories are starving provincial medicare programs. Labour's fight against these cuts extends from Ottawa to a small HEU local in Sicetch.