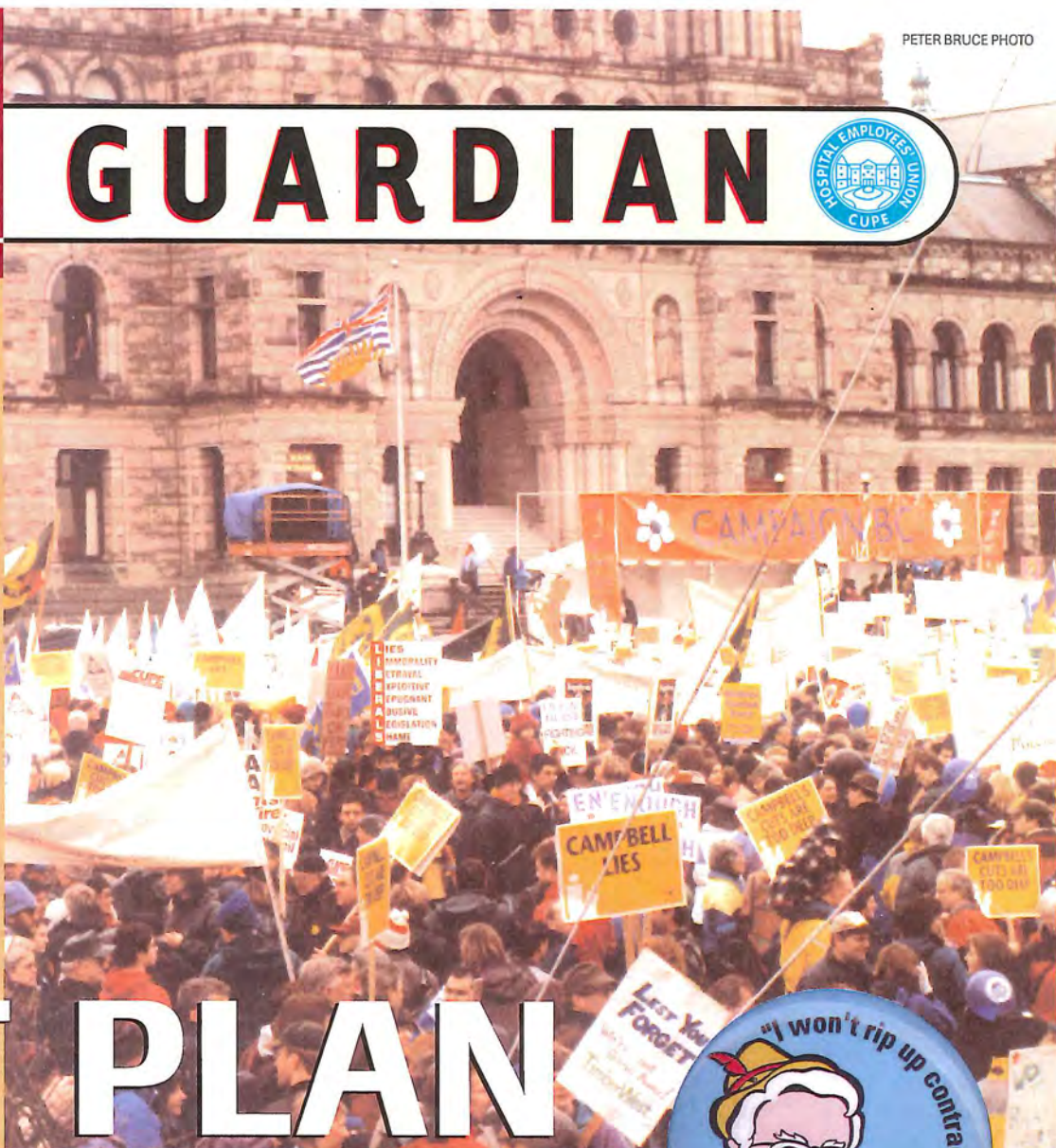


FIRST PAGE REPORT

Before the election, Gordon Campbell told HEU members he didn't believe in tearing up contracts. But on January 27 you could practically hear the ripping sound from Victoria as his government committed an act the *Globe and Mail* called 'legislative vandalism.'

Trashing signed agreements is only laying the groundwork for wholesale health care privatization

SECRET PLAN EXPOSED



PETER BRUCE PHOTO



Badges, buttons, jacket and stickers show HEU spirit.

PETER BRUCE PHOTO

Gordon Campbell is paving his "new era" with broken promises.

British Columbians did not vote for hospital closures, cuts to public services, nor the loss of thousands of jobs in small communities that are already hurting. The cuts his government has legislated are brutal and calculating.

And just how calculating became abundantly clear in a secret budget document obtained by HEU which outlines the Campbell Liberals' plans to axe nearly 28,000 health care jobs, increase surgery wait lists and shift another \$500 million in health care costs onto the shoulders of B.C. families.

The decimation of the province's public health care system is bad enough, but it is only part of the Liberals' grand plan.

When the government announced the elimination of 12,000 jobs along with the slashing of the public service, B.C. Government and Services Employees' Union president George Heyman said that Campbell was doing exactly what he said he wouldn't do. "He lied." With funding to women's centres cut and 24 courthouses closed, women in abusive relationships will have access to justice reduced. "And good luck if your family is in a crisis and needs professional help," he said, with 1,000 jobs that provide services to families and children in the dumpster.

And then came that infamous late January weekend, when teachers had their contract legislated and health care workers had their freely negotiated contracts ripped apart.

Claiming all the while to be protecting public education, the Liberals only had their tax cut and funding freeze in mind when they legally imposed increased class sizes,

changes in the school year and deferred construction of desperately-needed new classrooms.

B.C. Teachers' Federation president David Chudnovsky

said the government's actions will not guarantee peace and stability in the province's schools. Quite the contrary.

The same can be said of the province's health care system.

MIKE OLD PHOTO



HEU members by the thousands arrive in Victoria for the February 23 rally in front of the legislature (above).

If there ever was a piece of legislation that was inappropriately named, it is Bill 29, the Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act. HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt said the implications of Bill 29 for health care are dire for all British Columbians. "Communities are going to suffer immensely. Imagine, hospitals can be closed in 60 days and health services can be cut or transferred to another community with no consultation.

"And workers can see their jobs privatized and offered back to them with up to a 30 per cent cut in salary, no contract and no union. Community social services workers are returned to the low-wage ghetto with their clients exposed to instability in the delivery of their care," said Allnutt.

"Campbell and his MLAs lied in order to win the election. They lied to our members and they lied to all British Columbians."

But the people of this province are mad as hell at the betrayal. They are fighting back. And they're in it for the long term.



ALLNUTT

When we work together, there's reason to hope

Sisters and brothers, these are trying times. It seems we are being attacked from every side. But it is in times such as these that we learn to stand together and fight back.

The premier has screwed up – he made all sorts of promises before the election that he had no intention to keep. You know the ones:

- he'll respect contracts;
 - there will be no cuts to health care and education; and
 - HEU members do valuable work and don't have to fear privatization from a Gordon Campbell government.
- Unlike Ontario's Harris, or Alberta's Klein, who at least campaigned on an extreme right-wing agenda, the

The premier was dishonest with voters before the election

premier was dishonest with voters before the election. He'll never recover from the fact that he doesn't have a mandate from B.C. voters to do what he's doing.

Already, less than nine months after his election, 59 per cent of British Columbians don't trust him with our public health care system.

We've already forced him to back down in these ways:

- he's reversed himself on the cuts to seniors' bus passes;
- in his province-wide TV address, he had to acknowledge his promise to HEU members not to break contracts; and
- he's put in \$700 million more into health care this year than he had originally planned.

We've succeeded in these areas because we've stood together with communities throughout B.C. in fighting for the public health care system.

Serious threats to our contracts, our jobs, Medicare and our communities remain.

By fighting smart, we can knock the Liberals and their employer agents off their privatization agenda and continue to build a public Medicare system we can all be proud of.

voice.mail



He looked a critical gift horse in the mouth

HEU president Fred Muzin wrote, "When New York mayor Rudy Giuliani lauds the heroic efforts of public sector workers in responding to the World Trade Centre disaster, but then denies them the ability to bargain a better contract, I doubt his sincerity."

I have my doubts as well. In the wake of that horrific disaster, I looked upon Giuliani as a great, compassionate man. That is until I read an article in the *Vancouver Sun* on Oct. 12, 2001 which stated, "Prince Alwaleed bin Talal of Saudi Arabia condemned terrorism and handed the New York mayor Rudolf Giuliani a cheque for U.S. \$10 million for the relief efforts in New York."

"The mayor rejected the donation after

learning the prince criticized the U.S. Mideast policies."

Giuliani returned the cheque without asking the victims' families if they would appreciate the donation. I saw the article only once. Not one word have I noticed in the media about that returned cheque since October 12.

GERRY OLSEN
Central City Lodge Local
Housekeeping

Private health care equals for-profit

Private health care will not save the public money. Rather, it will drive up health care costs.

The Liberals' actions are nothing less than "reckless" because the only way private, for-profit companies can provide such important health care services at lower cost is

by cutting wages and undermining working

conditions and the quality of care. Our public health care system is cherished by virtually everyone, because currently all taxpayers benefit from it and have a stake in it.

The solution is not two-tier and private clinics. Rather, it is for our governments to return Medicare to a universal 50-50 federal-provincial cost-share program.

When equity is eroded it is the middle class who pay the higher costs, while the poor get charity health care if they pass a means test.

TROY ZOHNER
South Island Community Living

Happy to be working again

Thanks to the HEU members who supported me during my struggle to return to work after a three-and-a-half years' absence.

In June 1998, I had the misfortune to fall and break my left ankle in three places. After two surgeries, I was able to retrain for another job, because I could not return to work as a nurses aide.

I first met with human resources on Dec. 21, 2000 and had a real struggle to return to another job.

Without the support of union members and the executive, I would still be without an income and struggling to find a job. LTD closed my claim last April and said I

could do a sit-down job with minimal walking. Human resources said there was no such job at the hospital.

I finally returned to work in the health records department at Lions Gate Hospital. Yes, I still need to use a walking cast after several hours on my feet, but I am thrilled to be back at work.

A special thanks to the nursing staff on 2 North who gave me a special return-to-work party and to the HEU sister in Prince George who encouraged me to not give up in my struggle to return to the workforce.

I would like to encourage all the HEU members off on LTD and trying to return to work to not give up. I hope this letter will give you support and encouragement in your own future career changes.

TRISH MCNAIR
Lions Gate Local

Bum steer repudiated

On Friday afternoon there was a demonstration at the corner of Marshall Road and Sumas Way to bring public awareness about the threat of our hospital services being privatized when the new hospital is built in Abbotsford.

I want to thank the many hundreds of people who honked in support and gave us the "thumbs up."

The response was encour-

aging and it was great to know that many people are already aware of the seriousness of this issue.

The protesters were demonstrating after their shift (they all work). I have been employed at MSA General Hospital for 25 years and I am very concerned for our community and the future of our hospital.

I am personally offended that you referred to me as a bum. It clearly shows me that you are unaware of the facts.

In Prince Edward Island, the government was similarly planning to privatize services and the community banded together to defeat the plan. Studies have shown that there are no long-term cost savings.

In Durham, England, there was a new hospital built under private financing. This hospital cost 27 per cent more because of higher borrowing costs and profits for private developers.

Right here in our own province, St. Paul's Hospital has discharged its contract with multinational food giant Marriott and has brought back the workers "in house" as "a significant deficit reduction program" in the words of a senior administrator.

JOYCE GIROUX
MSA General Hospital

• This letter was printed in the *Abbotsford News* on Jan. 22, 2002.



news



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Leaked document reveals the 'why' of Campbell's lies

Voters would not have backed cynical Liberal plans to privatize health care

First the Campbell Liberals unilaterally broke signed agreements and stripped health care workers' contract provisions to pave the way for hospital closures, service cuts and privatization.

Now, secret government documents released by HEU reveal the Campbell government's plan to embark on widespread health cuts, shift another \$500 million in costs on to the shoulders of B.C. families, and launch the most radical health privatization scheme in Canadian history.

In a damning admission, Victoria also says surgery waitlists will increase, hospitals and hospital beds will close, and patient safety will be compromised by increased ambulance response times.

According to the secret documents, about 20,400 jobs are to be terminat-

ed by privatizing \$700 million in health care services by 2003. Another 7,500 jobs will be chopped in clinical and support areas as a result of service cutbacks over the next three years.

"The Liberals' privatization scheme is shocking proof that its agenda is all about ideology – not about saving money," says HEU's Chris Allnutt. "Victoria claims it will save \$70 million over three years – about one-third of a per cent of the health care budget – by privatizing



Trish McLean, from St. Paul's Hospital nutrition services, and Toby Caplet, a stores receiver at Lions Gate Hospital, told reporters they fear for their livelihoods if Gordon Campbell is allowed to carry out plans revealed in leaked government documents.

Its agenda is all about ideology – not about saving money

support services," he says. "But to eliminate jobs of thousands of women, Campbell will spend \$163 million in termination costs. Hardly a cost saving."

What will happen to workers whose jobs are privatized? At best, the secret document says they may be rehired by the private sector at reduced wage rates – up to 30 per cent lower. "That's a wage cut," says Allnutt, "of about \$150 million – a huge cost to be borne by workers, their families and local

communities that are already facing difficult economic times.

"For a third of one per cent of the health care budget, the Campbell Liberals are prepared to plunge health care into chaos," says Allnutt. "At the same time they will start writing big cheques to their corporate friends who are jockeying for lucrative contracts to provide these services."

Prior to the last election, Campbell told HEU members in a *Guardian* interview they didn't have to worry about privatization from a Liberal government and their work was important and valued.

Meanwhile, Allnutt says the Liberal's two-pronged cuts and privatization strategy will impact thousands of LPNs, Care Aides, RNs, and paramedical professionals who will be axed. And he warned privatizing housekeeping, dietary and laundry to multinational companies will reduce service standards and put pressure on nursing staff to pick up even more non-nursing duties.

The documents also reveal that seniors and B.C. families will pay \$406 million more over three years for higher drugs. About 420,000 seniors will pay more while 800,000 people will pay \$75 million more as the result of previously announced MSP cuts.

Allnutt charges that Campbell's government isn't telling the truth with claims that B.C. support workers are paid 30 per cent more than in other provinces. "When our higher cost of living is factored in," he says, "real wage rates in B.C. are the same as in Alberta, Ontario or Quebec."

STEPHEN HOWARD

Track record clobbers Sodexho

Huge corporations are lining up to make big profits from the Campbell Liberals' privatization frenzy. But if they're anything like French multinational Sodexho, B.C.'s health care system is headed for big trouble.

Sodexho – one of the world's largest providers of privatized health care services – is already on the scene here in B.C. But soon after the company was hired by the Northern Health Authority to offer advice on how to revamp support services, word came from Scotland about Sodexho's dirty track record.

The company is embroiled in a scandal in Glasgow where poor cleaning standards in hospitals it provides housekeeping services are linked to patient deaths and virus outbreaks.

A special Glasgow *Evening Times* exposé found horrid cleanliness standards including:

- soiled bags, used OR supplies and normal hospital waste stacked with linen bundles at the hospital's ambulance bay;

- bloody clothing and scrubs found in the lift used to transport patient meals;

- a cleaner in a ward hit by two superbug outbreaks is "told to serve patient meals after mopping toilets."

Staffing cuts and low wages – \$9 per hour, half what B.C. support workers earn – are at the root of the Glasgow crisis, where health administrators are now bringing services back in house.

"This Glasgow tragedy is a sobering eye opener for British Columbians about the track records of multinational corporations like Sodexho that Gordon Campbell and health services minister Colin Hansen want to bring into our province to run privatized health care services," says Allnutt.

HEU has demanded that the Northern Health Authority fire Sodexho immediately, a call that was supported by NDP leader Joy MacPhail who urged health services minister Hansen to take the same action in the Legislature March 13.



COFFEE BREAK

All stories guaranteed factual.
Sources this issue: CALM, The
Georgia Straight

Hardheaded or hardhearted?

American proposals to develop an antimissile defence system to destroy nuclear warheads could result in debris falling on Canada if interceptions occur over its territory.

American defence analyst Chris Sands of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies said the risk is something Canadians will have to live with, "Canada might want to request extra funding for hard hats, but there's not much else that can be done about it."

Top billing for Miss Cleo

"Miss Cleo should have seen this coming. It doesn't take a crystal ball to realize that ripping off consumers isn't without consequences," said Missouri attorney general Jay Nixon, announcing a consumer fraud lawsuit against Access Resources Services Inc., which uses someone named Miss Cleo in its TV ads to promote a tarot card reading phone service.

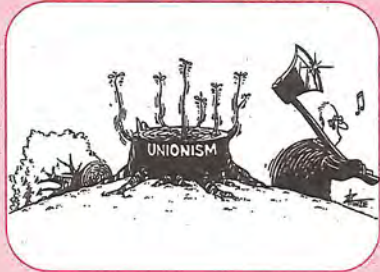
The company allegedly billed for supposedly free services, misrepresented rates, charged people for time spent on hold and billed people who had never requested the service, including some who were deceased.

What's an apology?

Garry Trudeau, creator of *Doonesbury*, apologized on his web site for a strip based on an Internet hoax that claimed George W. Bush has the lowest IQ of any president in 50 years.

"Trudeau takes full responsibility, acknowledging the use of fictional material from an outside source instead of simply making it up as he usually does. The creator deeply apologizes for unsettling anyone who was under the impression that the president is, in fact, intelligent."

CALM GRAPHIC



Future uncertain for two Vancouver Island families

CHRIS GAINOR looks at how threatened cuts to health care jobs plays out with resource communities that are already hurting from the forestry industry slump.

Gord and Geri Klughart are already making the tough changes that are facing many families on Vancouver Island and elsewhere in B.C.

They are wondering why the B.C. government is threatening them again as they recover from an earlier economic blow.

The Klugharts live in Chemainus, a town in the Cowichan Valley that fought back from forest industry closures in the 1980s by turning itself into a tourist destination on the road between Victoria and Nanaimo.

Gord had worked for 33 years at the Youbou sawmill. A clause in the local tree farm licence compelled the mill's owner, TimberWest, to keep the mill open, but the NDP government allowed the clause to "disappear."

As a result, Gord and his 200 fellow workers lost their jobs early last year when the mill closed and TimberWest began shipping raw logs outside of the country to be processed.

Geri, who has worked as an activity aide at the Chemainus Health Care Centre for six years, fears that she will lose her job as the Liberal government restructures health care after tearing up union contracts with Bill 29.

When the Youbou mill shut down, some businesses closed and others suffered. And now the Cowichan Valley is bracing itself for layoffs 10 times as bad if the softwood lumber dispute with the United States forces Doman Industries to close down its operations in the area.

A member of Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers of Canada Local 180 and the son of a union organizer, Gord fought hard with his brother and others to save the Youbou mill. "I was feeling deserted," he said.



CHRIS GAINOR PHOTO

Geri and Gord Klughart work on a boat he will use for his new business, Spirit of the West Fishing Charters.

Last year, Gord spent weeks away from Geri, their son Ryan, 16, and daughter Sarah, 13, as he worked as a fishing guide on the North Coast.

Now he is setting up a guiding business in Chemainus. "I've had to put up our house for collateral for a boat. Whether it will work out or not, I don't know."

In January, Geri attended an HEU meeting where she learned of the Liberal government's plans to gut collective agreements. She responded by spearheading the organization of a rally January 12 in Chemainus that brought together 450 people who were addressed by speakers from unions in both the public and private sectors.

"It was the first time I realized how

serious our situation was. We needed to organize together," Geri said. "I'm shocked that everything is so easily at risk. We're very vulnerable."

In February, she helped organize a bigger rally in Duncan that drew 2,500 people from all over the Cowichan Valley, and she joined the crowds in Victoria on February 23.

Meanwhile, the workers at the Chemainus Health Care Centre have received no assurance from the Vancouver Island Health Authority about their jobs or the future of their emergency room, laboratory or x-ray facility that complement the 75 extended care beds.

"There are quite a few women I work with whose husbands have been laid off," Geri said. "People are scared."

**B.C. AT
THE
CROSS
ROADS**
A continuing
Guardian
series

newsbites>>

Health authority ignores higher cost of privatizing

If the newly-formed Vancouver Coastal Health Authority gets its way, HEU members from North Vancouver to Bella Bella and Bella Coola will see a rapid change in the way health care support services are delivered in the region through a massive privatization deal. Management-types told union representatives in late February that a decision would be made within 90 days about contracting-out our members' work for the entire region in one of the support services areas.

"As Bill 29 becomes a reality, we can

expect attempts from health authorities to privatize health care support services under the guise of cost efficiencies and improved patient care. But that's simply not true, and we'll fight those attempts every step of the way," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"Our members know, and research backs them up, that their work is an integral part of health care and that privatizing it leads to reduced quality of care and higher costs."

While VCHA has not identified which support service will be targeted, food services may take the first hit. Private, for-profit giant, Aramark, has already infiltrated Lions Gate Hospital

and may be courting expansion opportunities. They should take a look at what the Providence Health Group is doing in Vancouver — namely contracting in food services management.

The Providence Health Group including St. Vincent's and Mount St. Joseph's hospitals cited cost savings as the reason for bringing the management of its food services back in-house and putting an early end to its contract with U.S.-based, multi-national Marriott.

Grand Marnier not so grand

In its December 2001 issue, the *New Internationalist* magazine reported on the plight of the Haitian plantation



Laid off Yubou workers were highly visible at the February 23 protest in Victoria.

There are people at my work who are talking about leaving if they both lose their jobs."

Further north on the island, Maria and Elmer Behn are also wondering what the future holds for them and their friends and neighbours in Port Alberni.

Maria has worked at the Echo Village and Fir Park Village long-term care facilities for 21 years, starting as a Care Aide. In recent years, she has worked as a programming clerk. Her husband Elmer has worked for nearly 29 years at the large paper mill in Port Alberni now owned by Norske Canada. Elmer has spent most of his time at the mill as an electrician, and together he and Maria are raising their children Elisa, 14, and Kurt, 8.

Elmer's father Walter was active in his union and his community, and one of his proudest achievements was helping to set up Fir Park Village as a place where seniors could get the care they need and still live an active life.

The two facilities, which are run under a common management, have many senior staff who, like Maria, started out as Care Aides and moved on to other jobs. They all know the residents well and can help out with their personal needs when required.

"My fear is that these residents are not going to get the best care because we won't have that flexibility." She explained that if services are contracted out and new staff get only minimum wage, they will stay for only short times and won't have the skills today's staff have.

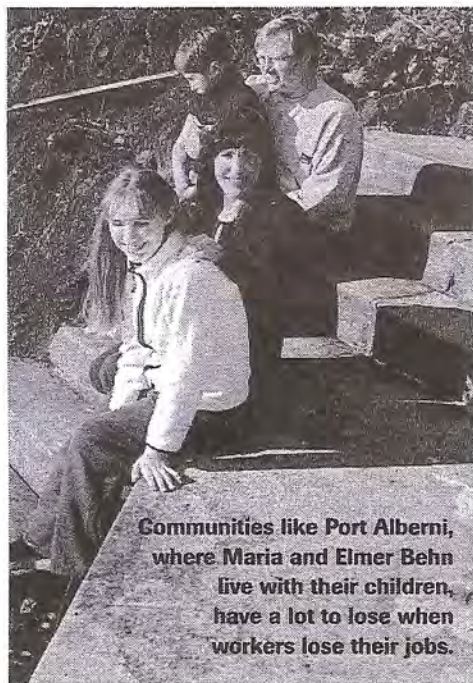
In the past year, the paper mill has closed down for short periods because of weak markets in Asia, and one of the three paper machines has been shut off for several months.

"There's a great deal of uncertainty out there," said Elmer, a member of the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers' Union of Canada. After listing some local businesses that have closed down in recent years, he noted that 15 jobs are vanishing because the B.C. government is closing the local assessment office. "Business in town is going to be suffering. I can't believe they aren't screaming about it."

Maria is a longtime activist in her HEU local, and she has been chief shop steward for four years. Now she's facing the reality that Bill 29 takes away bumping and seniority rights, along with training programs. "On a personal level, I'm angry that these rights have been taken away."

A local rally on January 25 that she helped organize drew more than 1,000 people. "So many things have happened since then," she added, including letter writing campaigns, handing out pink slips targeting local MLA Gillian Trumper, and participation in the big rally in Victoria.

"The support of the members has been fantastic," she said. "We're going to continue to be busy."



Communities like Port Alberni, where Maria and Elmer Behn live with their children, have a lot to lose when workers lose their jobs.

CHRIS GAINOR PHOTO



MUZIN

PRESIDENT'S DESK

Romanow out to 'remodel not demolish'

The Romanow Royal Commission on the Future of Health Care in Canada is currently involved in the public consultation phase, with hearings across Canada.

Despite the fact that in his interim report, the commissioner indicated that "the Medicare house needs remodeling but not demolishing," the actions of the Campbell B.C. Liberal government make it clear that they would rather destroy our public health care system. Their ideology promotes that the marketplace matters more than a caring society where we all take responsibility for each other.

The evidence clearly indicates that Medicare is sustainable and that privatization will only result in increased expenses and decreased services, i.e., delisting, longer wait lists, less accessibility. Romanow has adopted four main themes: Canadian values/Canada Health Act; sustainability and funding; quality and access; and leadership, collaboration and responsibility.

The Commission will explore how problems are undermining the stability of public health care and carefully analyze structural problems with a view to facilitating cooperation. The final report, expected in November, will hopefully be based on objective research and acknowledge Canadians' commitment to our most cherished social program, that ensures medical need rather than personal wealth dictates who will receive care.

The Campbell Liberals, drunk with power and blindly racing to surpass even Ralph Klein and Mike Harris, want to preempt the Health Commission and impose massive changes that will sell off our fragile system to their corporate friends, displace tens of thousands of health care providers and destroy hope for youth, seniors, women, the disabled and First Nations for a brighter future.

What is truly shocking about Campbell's reopening of legal contracts and rolling back decades old workers' rights, is the admission that \$700M in services are slated to be privatized, waiting lists will grow, 10,000 surgeries will be axed and emergency response times will increase, endangering the public.

We have to expose and oppose the B.C. government agenda that has nothing to do with balanced budgets and economic recovery.

Participation in the Romanow Commission (you can complete the questionnaire at www.healthcarecommission.ca) provides an important opportunity to counter the B.C. Liberals' misguided ideology.

Oppose the B.C. government agenda that has nothing to do with balanced budgets

workers who harvest the bitter oranges that flavour Grand Marnier.

The Paris-based Marnier-Lapostolle company has owned the plantation since 1880, and according to the workers there, things hadn't changed very much in more than 120 years. Then, in 1999, 350 workers on the plantation formed a union. Learning from the success of other unions in organizing garment workers in Haiti, the agricultural workers called for international solidarity in their own struggle. Union leaders were persecuted, but the outside support bore fruit and the workers won a 50 per cent wage increase and the provi-



sion of protective clothing.

This has had a snowball effect on the workers who harvest the same bitter fruit for Cointreau – a similar liqueur to Grand Marnier. But they are having a tougher time of it. Their leaders have been jailed and otherwise harassed. The union has joined with other Haitian labour organizations and local peasant farmers to pressure the Cointreau managers to negotiate.

With no settlement in sight, the union is exploring the possibility of eliminating middlemen and selling directly to the European market themselves. The struggle is still ongoing.

Liberals welch on promise to elderly

The Campbell Liberals have reneged on their "new era" commitment to provide 5,000 non-profit intermediate and long-term beds.

Instead, the February budget slashes funding for health care capital projects by more than half over the next two years and says the private sector will play a greater role in financing and operating long-term care. That's in direct contradiction to the Campbell Liberals' pre-election commitment to preserve or increase the role of non-profit providers in long-term care.

The budget documents contain plans for a massive shift of frail elderly and disabled people with high care needs into their own homes.

"It's another broken promise by the Liberals that will put seniors and the disabled at risk, and put more pressure on emergency rooms and hospital beds," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "The Campbell solution to meeting the care needs of seniors – privatizing long-term care, shifting costs to individuals and moving the frail elderly into the home without the necessary supports – is no solution at all."

FIGHT BACK: LEADING UP TO FEBRUARY 23

Since the Campbell Liberal government launched its full out attack on health care and public services, HEU members have been letting government know what we think.

JANUARY 9 • VICTORIA Hundreds protest



January 12, Chemainus rally

JANUARY 12 • CHEMAINUS 250+ rally

SUMMERLAND 800 confront health authority

JANUARY 13 • NELSON 250 protest cuts

JANUARY 15 and 16 • FORT ST. JOHN, DAWSON CREEK "Open cabinet" meetings, Campbell bus blocked

JANUARY 17 / BLACK THURSDAY

NANAIMO HEU members dress in black

NELSON "Where's Blair" campaign starts

VANCOUVER HEU supports rallies at BCGEU

JANUARY 25 • BRITISH COLUMBIA Rallies

across the province in support of Medicare and defending contracts

LOWER MAINLAND Seniors, students, anti-poverty advocates, health care and other union members turned out in force to the "Hands off Medicare" rally at Canada Place

VICTORIA Demonstration at B.C. Legislature

JANUARY 26 • TERRACE College students host public meeting

CRESTON 350 block main street

PRINCE GEORGE Protest at MLA Shirley Bond's office

KELOWNA Grim Reaper joins 1000 at rally



January 25, Protest at B.C. legislature

JANUARY 28 • SMITHERS Health workers meet health authority CEO Peter Warwick

TERRACE Community activists demand municipal council stand against cuts

SECHLT 700+ rally and march on MLA Harold Long's office

BURNABY Normanna HEU members march

JANUARY 29 • BRITISH COLUMBIA Community social services workers walk off job. Protests against tearing up collective agreements in Vancouver, Victoria, Dawson Creek, Powell River, Nanaimo, Campbell River, Courtenay, Parksville, Penticton, Kelowna, Vernon and Burnaby

JANUARY 30 • PRINCE GEORGE Information picket marches around hospital

BURNABY Rally at MLA Patty Sahota's office

JANUARY 31 • NELSON Hundreds at public meeting

continued on page 8

6 GUARDIAN • SPRING 2002

The nuts and bolts

How it will affect health workers

DALE FULLER PHOTO



HEU members hear implications of Bill 29 at February 9 emergency meeting.

BILL 29, the Health and Social Services Delivery Improvement Act, or as HEU calls it, the *Hospital Closure Enabling Act*, arms the Campbell Liberals with the tools they need to close hospitals, privatize health services and strip health care workers of their contract rights.

The scope of the attack on health care collective agreements is unprecedented and paves the way for hospital and service closures, contracting out and the expansion of for-profit health corporations into B.C.

The legislation affects all unionized health care and community social services workers – more than 100,000 workers – by gutting key provisions of their health collective agreements relating to contracting out, lay-off, transfer, employment security and union representation.

Contracting out

First bargained 20 years ago, the contracting out language in existing collective agreements is rendered null and void except in very narrow circumstances: where a nurse or designated professional in a designated acute care hospital performs clinical services on a patient who has been admitted to an inpatient

bed. Under these rules, the Vancouver General Hospital emergency ward could be 100 per cent contracted out.

Bill 29 also means that private contractors are not bound by the terms and conditions of existing collective agreements because these contractors cannot be deemed "successor" or "common" employers.

Here's an example: If housekeeping is contracted out at a hospital, you will be laid off and can exercise what's left of your bumping rights. The private housekeeping contractor might hire you back – at a much lower wage – but you have no seniority, no collective agreement and no union.

The Campbell Liberals say this is about putting patients first. But this is really about closing facilities, dismantling services, and removing those barriers that stand in the way of corporations making huge profits from public health care dollars.

THE LIBERAL STORY SO FAR

2001 – THE FIRST 90 DAYS

JUNE First tax cut favours the wealthy, paves way for service cuts

JULY Core review of all ministries announced

AUGUST Pay equity legislation repealed, collective agreements for BCNU, HSA legislated; Bill 18 guts teachers' bargaining rights, makes education an

essential service; protection for workers removed with mandatory secret ballots for union certification

2001 – THE SECOND 90 DAYS

OCTOBER Sweeping changes to Pharmacare; two-tier minimum wage rates of \$8 and \$6 opens door to abuse; health, education budgets frozen; HEU, BCTF predict service cuts; HEU exposes secret government plans to build private hospital in Abbotsford

DECEMBER Liberals ice health boards, councils, 600 volunteer decision-makers fired, including health worker reps; Campbell creates six mega

of Bill 29

Bumping

HEU's bumping language – first bargained in the days of W.A.C. Bennett in the 1960's – is gone. In its place are new provisions that will force many health care workers out on the street. Under the legislation, if you have more than five years seniority, you can only bump those with less than five years seniority.

Here's an example: A health care worker with 25 years seniority moves from her job as a sterile supply technician to a newly created technical position. The new position is deleted as a result of cuts. All the jobs in her former department and her new department are held by workers with more than five years seniority and those are the only departments where she can work. She's out of a job despite her 25 years seniority.

If you have less than five years seniority, you have to take the job of the most junior person – before you get bumped yourself. Under the legislation, the provincial cabinet can rewrite bumping provisions anytime they want. The legislation restricts layoff notice to a maximum of 60 days (rather than six months).

Rebuilding the "wall" between community and facilities workers and services

Under Bill 29, the "wall" – only recently torn down – is back. This means that health care workers who deliver health care in what's defined as the "community sector" will continue to be underpaid and undervalued. In concrete terms this means:

- community and facilities workers won't be bargaining a common agreement in the next round of bargaining; and
- employers will try to arbitrarily transfer work into the "community," pay community level wages and provide community level conditions.

When taken together with the legislation's new provisions for transfer, it's clear that this part of the legislation is designed to expand this practice.

Transfer

Under Bill 29, an employer can transfer a whole department or service and, at the whim of the employer, the employees can be transferred along with it as long as the receiving employer is an HEABC member.

And under the regulations that accompany the bill, employers can transfer an employee with no right to decline and no posting or other rights except covering accommodation costs and other travel expenses. The regulations allow employers to do this to an employee for 30 days in a four-month period. If a permanent transfer is carried out that moves the job or service more than 50 kilometres, an employee has bumping rights. But these rights are severely limited as described above.

Union rights

Bill 29 is about removing any contract provisions that stand in the way of this government's efforts to cut some services and hospitals and privatize others. It's also about removing any serious obstacles posed by health care unions. The legislation provides the minister of labour with the power to direct a labour board review of union representation. In short, the legislation says that the Labour Relations Board can be instructed by the government minister to "consider whether continuation of a certification issued to a trade union is appropriate." In the bill, the LRB must decertify the union if doing so improves employer "efficiency" or improves their ability to "restructure or reorganize" (or privatize).

Employment security and the Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency

The groundbreaking labour adjustment policies that have been in force since 1993 and part of health care agreements since 1996 have been erased by the stroke of a legislative pen. In concrete terms, health care workers no longer have access to placement in another facility or agency if there's nothing available in their own workplace. There's no retraining. And there's no one-year period during which workers keep working while awaiting placement.

The Healthcare Labour Adjustment Agency will be dismantled within a year after it completes its outstanding obligations to workers and employers.

Erasing the gains made by community social services workers

Bill 29 steals from community social services workers the significant gains made after an 11-week job action in 1999. This means no successorship protection; no HBT extended benefits coverage; no equity adjustments; and restricted rights for new certifications.

This is a devastating setback for CSS workers and their clients who finally received a measure of respect as a result of their 1999 job action.

Government immunity

In an attempt to shield itself from legal action from health care workers, their unions and from individuals, Bill 29 includes a provision preventing legal action for damages or compensation.

What can we do to fight back?

- Participate in local rallies and demonstrations.
- Participate in the B.C. Federation of Labour's Campaign B.C. events in your community.
- Start or join a local fightback coalition.
- Write letters to your local paper, call your radio phone-in shows. Get the message out about how Bill 29 affects your community.
- Stay in touch with your HEU local executive.
- Check HEU's Defend our Contracts Hotline at 1.800.909.499, and sign up for HEU e-bulletins by visiting our website at <www.heu.org>.



HEU/EMERALD CITY GRAPHIC

WHAT THE PEOPLE THINK

The Campbell government's drastic actions on health care are not finding favour in the court of public opinion. Which makes you wonder who the government is actually listening to. Here are the results of the McIntyre and Mustel poll taken Feb. 6 to 10, 2002.

Do you trust Premier Campbell to protect health care?

35% YES

59% NO

7% don't know

Some say Premier Campbell has broken his promise to health care workers and voters. Others say he was right to take this step. Which view is closest to your own?

PREMIER CAMPBELL HAS BROKEN HIS PROMISE TO HEALTH CARE WORKERS

59%

HE WAS RIGHT TO TAKE THIS STEP

35%

DON'T KNOW

7%

The provincial government says it has altered collective agreements for health care workers to provide flexibility and to put patients first. Health care workers and their unions say that by unilaterally altering contracts, the government is paving the way for hospital closures, service cuts and privatization. Which view is closest to your own?

ALTERING COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS WILL LEAD TO HOSPITAL CLOSURES, SERVICE CUTS AND PRIVATIZATION

61%

ALTERING COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS WILL PROVIDE FLEXIBILITY AND PUT PATIENTS FIRST

25%

DON'T KNOW

13%

Do you think the government should revoke this law?

55% YES

34% NO

11% don't know

regions with handpicked czars as sole voting members; more changes to Pharmacare devastating to elderly, poor and sick

2002

JANUARY Another tax cut for the wealthy; restaurant and bar workers lose WCB protection from second-hand cigarette smoke; teachers' collective agreement legislated; health care workers' collective agreements ripped up

FEBRUARY Throne speech signals confrontation, privatization in health care; "us and them" budget will damage province for decades; no extra money to cover teachers' salary increase, school boards

told; tuition freeze lifted for post-secondary students; MSP premiums increased; commitment to frail elderly to build 5,000 long-term beds scrapped

MARCH Introduced law to change doctors' legally-binding arbitrated contract; secret budget document exposes government plans to axe 28,000 health care jobs while admitting support services will be privatized, hospitals and hospital beds will be closed and patient safety compromised; Campbell government hit by Charter of Rights suit launched by HEU, BCGEU, BCNU and HSA.

continued from page 6

DAWSON CREEK Town hall protest
NORTH VANCOUVER 200 people rally
TOFINO Noon-hour rally
VICTORIA Overpass demonstration
FEBRUARY 1 • KASLO Public meeting
PORT MOODY Rally at Christy Clark's office
MAPLE RIDGE Rally at MLA Ken Stewart's office

FEBRUARY 2 • GRAND FORKS 1100 protest – almost the entire town
VANCOUVER 1500 people rally at Art Gallery



February 2, Vancouver rally

FEBRUARY 3 • DELTA 3000 rally to save hospital

FEBRUARY 5 • INVERMERE 400 rally

FEBRUARY 6 • HEU announces Day of Protest

FEBRUARY 7 • LRB nixes HEU protest
CANADIAN FEDERATION of Students National Day of Action

DAY OF ACCOUNTABILITY Visits to MLA offices around B.C. for anti-poverty

FEBRUARY 8 • ABBOTSFORD Full house forum to say "no" to private hospital

FEBRUARY 9 • COMOX Town hall meeting
DUNCAN Rally in the Valley

RICHMOND HEU activists discuss strategy to fight Liberal attacks. Frustrated at having Day of Protest axed, they pour out into nearby street



February 9, Richmond rally

FEBRUARY 10 • NORTH VANCOUVER Town hall meeting

FEBRUARY 13 • SURREY Protest at office of Gulzar Cheema

VICTORIA

Protest Gorge Road Hospital closure

REVELSTOKE City council meeting on health care

FEBRUARY 14 • SURREY Protest Liberal charges of "sweetheart deals"

FEBRUARY 15 • VANCOUVER Rally at MLA Rob Nijjar's office

SALMO UFCW rally

SALMON ARM Rally, meeting with MLA and mayor

FEBRUARY 16 • LADYSMITH Rally protests possible hospital closure

FEBRUARY 17 • WHITE ROCK Public meeting discusses health care cuts

FEBRUARY 20 • RICHMOND Rally confronts "Robbing Hood" Campbell, "Friar" Hansen and their merry henchmen

CHILLIWACK Protesters confront premier as he meets business buddies

FEBRUARY 21 • VANCOUVER Seniors' plan how to fight cuts

HOPE Hundreds attend public meeting on health cuts

LYTTON Town hall meeting

FEBRUARY 23 • VICTORIA 30,000 rally, thousands more across B.C.

Taking on Gordocchio

How we are defending Medicare and health care workers

The Liberal government's attack on HEU members, the public health system and legally negotiated contracts is unprecedented in British Columbia's history. Never before has a provincial government broken a collective agreement mid-term by using "legislative vandalism" to unilaterally redefine the terms and conditions under which people work.

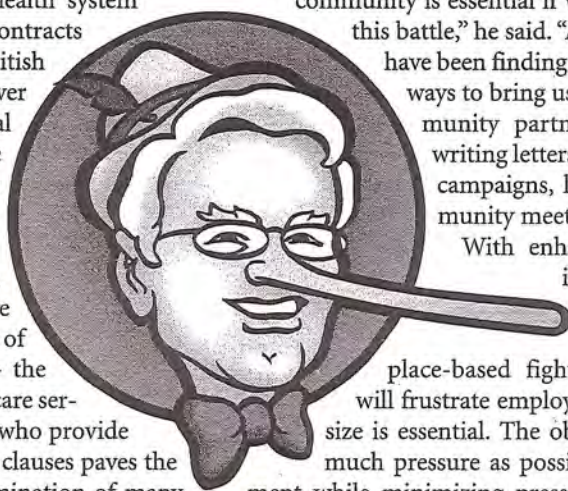
The contract clauses that have been targeted go right to the heart of our public health care system – the clauses that protect public health care services and the health care workers who provide them. Doing away with those key clauses paves the way for hospital closures, the elimination of many community and social health services and privatization of huge chunks of our public health care.

HEU's Provincial Executive presented their Action Plan to more than 500 local leaders gathered for an emergency meeting on Feb. 9, 2002. Discussions focused on planning a sustainable, long-term fightback against Campbell's agenda.

"Building our coalitions is critical," said HEU secretary-business manager, Chris Allnutt. "But just as important in the minds of our local leaders is continuing to educate our members and to engage them in a discussion on the range of actions they'll participate in to fight a government that has no respect for legally negotiated contracts."

HEU members across B.C. have been rallying, meeting and protesting together with seniors, students, youth, women, people with disabilities, churches, anti-poverty groups, community organizations and other trade unions.

On February 23, tens of thousands of British Columbians found their way to Victoria – by car, on foot, bike, chartering hundreds of buses, even chartering a ferry – to tell the Campbell government to stop tearing apart this province at the expense of so many for the benefit of so few. It was a powerful and enabling experience for those who were there, but the work is only beginning, said Allnutt.



"The coalition-building between labour and the community is essential if we are going to win this battle," he said. "And HEU members have been finding new and wonderful ways to bring us closer to our community partners, ranging from writing letters to editors, petition campaigns, leafleting and community meetings."

With enhanced consultation in the garbage can, finding ways to engage in workplace-based fightback actions that will frustrate employer efforts to downsize is essential. The objective is to put as much pressure as possible on the government while minimizing pressure on health care workers, residents, patients and clients.

Appropriating a favourite Liberal word, we will have to be "flexible" in our fightback plans and actions. That will mean changing plans very quickly sometimes.

"The boss is going to try and divide us, so it is paramount that we work with other unions in our workplaces," said Allnutt. "We need to work with local labour and CUPE district councils, even inviting them to our local meetings. And with them reach out to the community at large, so we can continue to build those coalitions in our communities."

Politically, HEU members can follow Campbell's advice and hold their local MLAs accountable and promote labour-friendly candidates in the November municipal elections.

HEU and other unions are working with the B.C. Federation of Labour to fight the Liberal attacks. The government's assault is clearly designed to dismantle this province's strong labour movement, and it is mandatory that a strengthened commitment to organize the unorganized must be part of this fightback campaign. That commitment will be sounded out with a canvas of the province's 450,000 unionized workers. HEU's participation in this canvas is dubbed "More Than a Strike Vote" and will be carried out in March.

Quality of life will deteriorate

The first thing that Gordon Campbell did upon taking over the reins of government was to cut taxes. The beneficiaries were for the most part British Columbians with yearly incomes of \$60,000 or more.

A second tax cut handed corporations a gift even they weren't expecting.

And in January 2002, although the first tax cut did not miraculously send the economy through the roof as finance minister Gary Collins had promised, the Liberals went ahead with another tax cut.

Such a gross loss of government income has to be paid for somehow – and the Liberals have deemed that the workers and the most vulnerable people in B.C. will make up the shortfall.

Lower income British Columbians received minimal tax cuts, but they are being clawed back through higher medical premiums, paying for medical services previously covered, higher tuition costs for their children, etc.

Seniors, the poor and disabled are having the rug

pulled out from under them – the social safety net that, although not perfect, afforded them a certain amount of security and dignity.

Thousands of government and health care employees are going to lose their livelihoods under the Liberals' "new era," but seniors, the disabled, women and the disadvantaged of this province will see their quality of life deteriorate considerably because of these tactics:

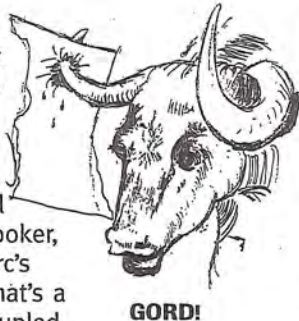
UNIVERSAL HEALTH CARE: MSP premiums up 50 per cent; Pharmacare slashed; increased user fees; diabetics paying for essentials; delisted medications;



Poverty advocate Jean Swanson

Sticking it to B.C.

Spoofig Gordon Campbell is something that Barbara LeClerc, a housekeeper at Royal Columbian Hospital in New Westminster, can't resist. RCH's local chairperson, Janine Brooker, sent in a pile of LeClerc's cartoons. Here's one that's a fine example of wit coupled with artistic talent.



Moving message

Andy Denis, a maintenance worker at Kelley Care Centre in Summerland, just had to speak out against "the expected demise of our province and our jobs." So he covered his SUV with messages for Gordon Campbell, his government and his friends.



It's just a matter of time, Gordo

It was inevitable people outside HEU would take the Gordocchio image a little further than a sticker and a button. Gudrun Langolf, a staff rep at CUPE 15, photocopied and enlarged it and made a clock.



TWO CONSERVATIVE PERIODICALS TAKE ON GORDON CAMPBELL

Right wingers blast Campbell's economics

Union members – especially in HEU – usually do not get a fair shake from the media, who rarely stray from the course set by the corporate world.

However, Gordon Campbell's social and economic agenda is so reckless and one-sided that it is attracting some hard-hitting criticism from some unlikely sources.

Two periodicals known for their conservatism recently ran editorials criticizing Campbell, his approach and his motives.

After the Liberal feeding frenzy left the collective bargaining rights and probably livelihoods of thousands of public service workers, teachers and health care workers in the dumpster, a January 30 *Globe and Mail* editorial stated that when Campbell ripped up existing agreements, he signaled that he can't be trusted. The implication is this is a major drawback if the province is trying to attract investment.

"Before last May's election, he sought to allay the concerns of those who feared he would ride roughshod over the rights of those he disagreed with. He wasn't one to break contracts, he said. 'I don't believe in ripping up agreements.'" (That's a direct quote from the interview with Gordon Campbell that appeared in the Oct./Nov. 2000 *Guardian*.)

The Economist, an British publication, recognizes the intent behind those moves. "Last weekend, Mr.

Campbell set out to cut the power of public-sector unions, a sure recipe for conflict in Canada's most unionized province."

The *Economist* looks askance at Campbell's reasoning when he says he must make drastic cuts to control a massive deficit. "Yet the Liberals did not inherit a deficit. The New Democrats, having belatedly cleaned up their act, left behind a surplus of C\$1.5 billion. The Liberals gave that away in tax cuts, and just at a time when revenues started to fall.

"Unfazed, Mr. Campbell said the government would balance the books by cutting spending by C\$1.9 billion over three years and eliminating 11,700 jobs."

But the *Economist* says in the real world "the province may have little power to control its economic fortunes. Japan's continuing malaise, the United States' recessions and the impact of American duties against softwood imports have all hammered British Columbia."

It's clear that Campbell's agenda is ideological, he wants to privatize the province and unionized workers are in the way. Before the 1996 election, he admitted he would tear up contracts and he lost the election. In last year's election he simply lied, won the election and is proceeding to do what he always meant to do.

But, as the *Globe and Mail* wrote, "... even by his own steamroller standards, Premier Campbell violated a basic covenant on the weekend by forcibly rewriting legal, negotiated contracts that were still in force. If he is not prepared to respect so basic a legal agreement, what other contracts is he prepared to rip up? This is not reform. It is legislative vandalism."

for many British Columbians

no eye tests, physiotherapy, massage, or chiropractic services.

WORKING CONDITIONS: No more WCB smoking-in-the-workplace regulations; business leaders on WCB sure to scale back workers' health and safety regulations.

YOUTH: No more post-secondary tuition freeze; \$6 per hour minimum wage for first-time workers; teachers' contracts no longer limit class sizes.

LABOUR: Legislated contracts for nurses, bus drivers, paramedics, teachers; thousands of direct public service jobs gone; pay equity laws, fair wage provisions axed; labour code changed, making it harder to join unions and impossible to keep certification with turving of successorship provisions.

POOR: Chopped programs for at-risk children and families, special services for the blind, and legal aid;

health ministry staff cutbacks; welfare rates slashed; closed residential tenancy offices; freeze on social housing projects; rolled back childcare benefits; eliminated funding for women's centres.

SENIORS: Closed seniors' advisory council and government office for seniors; clawed back meals-on-wheels and other support services for the elderly; axed the B.C. Seniors' Income supplement.

PUBLIC ASSETS: Preparing ground for privatization of B.C. Hydro, B.C. Ferries, ICBC; have already privatized parts of B.C. Rail.

FIRST NATIONS: Created a climate of confrontation with B.C.'s Aboriginal People by pursuing the land claims referendum.

ENVIRONMENT, TRANSPORTATION: Slashed budgets in environment, forestry, and transportation ministries.

WHAT HEU MEMBERS ARE SAYING

"To privatize our work [trades and maintenance] would not only increase the financial cost to the taxpayers of B.C. but also result in a dramatic decrease in the safety and quality of the vital service our members provide. Add to this the disbanding of the Industry's Training and Apprenticeship Commission in the face of a looming skills shortage, and there exists a recipe for disaster in our health care system."

Dave Pellerin
SURREY

"Not only do we disagree with Bill 29 and all other attempts to erode the public sector, but also we, the workers and taxpayers of this province did not give you the mandate to carry out such massive cuts. Other experiments to privatize health care and other social services in Britain and New Zealand in particular proved to be destructive to patient care, accessibility and a high standard of practice."

Workers of Dogwood Lodge
VANCOUVER

"That your government would make the insidious claim that my collective agreement or accords found within were 'sweetheart, backroom deals made with the NDP' is insulting. We walked the picket lines for 11 weeks, Mr. [MLA] Coell, hardly a 'sweetheart' dealmaking situation."

Josephine Queraud
SIDNEY

"I feel that the imposed contract that lets a person only bump someone with five years [seniority] or less will cause increased conflict in the workplace. I can tell you that this will not be in the best interest of delivering good health care."

James C. King
VERNON

"The government likes to compare my wages to workers in Alberta ... I find it strange that when the nurses asked to paid the same as nurses in Alberta, the government didn't see the comparison as fair and now if the same line of reasoning is used to pay someone less, they're all for it!"

Carla McLeod
SUMMERLAND

"We had contracting out protection in our contract way before the NDP was ever elected. Our bumping rights have been in our collective agreement since 1968 and we won this provision under WAC Bennett's government long before I even entered the industry."

Blair Thomas
VANCOUVER

Spread the work around, says CEP

A new campaign by the Communications, Energy and Paperworkers' Union looks to create jobs with shorter workdays.

At a time of massive layoffs in many industries and sectors, those who are left in worksites often work overtime. At the same time there are countless young people who cannot get a toe-hold in the labour market. One million Canadians are unemployed, with unemployment among those aged 15 to 24 at 13 per cent.

After researching the problem, CEP launched the *Shorter Work Time Campaign*.

Their research found that one out of every five full-time workers regularly works over 40 hours a week. Their overtime adds up to 20 million hours every week – equivalent to 500,000 full-time jobs.

CEP president Brian Payne says unions struggled for too long to get shorter hours and time off. Now, employers are trying to take that away from us.

CEP's campaign kit can be found at www.cep.ca under Campaign/Events.

Women overlooked

Six current and former Wal-Mart employees filed a sex discrimination lawsuit against the United States' largest private employer. The suit contends that women are relegated to lower paying jobs and systematically denied advancement. Even though they are only 28 per cent of the total workforce, men hold 90 per cent of Wal-Mart store manager positions.

Labor Notes/CALM

Bill 27 is anti-education, say teachers

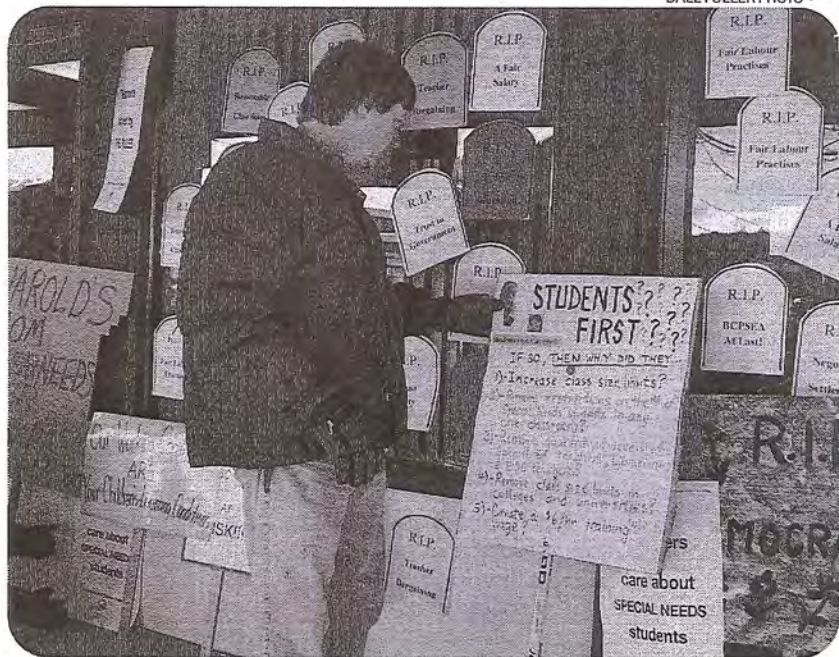
British Columbia teachers are outraged that the provincial government rewarded an intransigent employer who refused to budge from its one and only offer during months of negotiations. On the same weekend Campbell's Liberals rammed through Bill 29 – stripping health care workers of their collective agreement – they also passed Bill 27, which imposes that employer's offer on the teachers.

Days before the legislation passed, the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, which represents the province's 45,000 teachers, filed a complaint of unfair labour practices with the Labour Relations Board against both the B.C. Public School Employers' Association and the provincial government.

The union had been bargaining in good faith for months with an employer who was only playing a waiting game, with the provincial government fully engaged in the charade.

The Liberals made their intentions obvious from the start, making education an "essential service" – curtailing teachers' ability to back up their bargaining demands with the threat of a strike. BCTF called an overtime ban and the withdrawal of voluntary services, instead.

With no movement at all from BCPSEA, it was simply a matter of Labour Minister Graham Bruce slapping a cut-off date for a negotiated collective agreement on the parties – or else the government would legislate an end to the teachers' dispute.



Seven hundred teachers and supporters marched through Sechelt on January 28. They left Liberal MLA Harold Long with their messages of outrage.

Still in good faith, the BCTF put forward another offer, which the employer instantly rejected. Believing this was evidence of collusion between the government and the employer, the union filed the complaint with the LRB.

The rest is history. On January 28 Premier Campbell summoned the MLAs to Victoria for a special sitting of the legislature to legislate Bill 27 into existence.

With the imposed two-and-a-half per cent increase in each of the three years of the new contract, teachers will fall further behind inflation. BCTF president David Chudnovsky said that the legislation doesn't only attack teachers. "With the stroke of a pen, this government has eliminated the very provisions that ensure quali-

ty education for children," he said. He is referring to provisions included in the teachers' collective agreement like limits to class size and guarantees of services to children with special needs.

On January 28 students, parents, health care workers, forestry workers, public sector workers and other members of the community joined teachers in protest to express not only their solidarity, but their concern for the education of young people.

On January 31 they held a representative assembly to strategize how to begin their campaign to defend public education, hold the Liberals accountable for their legislative vandalism and reverse the impacts of the legislation.

>>notebook>>



**"Poor people are
going to be
denied help"**

B.C. budget's a poison pill

The government says it is giving us tough medicine for the economy, but its budget plan is more like a poison pill that means unnecessary pain for thousands of individuals.

There is no evidence that the Liberals' tax cuts will result in improved GDP growth over the next three years. And yet the government has stated once again that they have no alternative but to maintain the tax cut bonanza for corporations and upper-income earners.

This budget outlines a major shift in the tax burden from corporations to individuals, and from progressive income taxes to regressive taxes like premiums for the Medical Services Plan and sales taxes. The government is paying for the doctors' fee increase by increasing the provincial sales tax by one half of a per cent to 7.5 per cent and MSP premiums by 50 per cent. These methods of raising revenue hit lower- and modest-income people the hardest.

The government has also shifted costs onto individual

British Columbians and employers in the form of the higher higher tuition fees, higher Pharmacare and drug costs and increased alternative therapy costs. Most people's tax cuts are evaporating and measures such as the \$25 increase in the provincial sales tax credit for low income earners will be of little help.

The most disturbing piece of this budget is in welfare spending and caseloads, even though the economy is in a downturn, unemployment is up and in resource communities across the province laid-off workers are exhausting their EI coverage. That means poor people are going to be denied help, and struggling local economies are going to have less cash circulating. The government claims that they have no choice. Not true. There is nothing inevitable about the government's direction. The week before the budget, the auditor-general confirmed that B.C. has the ability to sustain its program spending.

SETH KLEIN • CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Pilot project for newsletter editors

As part of a pilot project to support HEU local newsletters, six editors will attend the 2002 Canadian Association of Labour Media conference to be held in Vancouver from June 6 to 8.

Conference attendance comes with a year's membership in CALM. This provides for a wide range of additional services including graphics and cartoons, access to the web site at www.calm.ca with news stories that you can pick up for your newsletter and regular tips to build the skills of local newsletter editors.

If your local produced a newsletter during the last year, you are eligible to apply

Staff worried about Gorge Road residents

Staff and a few residents from Gorge Road Hospital held a protest rally on February 13 against the Campbell government, his massive cuts to health care and the announcement of the closure of Gorge Road Hospital in Victoria. Passing traffic was extremely sup-

portive. Because the protest started up at 2:00 p.m. and ended at 4:00 p.m., nursing staff, housekeeping and food services were all able to join in the rally.

The week before the protest, the new Vancouver Island Health Authority confirmed that it would phase out the 267-bed hospital.

Local health care workers are asking where residents will go – and given recent legislation that strips experienced health workers of their employment security – who will take care of them.

Gremilins at St. Mary's

Management at St. Mary's Hospital in New Westminster was threatening union mem-

bers with discipline if they wore their Gordocchio buttons at work.

When Provincial Executive member Casey O'Hern found out, he asked where the buttons were – he wanted to put one on. But the whole bag had disappeared from the nursing station where they had been stashed.

Later in the day, at the Wednesday tea party volunteers put on for the patients, O'Hern was passing by the family room when one of the patients who was visiting with his family called him in.

"He told me to empty my shirt pocket, so I did," recounts O'Hern. "Leo reached into the side pocket of his patient gown and

pulled out a handful of Gordocchio buttons and shoved them into my shirt pocket."

The patient then pointed proudly to the button on his own chest and asked O'Hern where his was. "Are you not allowed to wear these?" he asked. O'Hern said that was under discussion.

"Well, they can't stop us," said the patient, and he pointed around the room.

BALANCING IT ALL DALE FULLER

Campbell is following in Ontario Premier Mike Harris' footsteps, and JAANA GRANT finds that very scary; especially because his agenda is even more extreme.

DON'T MESS WITH JAANA

parent, they said. No one wanted to help me."

Because Grant was trained as an early childhood educator, she began using some of the techniques she had learned, with moderate success.

"But then we moved from Windsor to Thunder Bay and all hell broke loose. He was out of control," said Grant. She would get up to 25 calls a day from the school.

When Michelle was five, she went to the Lakeshore Regional Family Centre and said, "Look, I need help." They put her on a wait list. She told them that if they didn't give her immediate assistance, she was afraid of what would happen. "I was truly desperate," said Grant.

So they did help, but not much. "They put me in a course on how to be a better parent. They showed videos where the father was saying, 'Put your toys away, son' and the son said 'Yes, father'. We looked at each other in the room and said, 'Yeah, right.'"

When Michelle was seven years old, Grant decided to try something different. She started the Thunder Bay ADD/ADHD Parent Support Group. "We were 15 families. We talked and we cried a lot." And they explored different ways to deal with their children.



Jaana Grant is a fierce advocate for children with special needs like her sons Markku and Michelle.

Then Ontario Premier Mike Harris started cutting special education programs and increasing class sizes. That was when Grant hit the roof.

"I went with the parents' group to an open forum the school board was holding. We told the school board if they didn't give our 12 special needs children their own classroom, we were going to charge them with child abuse," said Grant. "We were very serious and they took us seriously. It took awhile, but we got what we wanted."

Grant moved to B.C. in 1998 with her family and now sees the same battles looming.

"What I want to tell the people of B.C. right now, because Campbell is going down the same road that Harris did, is that parents are going to have to defend their children because they are being attacked," she said. "My children have broadened me, given me the opportunity to stand up for other parents, to teach other parents to say 'It's not okay if it isn't okay.'"

Grant has started another parents' support group called HOPE (Helping Out Parents with Exceptional Children), this one made up of HEU members and their families. HEU's Provincial Office has provided them with meeting space. There have been two meetings so far. The next one is on April 22 at 7 p.m. at HEU headquarters in Burnaby. For information, phone Grant at 604.592.4186 or 604.418.4118.

factfile

When NASA started sending up astronauts, they discovered that ballpoint pens would not work in zero gravity. They spent a decade and \$12 billion developing a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, under water, on almost any surface. The Russians used pencils.

New on the web at <www.workingtv.com> highlights from International Women's Day march and rally in Vancouver at <www.workingtv.com/twd2002> Coming soon: Maude Barlow on *Medicare*, *profit is not the cure*, taped March 12 in Vancouver at <www.workingtv.com/main11> Listen to Vancouver Co-op Radio's *Union Made*, labour's "power hour" on radio at <www.workingtv.com/main2>.

The Marriott Hospitality Public Charter High School in Washington, D.C., funded by the Marriott Foundation and hospitality industry corporations, teaches its primarily African-American and Latino students the finer points of hospitality. Juniors and seniors are required to intern in the food service and hospitality industry. According to a volunteer tutor, the school was established because Marriott was having difficulty finding properly prepared desk clerks, waiters and housekeepers.

The Liquor Distribution Branch in B.C. says in light of government cutbacks, it expects one of the largest sources of government revenue will be from the sales of their inventory.

All the patients were wearing Gordocchio buttons!

Have you a story to tell?

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All three styles are 100 per cent cotton and made in Canada at union shops. T-shirts are short-sleeved and the sweatshirts are long-sleeved. Both are black with a red and white screened design on front and back.

Something for the well-dressed HEU member

New to the HEU boutique – some striking-looking denim shirts, sweatshirts and t-shirts.

line. Or you can send it by mail to Our Times/Working for a Living, P.O. Box 182, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia B2H 5Z2.



Front says "hands off our health care," back says "hands off our contract."

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continued on page 14

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She laments the fact this valuable program is losing its source of fundings, with HLAA closing its doors within the next year. "Programs like BEST are essential if we want to continue to educate our members and to empower them to make informed decisions. The course that is just about to wrap up (in April) will be the last HLAA-funded BEST course at Children's and Women's," says Gan. "But our local is kicking around some ideas to start something similar up on our own."

Supreme Court unties our hands

In a major victory for Canadian unions the Supreme Court of Canada handed down a decision that strikes down the common belief that secondary picketing is illegal.

In its January 24 decision, the court upheld the arguments of the Canadian Labour Congress to the effect that union members must be able to exercise their rights to freedom of expression like any other citizen or group. The court ruled that secondary picketing – that is picketing in support of a union which occurs at a location other than the employer's premises – is generally lawful.

Ken Georgetti, president of the CLC, said this victory is historic for working people and their union. "The Supreme Court of Canada reminds us once again that working people must have the rights to exercise the freedoms they are guaranteed under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms."

The case arose in 1997 in Saskatchewan when members of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, Local 558, were locked out by their employer, Pepsi-Cola. To back up their demands, members of Local 558 picketed retail outlets carrying Pepsi products. The CLC helped RWDSU Local 558 take their case all the way to the highest court in Canada.

HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt applauds the court's decision. "This is an important precedent for all working Canadians, and keeps an important tool in our hands at a time when we are under such virulent attacks."

In its ruling the Supreme Court said that to uphold the rights of union members to freedom of expression is necessary to the functioning of a democratic society.

Energy stays public in Colombia

Energy and telecommunications workers in the Colombian city of Cali have won a victory to save their public utility from private hands.

On Christmas day 2001, the unionized workers of EMCALI, the public corporation that provides electricity, water and telecommunications services in the city, occupied the municipal administration building. They were protesting the government's announcement to privatize EMCALI.

The union presented three demands: no privatization of EMCALI, no fee hikes for EMCALI public services and the formation of a multi-sectoral review panel to investigate corruption within the corporation.

The corporation had been improving its financial health under a co-administration between the union and the manager of EMCALI. This included rooting out deep-seated management corruption. But the government abruptly dismissed the manager that had been overseeing this process and on December 24 appointed a new manager who had been implicated in a range of corruption charges stemming from his time as

EMCALI manager in the 1980s. This was immediately followed by the government's announcement of privatization.

Public support for the union, SINTRAEMCALI, was very strong in spite of the fact that the government imposed heavy security measures on the city in late January. They rationalized this by claiming the union had links to one of the country's armed insurgent movements.

They closed school and suspended public transport, prohibited marches, demonstrations and meetings and deployed troops at all public buildings and at roadblocks throughout the city. This amounted to a state of siege and coincided with plans for a general strike, which was subsequently called off.

The community was not cowed, however. They demonstrated their opposition to the privatization of one of the last publicly held companies in the country and their support for the occupation by rallying in front of the municipal building anyway.

Negotiations between the union and the Community Alliance, a coalition of civil society organizations, with the government resulted with the agreement to all of the union's demands.

In a country where trade unionists pay a very heavy price for their struggles (SINTRAEMCALI has lost six of their leaders and activists in the last three years through assassinations), it is important that the government is aware the international community is monitoring the situation, said

Barbara Wood, of the union-linked development agency CoDevelopment Canada.

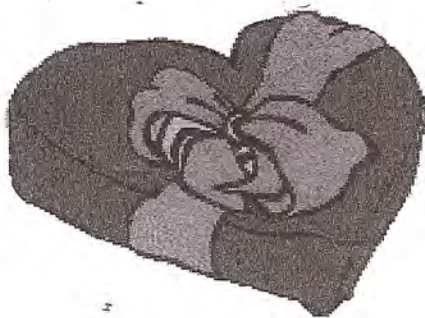
"I urge you to write a letter to the Colombian government with two messages: first recognizing their role in negotiating with the union and secondly indicating that the international community will continue to stand with the SINTRAEMCALI and will be watching the implementation of the government."

For information visit CoDev's website at <www.codev.org/codev>.

SINTRAEMCALI has lost six of their leaders and activists in the last three years

How sweet it is for chocolate workers

On January 31, Purdy's Chocolates workers voted to recertify with the



Communications, Energy and Paperworkers Union of Canada.

Local 2000 was first certified in February 1997. In August 1998, after a failed decertification vote, a first collective agreement was signed. With no agreement on a second contract, a strike began in April 2001.

On Oct. 15, 2001, the Labour Relations Board cancelled the certi-

fication after problems were discovered with four of the cards signed in the initial certification campaign.

With 20 employer-handpicked temporary staff, the recertification vote was close, but the union won.

Local 2000 president Mike Bocking says the courage and determination if his members is an inspiration to everyone in the labour movement.

>>voices>>



"We know what it is to fight almost insurmountable odds"

Defend your rights; it's your responsibility

have visited British Columbia before and have met with HEU activists both here and in Nicaragua. Through its association with CoDevelopment Canada, your union has been extremely instrumental in the success of Nicaragua's Maria Elena Cuadra Movement for Employed and Unemployed Women (MEC), of which I have been the leader for many years.

Now I see that your situation has fundamentally changed. The government is attacking health care and health care workers and seems determined to strip away all the gains you have made in the last few years.

What you have to remember is this: many of you have worked incredibly hard over the last few years to win the benefits you now enjoy, but you did not start from zero. You had a base to work on.

Untold thousands – millions – fought and made enormous sacrifices to win the rights you now value so much –

both as workers and as citizens. It's your responsibility to defend those hard-won rights. Don't let anybody take them away from you and your children. Above all, don't lose hope.

In Nicaragua we know what it is to fight almost insurmountable odds – and still we don't lose hope. Free trade practitioners have invaded our country and made life hell for many of our people – especially women.

But with help from our partners – like HEU and CoDevelopment Canada – we have been able, little by little, to help many of our people. And for that we thank you.

Solidarity is very important for you right now because what you are experiencing, sisters and brothers, is very much a part of the globalization agenda. We have to globalize solidarity and the defense of all of our rights as human beings. That is our only hope.

SANDRA RAMOS • DIRECTOR OF NICARAGUA'S MEC

Pilot project for newsletter editors

As part of a pilot project to support HEU local newsletters, six editors will attend the 2002 Canadian Association of Labour Media conference, to be held in Vancouver from June 6 to 8. Conference attendance comes with a year's membership in CALM. This provides for a wide range of additional services including graphics and cartoons, access to the web site at <www.calm.ca> with news stories that you can pick up for your newsletter and regular tips to build the skills of local newsletter editors.

If your local produced a newsletter during the last year, you are eligible to apply

to be part of this pilot project. Send in a copy of your newsletter along with a letter outlining why you would like to attend the conference to Dale Fuller in HEU's communications department.

The deadline for your entries is April 30, 2002. And good luck!

Staff worried about Gorge Road residents

Staff and a few residents from Gorge Road Hospital held a protest rally on February 13 against the Campbell government, his massive cuts to health care and the announcement of the closure of Gorge Road Hospital in Victoria. Passing traffic was extremely sup-

portive. Because the protest started up at 2:00 p.m. and ended at 4:00 p.m., nursing staff, housekeeping and food services were all able to join in the rally.

The week before the protest, the new Vancouver Island Health Authority confirmed that it would phase out the 267-bed hospital.

Local health care workers are asking where residents will go – and given recent legislation that strips experienced health workers of their employment security – who will take care of them.

Gremlins at St. Mary's

Management at St. Mary's Hospital in New Westminster was threatening union mem-

bers with discipline if they wore their Gordocchio buttons at work.

When Provincial Executive member Casey O'Hern found out, he asked where the buttons were – he wanted to put one on. But the whole bag had disappeared from the nursing station where they had been stashed.

Later in the day, at the Wednesday tea party volunteers put on for the patients, O'Hern was passing by the family room when one of the patients who was visiting with his family called him in.

"He told me to empty my shirt pocket, so I did," recounts O'Hern. "Leo reached into the side pocket of his patient gown and



pulled out a handful of Gordocchio buttons and shoved them into my shirt pocket."

The patient then pointed proudly to the button on his own chest and asked O'Hern where his was. "Are you not allowed to wear these?" he asked. O'Hern said that was under discussion.

"Well, they can't stop us," said the patient, and he pointed around the room.

BALANCING IT ALL

DALE FULLER

Campbell is following in Ontario Premier Mike Harris' footsteps, and **JAANA GRANT** finds that very scary; especially because his agenda is even more extreme.

DON'T MESS WITH JAANA

WHEN **JAANA GRANT** was living in Ontario a few years ago and Premier Mike Harris' government cut the province's educational funding, she got very angry. "The school board had to increase class sizes and make cuts to special education, and that meant that my son Mitchell was in a class of 40 with 12 special needs kids like him."

Grant, who now lives in the Lower Mainland and has been a care aide at the Finnish Canadian Rest Home and Finnish Manor for the last three years, has two sons, both with special needs. Mitchell, now 14, has Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and Markku, nine years, has high-functioning autism. Grant learned how to fight for both of her children through her experiences dealing with Mitchell's disability.

When Mitchell was born, the doctor told her there would be challenges ahead, and there were. "He never crawled, just began walking at five-and-a-half months," says Grant. "By nine months, he was a 'holy terror'."

The family doctor diagnosed him and then Grant at least had a name for what was happening. But when Mitchell started school at age four, Grant's real battle began.

"The teacher didn't know how to handle him," she said. At Christmas-time she found out that the teacher had been locking him away in a room.

Grant started looking around for help. "The first step in this process is that they blame the parent. They asked me if I drank, if I took drugs. I was a bad

parent, they said. No one wanted to help me."

Because Grant was trained as an early childhood educator, she began using some of the techniques she had learned, with moderate success.

"But then we moved from Windsor to Thunder Bay and all hell broke loose. He was out of control," said Grant. She would get up to 25 calls a day from the school.

When Mitchell was five, she went to the Lakehead Regional Family Centre and said, "Look, I need help." They put her on a wait list. She told them that if they didn't give her immediate assistance, she was afraid of what would happen. "I was truly desperate," said Grant.

So they did help, but not much. "They put me in a course on how to be a better parent. They showed videos where the father was saying, 'Put your toys away, son' and the son said 'Yes, father'. We looked at each other in the room and said, 'Yeah, right.'"

When Mitchell was seven years old, Grant decided to try something different. She started the Thunder Bay ADD/ADHD Parent Support Group. "We were 15 families. We talked and we cried a lot." And they explored different ways to deal with their children.

Then Ontario Premier Mike Harris started cutting special education programs and increasing class sizes. That was when Grant hit the roof. "I went with the parents' group to an open forum the school board was holding. We told the school board if they didn't give our 12 special needs children their own classroom, we were going to charge them with child abuse," said Grant. "We were very serious and they took us seriously. It took awhile, but we got what we wanted."

Grant moved to B.C. in 1998 with her family and now sees the same battles looming.

"What I want to tell the people of B.C. right now, because Campbell is going down the same road that Harris did, is that parents are going to have to defend their children because they are being attacked," she said. "My children have broadened me, given me the opportunity to stand up for other parents, to teach other parents to say 'it's not okay' if it isn't okay."

Grant has started another parents' support group called HOPE (Helping Out Parents with Exceptional Children), this one made up of HEU members and their families. HEU's Provincial Office has provided them with meeting space. There have been two meetings so far. The next one is on April 22 at 7 p.m. at HEU headquarters in Burnaby. For information, phone Grant at 604.592.4186 or 604.418.4118.



Jaana Grant is a fierce advocate for children with special needs like her sons Markku and Mitchell.

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The only rule is that it be no longer than 2,000 words.

Send your submission by e-mail to editor@ourtimes.ca, putting Our Times/Working for a Living in the subject

line. Or you can send it by mail to Our Times/Working for a Living, P.O. Box 182, New Glasgow, Nova Scotia B2H 5E2.

If your story is accepted for publication, you'll even get a \$100 honorarium!

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Front says "hands off our health care," back says "hands off our contract."

Long sleeved-denim shirts come in light blue, dark blue and black, with a white embroidered HEU/CUPE logo on the left chest.

Prices are at cost for HEU

members and include GST, PST and shipping:

- "Hands off" t-shirts: \$17.00;
 - "Hands off" sweatshirts: \$44.00;
 - Denim shirts: \$49.00.
- Soon to be available – fleece jackets (long-sleeved

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continued on page 14

>>factfile

When NASA started sending up astronauts, they discovered that ball-point pens would not work in zero gravity. They spent a decade and \$12 billion developing a pen that writes in zero gravity, upside down, under water, on almost any surface. The Russians used pencils.

New on the web at www.workingtv.com: highlights from International Women's Day march and rally in Vancouver at www.workingtv.com/iwd2002. Coming soon: Maude Barlow on *Medicare, profit is not the cure*, taped March 12 in Vancouver at www.workingtv.com/mainp11. Listen to Vancouver Co-op Radio's *Union Made*, labour's "power hour" on radio at www.workingtv.com/mainp2.

The Marriott Hospitality Public Charter High School in Washington, D.C., funded by the Marriott Foundation and hospitality industry corporations, teaches its primarily African-American and Latino students the finer points of hospitality. Juniors and seniors are required to intern in the food service and hospitality industry. According to a volunteer tutor, the school was established because Marriott was having difficulty finding properly prepared desk clerks, waiters and housekeepers.



The Liquor Distribution Branch in B.C. says in light of government cutbacks, it expects one of the largest sources of government revenue will be from the sales of their inventory.

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POLLOCK

continued from page 13

Driving Graham crackers

The Campbell Liberals have elevated business to the top of their most preferred special interest group with tax breaks for the wealthy and corporations while gutting collective agreements to help out health employers.

But Cowichan Valley residents are quietly and effectively making their disapproval known by taking their dollars away from two local grocery stores owned by labour minister Graham Bruce or members of his family.

According to media reports from Duncan,

normal profits are down and familiar faces have disappeared from the regular customer crowd at Bruce's Grocery and Chemainus Foods.

That's because Bruce and his government's policies have outraged union members, community activists and many others who have taken their business elsewhere.

"Because of the Liberal government's policies, hundreds of residents in the valley are uncertain about their next paycheques," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"People are speaking a language that Gordon Campbell, Graham Bruce

and the rest of the Liberals understand, profit.

Cowichan Valley residents are saying, we don't like what you are doing so we are not spending our hard-earned money at your stores," says Allnutt.

"It's a simple message delivered by consumers in a market-driven economy — just the way the Liberals like it."

Expert says private hospitals cost more

As B.C.'s Liberal government and the Fraser Health Authority are poised to proceed with a plan for Canada's first private hospital in the Fraser Valley, a British doctor and health policy expert told 375 Abbotsford citizens, including a large contingent of HEU members, the move will lead to reduced quality of patient care, fewer beds and higher costs.

At a February 8 public forum, Dr. Allyson Pollock, who heads the Health Services and Health Policy Research Unit at the University College London's School of Public Policy, said, "If B.C. follows the

United Kingdom's example of privatizing hospitals, the consequences to health care will be very serious."

Pollock says that the U.K. implemented its version of public/private partnerships called PFIs for health care in 1992.

The "finance-own-to-operate" scheme meant that in order to pay profits to private investors, the U.K.'s National Health Service was obliged to decrease the number of hospital beds by 30 per cent and clinical staff budgets by 25 per cent.

The public service underwent massive reductions with little government accountability.

MARCH

APRIL

MAY

JUNE

MARCH 29

Good Friday
HEU offices closed

APRIL 1

Easter Monday
HEU offices closed

APRIL 28

Day of Mourning for Workers
Killed or Injured on the Job

APRIL 27-MAY 19

Annual Mayworks Festival
Vancouver

MAY 1

May Day
International Workers' Day

MAY 18

Paul Robeson
Memorial Concert
Peace Arch Park

MAY 20

Victoria Day
HEU offices closed

MAY 25

B.C. Federation of
Labour rally
Vancouver

JUNE 10 TO 14

Canadian Labour
Congress Convention
Vancouver

American health care system costars as villian in *John Q*

A mother and father huddle together in a hospital boardroom. A vast expanse of metallic table separates them from a cardiac surgeon and a hospital administrator who are telling them they should take their son home and make him as comfortable as possible, because he is going to die. The reason he will die, they say, is because he needs a heart transplant and the father's health insurance will only cover \$20,000 of the needed \$250,000. The hospital will not, therefore, perform the operation.

"I'm sorry, but we have to make decisions like this every day," says the administrator. Later on in the film she answers criticism by saying, "There are 50 million Americans with no health insurance. If you don't like it, write your congressman."

This is the scenario presented in *John Q*, a film with Denzel Washington, Kimberly Elise, James Wood, Anne Heche, Ray Liotta and Robert Duvall. In other words, a Hollywood blockbuster.

This is an American movie about an American problem — but Canadians should take note.

John Quincy Archibald and his wife are working class residents of a town somewhere near Chicago. She is a clerk in a grocery store; he works in a steam-generator manufacturing plant. Recently his hours were cut back to 20 hours a week. They are struggling, but he expects to start working full-time again soon.

What he doesn't know is that his company has changed its health insurance carrier to a health management organization (HMO) and that as a part-time employee he only has the aforementioned \$20,000 coverage. In the U.S. this doesn't buy you very much hospital care.

After his nine-year-old son suffers heart failure at a baseball game, the situation rapidly deteriorates. The couple rushes their son to the nearest hospital. The rude awakening comes in

the hospital boardroom. The drama unfolds as the situation becomes desperate.

FILM

John Q

Director:
Nick Cassavetes
Screenplay:
James Kearns

reviewed by Dale Fuller

John Q's promises to somehow pay in the future fall on deaf ears. No money, no operation — sorry.

His friends' and neighbours' efforts at fundraising make hardly a dent in the quarter million dollars. He sees no way out. "I am not going to bury my son," he says. "He is going to bury me."

He confronts the cardiac surgeon and tells him he must save his son's life. When the doctor tries to brush him off, the desperate father pulls out a handgun, drags him into the emergency room, seals it off and tells the people there he's taking them hostages and won't let them go until his son has the promise of a new heart.

The dramatic tension revolves around how the situation is resolved: whether his son will survive, whether indeed *he* will survive, if any of the hostages will get hurt, etc. The hostages are the denizens of any emergency room: health care workers, a security guard and patients in varying degrees of medical stress, their friends or family. In the end, they are all on his side. Even the cardiac surgeon eventually has an attack of medical ethics. The crowds gathering outside the hospital are also with John Q.

The film has come under criticism for being preachy about the state of health care in the U.S. And it certainly does get that message out. But it seems Americans want to listen to that message, because they are going to see the movie in droves.

It has also been knocked for its cookie-cutter characters. But it is a drama about an "everyman" — after all, what does John Q mean but John Q Public? And the other characters also represent different facets of American society.

Perhaps in the future people will look at this film and see a morality play about early 21st century American society and their strange custom of denying health and well-being to such a large segment of their own citizenry.

HEU PEOPLE



WAYNE



WATT



CHAND

Happy in new home

Margie Wayne retired from her position at MSA General Hospital in March 2001, after being on LTD for nearly eight years. She started at the facility in 1974 in the dietary department.

She was an active HEU member, working to keep other members informed about contractual changes and important political concerns – always ready to fight an injustice.

She held positions in her local executive, serving as warden-conductor, vice chair and chairperson. And she has many fond memories of helping out her sisters and brothers as a shop steward.

She also served on the Provincial Executive from 1984-1994 and with the New Westminster and District Labour Council.

Politically involved, she lent her organizing skills to the local NDP and worked on several campaigns.

She was also a fun person to work with says Terry Lukach, MSA chairperson. "We look back on many fond memories and some with a bigger laugh than others," she writes.

Besides working as a dietary aide, she also was a housekeeping aide, operating room aide and a laundry worker.

Although she has been off on LTD for such a long time,

her co-workers say they miss her and wish her a very happy retirement. She's filling up her time with decorating her new home in Mission, gardening and of course, grandchildren. She'd love to hear from her union sisters and brothers.

Thanks to his union

Frank Verloop, of the White Rock local, wrote in saying that he is retiring after being a proud HEU member for 28 years. He thanked HEU "for all the work, negotiating and efforts made on my behalf during my years of employment at Peace Arch Hospital.

"I wish the union all the success, courage and strength in representing our members, especially in these difficult times," he concluded. Verloop retired on Feb. 14, 2002.

She'll not lack for things to do

Norma Watt retired from her position of care aide at Richmond Lions Manor on Dec. 31, 2001.

She first started working there in September 1987. She's been active in her union as shop steward, trustee and chairperson. She extended her activism to serving as an alternate on the OH&S committee and attending many Labour Adjustment Committee meetings. As a matter of fact, she

was active during almost the entire 14½ years she was at RLM. The current executive says they are going to miss her input very much.

Her future plans include spending more time with her husband and family, traveling in her RV to visit her 20 grandchildren and eight great grandchildren, bowling and golf. And she will pop into RLM as a casual once in awhile.

New secretary for organizing

In January, HEU's organizing department gained a new secretary.

Maureen Chand has worked at HEU since December 1999 as a casual in servicing, education and finance.

Immediately before moving to HEU, she was an admitting clerk at St. Vincent's Hospital/Heather Street site.

She graduated from Vancouver Community College's unit clerk program in 1994.

Right now she says she wants to expand her knowledge and apply what she already knows to make a valuable contribution to HEU. She's interested in web design and has taken some courses along that line.

She will start working as a volunteer at WAVAW (Women Against Violence Against Women) on their crisis line when she finishes her training with them.

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PRESS 1

Ethnic Diversity

One union, many colours!
Working across our differences!
To participate, please call and leave us your name!

PRESS 2

First Nations

First Nations members would like to hear from you! Please call if you would like to help educate our union brothers and sisters on issues that affect First Nations people.

PRESS 3

Lesbians and Gays

For support: afraid of being identified, feeling isolated, want to know your rights? Call for information on same sex benefits, fighting homophobia and discrimination.

PRESS 4

People with disabilities

If you are on WCB, LTD, or if invisibly or visibly disabled in the workplace, let us know how the union can better meet your needs.



ALL CALLS ARE CONFIDENTIAL

Talk to us Toll-Free!

You can call any HEU office toll-free to deal with a problem or get information. It's fast, easy and free.

PROVINCIAL OFFICES

• Vancouver Site
1-800-663-5813
• Abbotsford Site
1-800-404-2020

REGIONAL OFFICES

Northern Office
• Prince George
1-800-663-6539

Okanagan Office
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1-800-347-0290
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1-800-624-9940

Kootenay Office

• Nelson
1-800-437-9877

We Can Do It!

Campbell is attacking
social services
workers and clients.
Speak out. Fight back.



BRITISH COLUMBIA GOVERNMENT
AND SERVICE EMPLOYEES' UNION



HOSPITAL
EMPLOYEES' UNION



HEALTH SCIENCES
ASSOCIATION

AGREEMENT NUMBER 1571931

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GUARDIAN



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Protesters gather in Vancouver



Chilliwack protester tells the truth



St. Mary's Hospital employees support rally

Extreme agenda

Gordon Campbell's leaked documents expose plans for radical health privatization.

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B.C. at the crossroads

Two Vancouver Island families could be hurting

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HEU lampoons

Health care workers know a good fight needs an injection of humour

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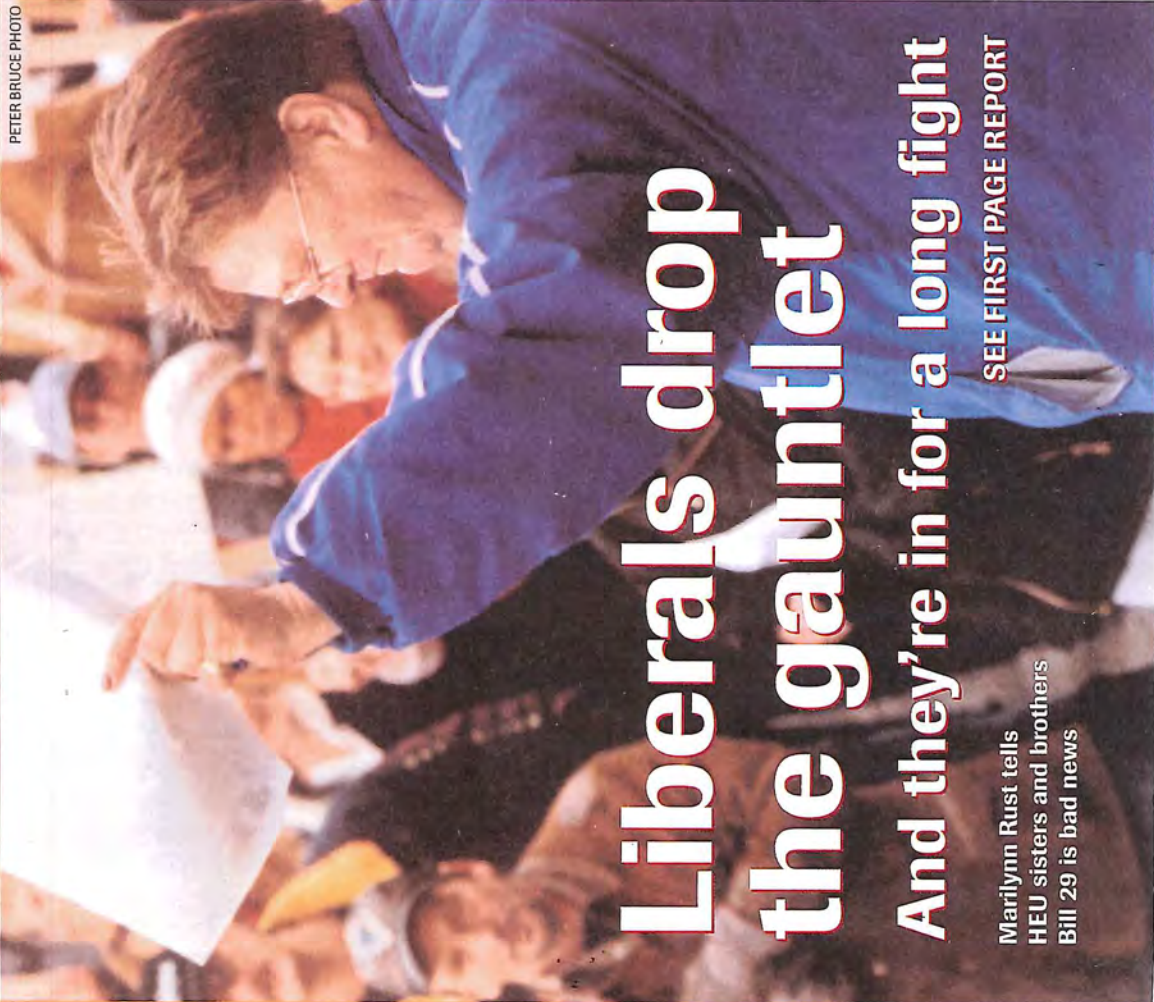


BARBARA LECLERK GRAPHIC

No small victory

Colombians stop privatization of utility in Cali

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Liberals drop the gauntlet

And they're in for a long fight

SEE FIRST PAGE REPORT

Marilynn Rust tells
HEU sisters and brothers
Bill '29 is bad news