

A rally on May 6 to support the fight of the residents and caregivers at St. Vincent's Hospital drew health care workers like Marie Pantelis (at mike) from other facilities that are facing the same fate.



■ Health care workers like Marie Pantelis are out there in their communities fighting against devastating government cuts that hurt the ones they care for.

fighting to care

Marie Pantelis is a fighter when it comes to standing up for what is fair. And she thinks that closing a long-established seniors' care facility that is home to almost 200 elderly people in West Vancouver is wrong. She's joined with family members, co-workers and her union in standing up to a government she feels is bullying some of the province's most vulnerable citizens.

"It's the union that stands up for our rights as workers," she says. "And HEU goes after what is fair, not only for our members, but for the people we take care of. That means defending our public health care system."

Pantelis has been working as a care aide at Capilano Care Centre (formerly Beacon Hill Lodge) for 24 years. When a government document leaked by the B.C. Nurses' Union last February stated that Capilano Care Centre was slated for closure early next year, Pantelis and her local began organizing to stop it.

"We decided to make the public aware of what was happening," she says.

The local organized a rally on May 2, catching early morning commuters heading into Vancouver from the North Shore via the Lions Gate Bridge. "Honk for seniors" and "Humanity cannot put \$ on health care" said a couple of the signs. The result was high recognition and a lot of support – at least



This senior went to the Lions Gate local's People's Picnic with Marie Pantelis and told the Liberals just what she thinks of their cuts to health care.

judging from the honking cars. "But we couldn't just leave it at that," says Pantelis. "The members of a group of the residents' families drew up a petition and we helped them distribute it and collect signatures."

In the end, between them all, they collected 10,000 signatures. "We presented the petition to North Vancouver/Lonsdale MLA Katherine Whittred and West Vancouver/Capilano MLA Ralph Sultan."

Pantelis says that Whittred was not helpful and didn't listen, but that Sultan was surprisingly sympathetic and presented their petition to the legislature on April 30, 2002.

The health care providers at the care centre are taking every opportunity to talk to people about the West Vancouver facility. "We hear they have postponed the closure until 2004, but that is still not good enough. It shouldn't close at all," she says.

For the People's Picnic put on by the Lions Gate local on B.C. Day in August, Pantelis donned a costume to become a giant senior to dramatize the plight of elderly British Columbians that live in residential facilities in the province. "To let people know that the people who care for them are fighting to protect their rights – but that seniors are out there fighting too!"



ALLNUTT

Fighting back is never in vain

Times are tough in Gordon Campbell's British Columbia, but his all-out attacks on workers, women, seniors, the young, the poor and the disAbled have resulted in communities getting together

and finding out that fighting back is not just a vain exercise.

One of the broadest attacks of the Liberal government has been against health care workers.

Rallies, petitions and occupations, that's where you'll find HEU

Never before in HEU's 58-year history has this union faced such a vicious assault as we have since the passing of Bill 29 last January.

And never before has resistance been as wide-spread as it is now. The Liberal government is attempting to undermine the whole public health care system, and that hurts everyone, not just health care workers.

When the Interior Health Authority told the residents of Moberley Manor in Revelstoke that they had 30 days to find a new place to live, HEU members went to work. They contacted families and before

you know it there wasn't a soul in town who didn't know what was going on.

They formed a circle around the facility to stop move-outs and embarrassed the health

authority into backing down.

HEU members at Capilano Care Centre in West Vancouver also said, "No way," when leaked documents showed their facility was slated for closure. Forming an alliance with family members, helping them with a petition against the closure, they actually got their Liberal MLA to break ranks with his party and call for a reversal of this decision.

The plan was put on hold.

Children's and Women's local members were on constant lookout for "men in suits" who were roaming the hospital corridors, because they knew their facility was to be a Liberal template for contracting out. HEU exposed the stupidity of contracting to a company without due diligence.

Again the boss was embarrassed and backed down.

In community after community, we have damaged the Liberal plan, we have delayed or stopped their efforts to cut services and privatize health care.

Whenever you look around British Columbia today, there are HEU members joining with others in the fightback.

Rallies, petitions and occupations, that's where you'll find HEU.

voice.mail

Retiree thanks HEU

As a member since July 1979 and now an official pensioner, I would like to thank the union for all the help it has given me over many years.

Years ago, trying to get the hospital to acknowledge dates that I had worked there permanent and part-time, the union stepped in and worked very hard on my behalf.

Going onto long-term disability for 12 years was even more difficult for me and my family. Especially as they delayed my pension. Again, the union came to my aid, and after nine months of waiting, they finally paid up and I had an income again.

After 10 years of disability the union was working extremely hard to improve conditions for us and we received our very first pay raise. Something I thought would never happen.

At 63, I took early retirement and I had some buy-back time, but I didn't hold out much hope for the hospital to agree. That was over two years ago and I had completely forgotten about it.

Four weeks before I was 65, an urgent letter arrived and I was shocked to find that I was able to buy back 19 months of service. So, after all this time, I realized that this was due to the work of Robbin McCurrach [Knox] and her colleagues. They had obviously been negotiating this with the hospital until the last minute.

For me it was great news, because they had already announced that at 65, my pension would be reduced by \$286 a month, which I expected but it still hurt. So I am thankful and very grateful once again to HEU. Now I have another chance to increase my pension a bit.

Keep up the good fight against the Campbell government and please know that you will always have support from me.

PATRICIA COOK
*LPN/Nurses Aide, retired
Burnaby Hospital*

Even more thanks

The Victoria-Anti-Poverty Coalition (APOV) would like to thank your members and HEU itself for demonstrating that there is action and meaning behind the word solidarity.

The consistent presence and support of HEU at all community actions taken recently to resist the neo-Liberal agenda has had a big impact on creating links between the diverse groups who are all under attack by the government of this province.

The greatest threat to the Liberals is for their many targets to join together and defend each other even if the direct link between our interests is not immediately apparent.

The draconian cuts to welfare were designed to create a huge pool of desperate workers who would not hesitate to cross a picket line (some expect as many as 100,000 to be on welfare in B.C.). Using the unemployed to bust unions is no doubt part of the Liberal agenda.

Making ties between the unemployed and unionized workers is an essential strategy to take at this time.

APOV's Kimberly Rogers Womyn's Brigade also wishes to acknowledge and thank those who came out to support us during the occupation of Jeff Bray's office and who ended up facing unexpected, and uncalled for, police brutality.

In addition, we would like to thank all the HEU members who made donations to our legal defense fund. Our court date is July 4th [2002] at the Victoria courthouse.

The unfortunate reality is that many of today's unemployed workers are tomorrow's low wage workers, unemployed or victims of the welfare system. It is only through continued solidarity and escalating resistance that we can defend ourselves and fight to win.

ANTI-POVERTY COALITION
various signatures

Get real, please

This letter was written on May 27, 2002 and addressed to Richard Lee, MLA for Burnaby North. It has been edited for length.

I would like to voice my serious concern over the potential closure of acute care beds at Burnaby Hospital. You may or may not be aware that

this hospital plays an integral role in ensuring the delivery of timely and efficient health response services to Burnaby residents.

The vast majority of health care employees — from housekeepers to doctors — readily agree that despite the issue of cost restraints the government is approaching the health care situation in a brutal, uncaring and uninformed manner.

Your government is on record as stating that the health care system has been out of control for the last 10 years, saying labour is a major impediment to the cost efficiency of our health care system.

It is a serious shame that your government and particularly your Health Services Minister, Colin Hansen, doesn't realize the true reason for health care's soaring costs is in fact rising pharmaceutical costs, technological innovations and costlier and ever-increasing patient treatments.

Your government's oversimplification of the complexities of the system and callous determination to increasingly treat it as a business will inevitably set the stage for unprecedented numbers of patients to fall between the cracks.

D.J. HARRIS, BA
*Housekeeper
St. Paul's Hospital*



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Fraser Valley jobs, four million pounds of laundry to go to Alberta

Ten-year contract goes to K-Bro, an Alberta-based company controlled by a U.S. investment firm

A plan to ship more than 4 million pounds of hospital laundry and dozens of Fraser Valley jobs to Alberta is economically damaging, risky and raises serious doubts about whether health authorities are practicing due diligence in the awarding of lucrative health care contracts, says HEU.

K-Bro Linen Systems – an Alberta-based company controlled by a private U.S. investment firm – was given an unprecedented 10-year contract to clean laundry for four Fraser Valley hospitals. That means Chilliwack and Mission will lose 43 skilled laundry jobs and \$1.5 million in direct economic activity.

"It's completely unacceptable that this government and their health authority appointees would ship decent jobs to Alberta and health care dollars south of the border," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "Especially since the projected – and unproven – operating costs savings are modest at best. But there's serious implications in this decision for patient health and safety as well."

Over the next year – while the FHA waits for K-Bro to build a laundry facility somewhere in the Lower Mainland – millions of pounds of hospital laundry including more than 400,000 pounds of critical operating room linens will be trucked to and from Calgary through some of the most difficult mountain passes on the continent.

"Hospitals constantly resupply their inventory of sterile OR linens," says Allnutt. "Even minor weather related delays in delivering these supplies could have major repercussions for patient safety."

The union is calling for full disclo-



HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt speaks to the Chinese media at the September 4 launch of the union's billboard campaign, part of its fight against the Campbell government's plans to privatize health support services like laundry. Two signs – like this one – are directed at Vancouver's Chinese community.

sure of the terms of the contract and is raising doubts about whether due diligence was followed in the tendering process.

The communities of Chilliwack and Mission will lose 43 skilled laundry jobs

"This announcement raises many questions about the health authority's privatization plans," says Allnutt.

Those questions include:

- Why are taxpayers on the hook for a 10-year contract when the tender document specified a five-

year contract and how much will it cost taxpayers to bail out if K-Bro fails to perform?

- What commitments does K-Bro have outside of the tendering process

to provide the company with enough volume to justify their planned \$4 million dollar investment in a new laundry facility?

- Did the FHA investigate the controversy surrounding cost overruns during the first year of K-Bro's laundry contract with the Calgary Regional Health Authority in 1998?

- Why didn't B.C.'s public health authorities submit a proposal to do the work by the efficient, cost-effective and publicly-owned Tilbury Regional Hospital laundry in Delta?

"Campbell's health privatization train is picking up steam," says Allnutt.

"It's headed right out of the province loaded with millions of health care dollars."

HEU to hold 23rd Biennial Convention

This issue of the *Guardian* will be hot off the press on the first day of HEU's 23rd Biennial Convention. The political and social climate has done an almost complete 180-degree turnaround since we held our last convention in 2000.

About 600 delegates at this convention – many of them first-time delegates – will be debating resolutions and constitutional amendments, but what is going on outside the big tent in Richmond will never be far from anyone's mind.

It's very appropriate that the first day of convention – October 7th – coincides with the Day of Defiance and with the first day of the Fall 2002

sitting of the legislature in Victoria.

It will be a day of protests across the province. The largest one will be in Victoria at Centennial Square. As the *Guardian* goes to press, plans for a Vancouver rally in front of the BC Hydro building were taking shape. More @ <members.shaw.ca/solidarity>.

It will make for an interesting backdrop to the convention this year. HEU members will come out of it energized to continue the fightback against cuts to our health care system. And the leadership will have a new mandate to lead that fight with the members.

Elections imminent

The November 16 municipal elections will give British Columbians a say to oppose the Campbell government's attacks on our public services.

So far six HEU members are running for office in their communities: Barb Burke (Penticton), Jennifer Neely (Saanich), Gordon Logan (Colwood) for council, Jaana Grant (Delta), and Chris Dorais (City of North Vancouver) for school trustee. In Penticton Kevin Andrews is running for council and schoolboard.

A special membership mailout is being prepared to provide you with the names of labour-endorsed candidates in your community.



COFFEE BREAK

All stories guaranteed factual.
Sources this issue: the Internet

Stock market (partially) deciphered

Bull market: a random market movement causing an investor to mistake himself for a financial genius.

P/E ratio: the percentage of investors wetting their pants as the market keeps crashing.

Broker: poorer than you were last year.

Buy, buy: a flight attendant making market recommendations as you step off the plane.

Stock analyst: idiot who just downgraded your stock.

Cash flow: the movement your money makes as it disappears down the toilet.

What were they thinking?

Excerpts from actual classified ads:

Auto Repair Service. Free pick-up and delivery. Try us once, you'll never go anywhere again.

Stock up and save. Limit: one.

Semi-annual after-Christmas sale. Now is your chance to have your ears pierced and get an extra pair to take home, too.

Vacation special: have your home exterminated.

Used cars: Why go elsewhere to be cheated? Come here first.

Superstore — unequaled in size, unmatched in variety, unrivaled inconvenience.

A short history of medicine:

"Doctor, I have an ear ache."
2000 BC

"Here, eat this root." 1000 BC

"That root is heathen, say this prayer." 1850 AD

"That prayer is superstition, drink this potion." 1940 AD

"That potion is snake oil, swallow this pill." 1985 AD

"That pill is ineffective, take this antibiotic." 2000 AD

"You're body has built up a resistance to that antibiotic. Here, eat this root!" 2002 AD

Two one-liners

Where do polar bears vote? — The North Poll.

What's better than a talking dog? — A spelling bee.



Security is not secure

The Vancouver Coastal Health Authority is planning to privatize security services at Lower Mainland hospitals, saying it's to improve service, but St. Paul's Hospital security supervisor Roger Kishi says, "It's about cutting costs."

HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt agrees. "It's an alarming move that threatens the safety of patients and health care workers."

To illustrate the absurdity of this measure, on July 29 the security staff at St. Paul's Hospital were recognized

for the special work they do at the facility when Dr. Michael Myers, president of the Canadian Psychiatric Association, presented them with a plaque from his association commending them for "the kind and sensitive attitude shown by the Protective Services Team toward mentally ill and socially disadvantaged individuals who have come to the emergency room and the Comox Unit."

These are some of the jobs that the Campbell government is looking to contract out to the lowest bidder.



Dr. Michael Myers, psychiatrist; Dr. Cosmos Leung, director of St. Paul's emergency services department; Roger Kishi, security supervisor; and Kevin O'Donnell, security officer at the award celebration.

Organizing private contractors

Giant multinational corporations are learning that in B.C. winning private health care contracts is no guarantee their workers won't seek out union representation.

In September, 23 employees at Renfrew Care Centre in East Vancouver who provide dietary, housekeeping and laundry services and work for Compass, the world's largest health care provider, voted to join HEU. The facility thought that by firing workers and inviting in a private multinational, they would no longer have to deal with a union.

Earlier in the summer, within one week of each other, employees of the French multinational Sodexho who work at two private for-profit retirement complexes voted overwhelmingly under Labour Relations Board supervised votes to join HEU.

The 18 employees at Mayfair on the Green in Port Coquitlam joined HEU to win stronger representation and better opportunities to improve wages and working conditions, as did the 15 new union members work at Rideau Manor in Burnaby.

"These are small but important victories for all health workers in our efforts to improve pay, benefits and

working conditions for employees of multinational companies like Sodexho and Compass who are pushing for private health care," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

Also in late July, 22 employees of North Vancouver's Summerhill retirement living complex voted overwhelmingly to join HEU. The key issue for the housekeepers and food service workers was to win greater respect from onsite administration.

"We look forward to working constructively with the Summerhill employer to negotiate a fair first contract for our new members," says Allnutt.

The Port Coquitlam workers are halfway through a five-year agreement negotiated by their former organization, the Service Workers Union, a small outfit that is outside the mainstream labour movement.

These new members joined HEU as a result of the union's comprehensive organizing strategy to counter the Liberals' efforts to roll back workplace protections through privatization and legislated contract breaking.

Meanwhile, HEU is working with the 40 members fired from Renfrew to show how the Liberal government's legislation that paves the way for the privatization of services and the sacking of skilled and experienced workers is bad for patients and residents.

Role model for private for-profits?

HEU has called for an investigation into the firing of 20 direct care staff at Valley Haven Guest Home in Chilliwack.

The union wants to find out if the facility's operator, John Jansen, is violating the provincial law that governs operation of continuing care facilities by contracting out care staff.

Earlier Jansen — an ex-Social Credit health minister — fired housekeeping, laundry and dietary staff and contracted the work out to a firm owned by his brother who hired many of the same workers back at lower wages, minimal benefits and longer hours.

"Mr. Jansen has a license to employ and supervise staff to look after seniors in his care," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt, adding that legally Jansen must have a hands-on role in providing supervision and care to seniors at Valley Haven.

<<newsbites>>

Keep our kids close to home

A summer-time hunger strike to fight the closure of a small elementary school in B.C.'s interior has resulted in an agreement proposed by the District of Wells, B.C. and accepted by the Quesnel School Board. At issue was the school board's edict to close the school and bus the children — some as young as five-years-old — 150 kilometres a day over mountain roads.

When the school board turned a deaf ear to the townspeople, Wells artist Claire Kujundzic started a hunger strike that was joined by the town's septuagenarian mayor, poet

Susan Musgrave and many others. The school board waited until right before the start of the school year to agree to enter into negotiations, but closed the school anyway. Mayor Dave Hendrixson pointed out that the District of Wells had been willing since June to negotiate a cost-sharing agreement with the school district. "For them to come to us at the last minute, and expect an instant response, while at the same time keeping the school closed, is not a sign of good faith."

Under the agreement, Wells is providing a temporary classroom in the town's community hall and the school board is providing a teacher.



Most parents in Wells refused to send their children away and started an alternative school.

First day of classes for the elementary aged children in Wells was September 17.

Workplace chemicals information online

Health care workers can now find about the risks and hazards of chemicals and other products they work

Class action suit aims to protect B.C.'s public power

The lawsuit could be the largest in Canadian history

A grassroots organization fighting the privatization, deregulation and breakup of BC Hydro called B.C. Citizens for Public Power, filed what could be the largest class action suit in Canadian history in seeking an injunction to prevent the provincial government and BC Hydro from selling or transferring the crown corporation's assets.

Despite election promises to "protect BC Hydro and all its core assets including dams, reservoirs and power lines under public ownership" and to "restore an independent B.C. Utilities Commission to re-regulate BC Hydro's electricity rates," Gordon Campbell is moving ahead to breakup, sell off and deregulate B.C.'s publicly-owned power system.

"If the B.C. Supreme Court certifies this lawsuit as a class action, then every BC Hydro customer – residential, institutional or commercial – may be included. That's more than 1.5 million customers," said Leo McGrady, legal counsel for BCCPP. "British Columbians created BC Hydro to gain control over future electricity development, access to funds for this development, security of supply, control over price and support for economic development."

"This suit charges that the government is breaking a trust with the people of B.C. – many of whom have

invested in this corporation for more than a generation – by breaking it up and privatizing key functions."

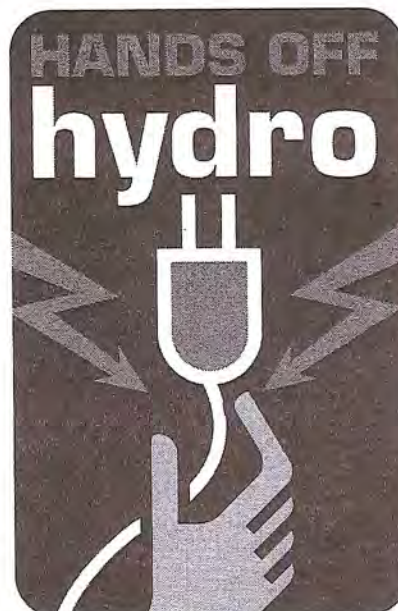
Marjorie Griffen Cohen, spokesperson for BCCPP, says the fact that BC Hydro has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bermuda-based multinational Accenture to privatize

one-third of Hydro's operations and employees makes the lawsuit critical.

"We believe the lawsuit is one of the best ways we can use to express the overwhelming demand of British Columbians that the privatization and dis-

mantling of BC Hydro stop immediately," she said. "Taking government to court is perhaps the most serious step citizens can take when elected repre-

The government is breaking a trust with the people of B.C.



sentatives refuse to listen to the people."

BCCPP has launched a province-wide campaign asking all British Columbians concerned about the future of BC Hydro to sign a Letter of Intent supporting its request to the Supreme Court to certify the lawsuit as a class action.

British Columbians can sign the Letter of Intent on the back cover of this *Guardian* and log on to <www.citizensforpublicpower.ca> to find out more about the campaign.

FROM B.C. FEDERATION OF LABOUR

What is Accenture?

Accenture is a multinational consulting company headquartered in Bermuda, a popular tax haven for corporations.

It operates regional offices throughout the world and has recently expanded into public utilities throughout North America.

Accenture used to be known as Andersen Consulting, the consulting arm of Arthur Andersen – the same accounting firm implicated in the Enron scandal in the U.S.

In 2000, Andersen Consulting (then a Chicago-based partnership) changed its name to Accenture, went public as a corporation and relocated their head office in Bermuda.

British Columbians, take note: in July 2001, in documents filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC), Accenture stated, "Shareholders of Bermuda companies do not generally have rights to take action against directors or officers of the company."

Not a shred of evidence

The Campbell government told HEU in August it will only release two pages of the scant documentation it's generated to support the wholesale privatization of health services. In response to a comprehensive freedom of information request filed by the union last February, the Ministry of Health Services disclosed that it has only 55 pages of documents to justify its plans to privatize health services and facilities.

"The ministry cannot produce a single shred of evidence to support its aggressive health privatization plans," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

After a confidential government budget document released by the union earlier this year revealed plans to privatize \$700 million worth of health services and fire 20,000 health care workers, the union filed an appeal to the information and privacy commissioner to gain access to the material.

Provincial legislation specifically states government ministers cannot withhold any factual information.

"We can only conclude that the health services ministry is sitting on a lot of spin but very little substantive research to support the government's health care privatization agenda," says Allnutt.

Numerous studies in peer-reviewed journals have pointed to the negative consequences of health privatization, including a recent study published in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. And this past May, respected forensic auditor Ron Parks concluded that a privately owned and financed hospital in the Fraser Valley may be more costly than a publicly owned and financed facility.

with on the Occupational Health and Safety Agency for Healthcare (OSHAH) website.

The Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS) requires availability of Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS), and health care workers across the province can now access the information at <www.ohsah.bc.ca>.

OHAH has created a provincial database, so that MSDSs can be stored, updated and delivered electronically via the OHAH website. A link on the website takes the user to the Web-based MSDS System homepage and there a worker can search by product name or health authority.

The page also has a link that takes the user to an MSDS request form, where you can request information about a new product.

Learn Alberta's lesson, says expert

A new study documenting the impact of privatization and decentralization of seniors' care in Alberta should be compulsory reading for B.C.'s health ministers.

A report released by the Consumers' Association of Canada says Alberta's seniors, their families and taxpayers are bearing the increased costs as a result of the introduction of a U.S. model of care that's fragmented ser-

vices, expanded the role of private insurers and increased administrative costs.

The B.C. Health Coalition's Terrie Hendrickson says, "This new study should prompt B.C. politicians – who propose to take seniors and their families down this same road – to take a sober look at those plans."

Eldercare – on the auction block: Alberta families pay the price says when the Alberta government cut funding to long-term care facilities and decreased the number of acute beds, real estate investors and private lodge operators cashed in with an expensive private-pay model imported from the U.S.

Wendy Armstrong, the study's author, demonstrates how the fragmentation of services and reliance on private insurance has increased administrative costs enormously.

"Many Alberta families now must choose between caring for a loved one at home or cashing in assets and savings to purchase pricey private services," she says.

Armstrong is a health policy analyst and advocate for consumer organizations, including the Alberta Chapter of the Consumers' Association of Canada. She recently completed a speaking tour of British Columbia.

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Health care carnage in British Columbia

Announcements of cuts to health care translates into the loss of precious health care resources in communities across the province.

When the province's health authorities held their marathon press conference in late April to outline their plans for B.C. health care, it amounted to an admission on the part of the Campbell government that they would be slashing and cutting our public health care system.

Besides announcing they had been given a green light to levy user fees and they'd be cutting \$195 million in support services right across the province without a shred of evidence this would save money without compromising care, Campbell's hand-picked health authorities also said they'd be closing hospitals in 11 communities and 3,000 long-term care beds across B.C. They also added the changes would mean more than 10,000 front-line health care workers would be receiving pink slips.

Eliminating 3,000 long-term care

beds translates into the closure of facilities in many communities, like Kelowna's beloved May Bennett home that shut down in April, displacing all of the long-time residents there. That was after years of protests.

But if Campbell thought British Columbians were just going to roll over and accept whatever he had up his sleeve, communities across the province have proven him very wrong.

Announced closures of Moberley Manor in Revelstoke and Parkholm Lodge in Chilliwack sparked community protests that delayed the closures, but the government plans to ram those closures down the throats of the community, the people who live there and their families.

A whole slew of new closures are on the drawing board. Some are outright closures while others are slated to convert to "assisted living" — that means private, for-profit. According to a recently-released report by Wendy Armstrong for the Consumers' Association of Canada, in Alberta seniors, their families and taxpayers are bearing the increased costs as a result of



Halcyon Community Home in Nakusp is one of many residential facilities that the government says it will close despite strong community objections.

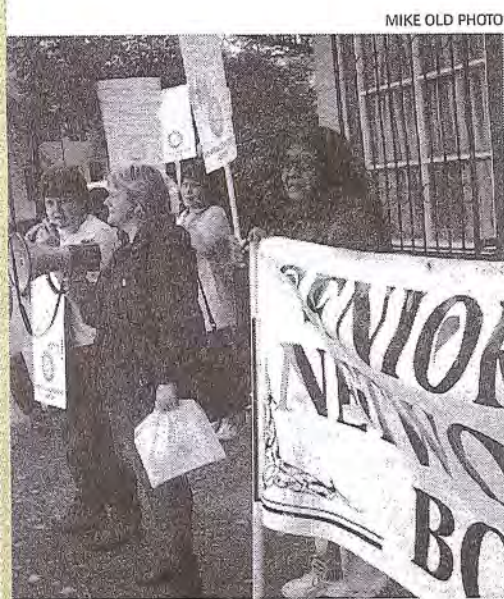
the introduction of a U.S. model of care that includes assisted living. In fact, the report shows how when the Alberta government cut funding to long-term care facilities and decreased the number of acute beds, real estate investors and private lodge operators cashed in with an expensive private-pay model imported from the U.S.

The Campbell government seems to be following that formula, but cannot ignore community outcries forever.

"Fighting back works and HEU members know that," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "They will continue to work with oth-

ers in their cities, towns and villages to stop the carnage of facility closures. And where hospitals and residential care facilities have already been closed, it is just as important to monitor the impact on communities."

CLOSED Enderby and District Memorial Hospital • Kimberley and District Hospital • May Bennett Home • St. Bartholomew's Hospital • Summerland General Hospital • Penticton Health Centre and Flora Esson House **NEED TO STOP CLOSURES AT** Cedarview Lodge • Cooper Place • Dogwood Lodge • G.F. Strong Rehabilitation Centre • Holy Family Hospital • Olive Devaud Residence • Rosewood Manor Adult Day Care • St. Vincent's Hospital, Arbutus and Heather Street sites • Cascade wing of Burnaby Hospital • Parkholm Lodge • St. Mary's Hospital, New Westminster • Vel Rey Lodge • Boundary Lodge • Cariboo Lodge acute care • Castlegar and District Hospital acute care • Halcyon Community Home • Kelly Care Centre • Mater Misericordiae Health Care Facility • Moberley Park Manor • Mount St. Francis Hospital • Penticton Retirement Complex • Pioneer Villa • Summerland Lodge • Tom Uphill Memorial Home • Victorian Hospital of Kaslo • Stuart Lake General Hospital • Cowichan District Hospital Laundry • Gorge Road Hospital • Greenwoods



MIKE OLD PHOTO

Another promise broken

A plan by the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority to close a 70-bed long-term care home on the Downtown Eastside is a broken commitment to that community to expand the facility and signals a new round of evictions and facility closures.

More than 50 front-line health workers received pink slips in preparation for closing Cooper Place and converting the building to "supportive housing."

The former health board had slated the 20-year-old facility for expansion

after the neighbouring Cordova House care facility was converted to housing in 1998.

"Closing Cooper Place will be a real tragedy for the Downtown Eastside," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "Colin Hansen should stop this move, consult with the community and take a closer look at the care needs of Downtown Eastside seniors."

Workers rallied with their supporters on the day they received the pink slips.

<<newsbites>>

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Baby-boom predictions out of whack

Waterloo actuary Robert Brown calculates that when baby boomers start retiring and cashing in their RRSPs, a large part of the predictions about the burden they'll place on the health care system will not materialize.

"My essential conclusion," said the professor of mathematics at the University of Waterloo in a paper he presented to the Canadian Institute of Actuaries' (CIA) convention this summer in Halifax, "is that a windfall

of tax revenue from the retirement system will come at exactly the right time, in exactly the right amount, to pay for the increased health care costs of the baby boomers."

Brown recommends raising the upper limit of RRSPs in order to enhance this phenomenon and says his projections rely on the containment of health care costs in general.

The CIA submitted their suggestions for controlling health care costs to the Romanow Commission.

Among their ideas: a national drug plan and prefunding health costs for baby boomers, similar to the Canada Pension Plan.

Trail-blazing California law

Earlier this year, in response to a crisis in California health care, the state legislature passed the Safe Staffing Law.

The new regulation sets minimum nurse-to-patient ratios in the state's acute care hospitals. The legislation was the result of a campaign waged for 10 years by the California Nurses' Association, a union that represents 45,000 nurses.

The law is considered a victory for patient safety in this state with the second highest patient to nurse ratio in the U.S.

Several nursing shortages caused by hospital downsizing endangered lives and was determined to have resulted in critical errors in diagnosis and medication.

The new law sets a ratio of 1:4 in emergency wards and 1:5 in medical and surgical units.

Friendly fire?

The summer 2002 issue of *Planning for Profits*, a business publication distributed by The Global Financial Group Network, cast a critical eye on Gordon Campbell's policies and style of governing.

• fiscal policy — "Problem is that

Board reinstates some union rights

The Labour Relations Board has ruled that displaced employees have broader rights than health employers tried to impose under Campbell's Bill 29. The board's decision sets out a series of directions that, in its words, provide a "fair, reasonable and balanced opportunity for employees facing job loss," within the confines of Bill 29.

The board's ruling comes after HEU and other unions applied to provide a broader protection zone to workers facing displacement.

Decision in brief

Displaced workers can now use their seniority over an expanded pool of jobs.

Facilities Subsector workers who are direct employees of the five regional health authorities are covered by the decision (the Community Subsector and the Provincial Health Services Authority are not covered at this time). That means the majority of HEU members are covered. Employer objections have prevented all HEU members from being covered.

Displaced employees at these workplaces now have an Expanded Pro-

tection Zone in which they can exercise their bumping and recall rights, their right to register for casual work (within some limits) and access unfilled vacancies, including promotions.

There will be 12 expanded protection zones in the province and a dovetailed seniority list for all covered workers in the Facilities Subsector, including members of HEU, BCGEU and IUOE for each of these zones.

New Expanded Protection Zones are: Northwest, Northeast, Northern Interior, East Kootenay, Kootenay Boundary, Okanagan, Thompson Cariboo, Fraser Valley, Simon Fraser/South Fraser, one region-wide Vancouver Coastal Health Authority region, South Vancouver Island and Central/North Vancouver Island.

The new options are effective June 28, 2002, with some retroactivity before that date. Seniority rights for all other purposes are not affected.

"The Board's decision is a setback for health employers, who were dumping skilled and experienced workers on the street," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt. "There are some problems with the decision, but displaced workers now have more options than health employers were providing."

Toll-free action

Across B.C. there's an outcry against the Campbell government for its cruel treatment of seniors when it comes to health care. Now, the B.C. Health Coalition and the Seniors Network-B.C. are launching a special toll-free number for British Columbians to report specific instances when Victoria's policies have prevented seniors from receiving the health care services they need. It's not a help line, but it is a way of expressing the stories of seniors

and their families. Here are other ways to get involved in the fight to protect seniors' health care services.

- call 1-877-600-1180 (toll free) and leave a message;
- email justsayno@bchealthcoalition.ca
- call the Seniors Housing and Health Coalition at 604-520-6621 or email info@seniorshousing.ca;
- to organize a family council at a care facility, contact the Association of Advocates for Care Reform at 604-879-7274 or www.vcn.bc.ca/acr/.

there is not much fat to cut from B.C.'s social programs. B.C.'s public sector was already the second smallest in Canada." [referring to tax cuts and subsequent cuts to social programs]

- softwood lumber dispute – opening up B.C. forests to logging upset the market-share threshold and "caused a U.S. forestry industry to demand for and receive protective tariffs."
- social programs – "When asked how he responds to critics who say he didn't follow through on health and education promises, he shoots back, 'some people don't want to lose their handouts.'"

- workers' rights – "Workers in Mexico now have more protection than workers in B.C."
- BC Hydro privatization – "Given the fiascos that have played out in California and Alberta energy deregulations, there is not much sense to Campbell's dogged pursuit of privatizing just for the sake of privatizing."
- treaty rights referendum – "Angus Reid, a veteran in the polling business, called the referendum 'one of the most amateurish, one-sided attempts to gauge the public will that I have ever seen in my professional career.'"

more at www.investment.com



MUZIN

HEU members will keep on fighting Campbell's attacks

The next eight months will be a defining period in the 58-year history of HEU.

We are under a vicious attack by the Campbell Liberal government that before the end of their fiscal year on March 31, 2003 has to justify its misguided budget planning that has resulted in a \$4 billion deficit. Rather than admitting that \$2 billion in tax breaks given the downturn in the provincial economy as a result of the softwood lumber tariff and the post-911 drop in tourism was at best premature, Campbell is balancing the budget by eliminating vital public services.

The government's contention that increased revenue will offset tax breaks has proven to be bogus. Their mantra that privatization is the solution to all

problems results in bizarre initiatives. We continue to export raw logs and jobs to the U.S. The sell-off of BC Hydro will result in domestic rate increases of at least 30 per cent and destroy one of B.C.'s best competitive advantages. Public-private partnerships such as assisted living homes for our elderly, liquor stores and toll highways, mean that we will incur a long-term debt to private corporations, add needless expenses for taxpayers and suffer a loss of control and accountability for service provision.

As court houses, government offices, forest and park services shut down, thousands of public sector workers are displaced, their families and communities disrupted and local economies savaged. The Fraser Health Authority is shipping dirty hospital laundry to K-Bro in Calgary. The public, cost-efficient and unionized facility at Tilbury was not even allowed to bid on the contract. Several years ago, K-Bro abandoned its operation on Vancouver Island to the public Cumberland laundry, since the entrepreneur couldn't bleed enough profits out.

The Coastal Health Authority is contracting out security services, oblivious to the expertise required as part of hospital nursing teams who deal with aggressive patients and residents. This conjures up images of an Alzheimer's patient being wrestled to the ground by the riot squad, before being carted away and warehoused in an inadequately-funded assisted-living facility.

Rather than consulting and working with all citizens in B.C. to rebuild a vibrant economy, the Liberals are intent on union busting, creating desperation for the poor, homeless and the disabled, subjecting our seniors to unnecessary hardship and fueling economic disruption and social unrest.

The 600 delegates at this autumn's HEU Biennial Convention have an essential role in debating, revising and confirming our action plan to mobilize and fight back. Reenergized and recommitted, we must be prepared to defend Medicare and a civil society.

The Liberals are intent on union busting



HEU PE members join retired PE 1st vice-president David Ridley at a September 19 rally in New Westminster.

1,200 rally in New West

New Westminster turned out in force on September 19 for a rally and meeting to fight the closure of St. Mary's Hospital.

On July 10 the Fraser Health

Authority said it would withdraw all funding from the 115-year-old hospital. The workers, hospital administration and the community vowed to stop the closure.

The Massey Theatre audience booed New West Liberal MLA Joyce Murray, but the harshest criticism came for FHA CEO Bob Smith and chairman Barry Forbes who were conspicuous by their absence.

HEU president Fred Muzin, PE member Casey O'Hern and Tilbury local member Ronnie Nicolasa stressed the importance of keeping the New Westminster hospital open and public.

Provincial government cutbacks are hurting HEU members and their families in communities that are dependent on a resource industry. Here is an update on three of the five families we have profiled so far.

Challenges are mounting

PAULA GILL, NELSON

THE MILL CLOSED in Slocan, so Paula Gill's husband Jarnail lost his job as a grader. Now he works on the green chain at the Talbot mill in Castlegar. "He's back to where he was when he started 30 years ago – on the toughest and most physical job at the mill," says Gill, who still works as a temp in the kitchen in Jubilee Manor. The permanent part-time job that she "owned" was cut, so she has exercised her bumping rights for a part-time job in housekeeping in Kaslo. That is where she will probably have to go when the temporary job ends. But she dreads driving the hour-and-a-half to Kaslo in the winter.



Adapting to changing times

WENDY BEKKEMA, POWELL RIVER

LATE LAST YEAR Powell River General Hospital LPN Wendy Bekkema feared that the project she was working on – an alternative-level-of-care rehabilitation unit – would be axed. When that did, in fact, happen, she says, "The loss was great. It was a project that was really working." Now she no longer works as an LPN, but as a care aide in a temporary job in the extended care ward of the hospital, and when that job is up, as a permanent part-time housekeeper in the facility.



Her husband Ron now works as an electrician at the mill.

The most difficult fallout from the changes for the 56-year-old HEU member who was looking forward to retirement in six years, may be that with only a part-time job she'll have to work another 10 years instead.

Uncertainty looms

GERI KLUGHART, CHEMAINUS

FOR GERRI KLUGHART and her family, uncertainty is still the name of the game. She continues for the present time in her job as an activity aide at the Chemainus Health Care Centre, but it could change anytime, so she takes one day at a time. Her husband Gord's guiding business – after the mill shut down, he lost his job – is doing so-so. "It's helped," says Klughart, "but it's not the same as full-time employment." He may have to spend next summer away from the family and work for a guiding outfit up north.



While Gordon Campbell is busy ramming through his right-wing agenda, British Columbians are busy building grassroots coalitions to fight them. They've found a common cause because they are fighting mad.

common cause

Here are the stories of four HEU members

who have joined with others in their communities to fight the government's attacks on workers and on the most vulnerable British Columbians. There are many more like them.



In Creston maintenance worker Terje Munkerud made these signs up to protest health care cuts.

Signs of cuts are clear in Creston

Terje Munkerud's signs are a big hit in the Kootenay town of Creston. He's selling the placards protesting government cuts to health care through a local auction house, and they're selling like hotcakes. One resident of Pioneer Villa bought one and had Munkerud, a maintenance worker at the intermediate care facility, attach it to the outside of the building.

"Those folks know the government says it's going to close the place where they live and ship them out to live somewhere else, and they don't want to go," he says.

Munkerud is part of the Save Our Communities Coalition in Creston, and he says the cuts to health care are going to be devastating to this town of 5,000 people – 14,000 if you count those in the outlying area.

To close an intermediate care facility that houses 40 seniors and 10 Alzheimer's patients, chop the

hospital's operating room and make cuts to home care, is just outrageous, he says.

"Sending people over a frequently-closed mountain pass for emergency surgery – is that getting health care when you need it, where you need it?" he asks.

"And closing Pioneer Villa, a place where the elderly can go into care but still be close to family and friends, is inhumane. To top it off, cutting home care, which might allow the elderly to stay in their homes. It's just insane," he adds.

He also fumes at the form seniors were being asked to sign before they went into respite care. The form stated that if they didn't take the first available bed, no matter where, they would have to go home or go into hospital to the tune of \$500 per day. "The part about the money wasn't written down, but that's what they were told," he says.

This preying on the vulnerable was stopped after cries of outrage forced the health authority to back down. Now they have a family member sign the papers. Munkerud sees this as only a marginal improvement in a cruel practice.

fighting to care

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"Using ways to educate like the puppets, dancing and theatre gets people talking, and not only that – asking questions," she says. "And it gives union members the courage to participate, too."

Pantelis says HEU members from other locals

often ask her how she gets people motivated to take part in her local's activities.

"Basically I talk to them and say, 'please, please, please – it won't take much time.' I talk a lot on the phone, following up. I ask them for their ideas. And I tell them we need their support – that we can't do it without them."

She knows times are scary for many HEU members now.

"I'm scared, too. I have three small children. But I know if we don't stand up for our rights, we'll lose our union. This government is out to destroy the labour movement. And I want those unions to be there for my children when they begin to work."

And she wants B.C.'s elderly citizens to have a safe, caring place to live if they need it, too.

Cowichan tells Liberals, "It just doesn't wash"

People in the Vancouver Island town of Duncan are outraged that the dirty linen from Cowichan District Hospital is going to be sent to Victoria to be laundered.

Outsiders might ask, "Why on earth would those people get so upset about a government announcement to close the local hospital laundry?"

Just ask Jesse Winfrey, who has been working as a cook there for nine years and is part of the Cowichan Citizens Coalition fighting government cutbacks in the area. "Well, first of all, any loss of jobs in a small community has a noticeable effect on the local economy."

But the anger of the townspeople in Duncan has deeper roots. This is a fight they've fought before and thought they had won.

Three years ago, the public regional health board invested \$1.2 million of the community's money into upgrading what had admittedly been an out-of-date laundry at the hospital. This followed a very public campaign against another proposal to shut the laundry. HEU staff proved to the board that a closure would, in fact, be a waste of taxpayers' money and that the resulting job loss would hurt the community.

Now, the new health authorities say they're going to close the laundry, but people in Duncan know there's no good business case for the move.

"The health authority bosses have been hand-

The health authorities say they are going to close the laundry but people in Duncan say there's no good business case for the move



Cowichan District Hospital workers joined others in their community to protest the closure of the facility's laundry.

picked by Campbell's Liberals to hasten the privatization of health support services. We know this is not about what is good for the community of Duncan," says Winfrey.

The citizens' coalition commissioned another study, in fact, to show authorities it still doesn't make sense. They say it won't save money. "And there are also logistical problems," says Winfrey. "They will have to deal with the Malahat Highway in the wintertime, when bad weather can mean the road is shut down. What will they do then? Dirty linen is not an option in a health care facility."

There are 12 people who work in the Cowichan District Hospital Laundry. After the closure there will be 1.7 full-time positions left in the CDH laundry – although no one is sure yet how this will play

out. Right now CDH cleans linen for many of the long-term care facilities and clinics in the area.

Those who receive displacement notices will be able to apply for the six laundry jobs they plan to create at Victoria General, where the laundry will be done, they say. But not all of them will be full-time.

The community says this is not good enough, especially when there's no good reason to shut down this laundry they worked so hard to keep. And paid good money to ensure it stay in the community.

So far, the government is not listening. But with the loss of the hospital jobs, the closure of the laundry and with kids affected by cuts to education, plus the effect on the local economy caused by the downturn in the lumber industry, this community is going to keep on fighting the Liberal government and what they are doing to small communities like Duncan. They'll be in MLA Graham Bruce's face at every opportunity.

"He can count on that," says Winfrey.

Slow-burning activism in Mission

Cindy Kelly and her husband Martin are so well-known for their activism in the Fraser Valley town of Mission that when the government started making noises about large-scale cutbacks to health care services, people came to them and said, "Do something!"

Kelly downplays her role as an activist, saying that sometimes it's difficult to motivate people to come out in large numbers, as outraged as they may feel.

"At first, especially with the issue around the private hospital in Abbotsford, people came out in large numbers. They really got that," she says. She feels the government backed down on that issue – but only temporarily.



KELLY

They've closed the maternity ward, the ICU and the CCU. The OR is sitting idle right now, though they say it's only temporary."

It's easy to get discouraged, but upon some reflection, she says that maybe hers is a "slow, steady, quiet activism."

The community of Mission has been threatened many times with the closure of the Mission Memorial Hospital, according to Kelly. "I really feel if they would have gone ahead with an outright closure, there would have been rioting in the streets," she says. "But instead they are 'nibbling the hospital to death.'"

That's probably because this is not the first community issue she and Martin have taken up – and it won't be the last.

On September 17 the Fraser Health Authority announced the closure of all laundry functions at four hospitals by November 15.

FHA has signed a 10-year \$5.8 million contract with K-Bro Linen Services, an Alberta-based company controlled by an American investment outfit. K-Bro is going to build a \$4 million dollar facility in the Lower Mainland somewhere, but until that is built, all laundry will be shipped to Calgary.

"People ask me, 'How is that possible? How can they save money?' I tell them, 'Look, it's not about saving money. It's about privatization and making profits,'" says Kelly. "I guess there's still work to do in educating people."

Crass opportunism

The world breathed a collective sigh of relief this summer as nine Pennsylvania coal miners were rescued from a flooded mine shaft.

U.S. president George W. Bush didn't hesitate to visit the town of Green Tree to bask in the glow of the mine workers, but he didn't mention that earlier this year, despite an increasing fatality rate in U.S. coal mines, his administration proposed cutting the budget of the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration by \$7 million. The proposed cut would result in a 25 per cent reduction in the government's mine-safety inspection workforce, according to West Virginia Senator Jay Rockefeller.

Leaflets at Save-On

Members of Local 1518 of the United Food and Commercial Workers employed at Loman Warehouse in Langley have been leafleting Save-On Foods stores since April when they received notice that Overwaitea Food Group (OFG) intends to contract its warehouse work to a new warehouse facility in Aldergrove – throwing the 250 Langley UFCW members out of work. They're asking customers to spend their grocery dollars at other union stores in their community.

The average length of service at the warehouse is 17 years, and many have been employed there for 20 to 30 years. The existing Loman warehouse is across the street from OFG's head office and supplies dry groceries to almost all Save-On and Overwaitea Foods stores in B.C.

Big win for U.K. health workers

Scottish health care workers who work for French multinational Sodexho at Glasgow Royal Infirmary were celebrating after achieving their objectives of £5 an hour minimum wage, a significant increase in sick pay benefits and a phased return to the terms and conditions equal to direct employees of the U.K.'s national health service. They were set to begin a third three-day walkout when the news came of the agreement on August 15.

Carolyn Leckie, the branch secretary for UNISON, the union representing the 300 striking porters, cleaners and other staff, said, "This was a David and Goliath battle between the lowest paid workers and a brutal multinational who pulled out all the stops to defeat us. They failed."

One of the tactics Sodexho used was to bus in teenagers from army camps in Wales and England in an effort to break the strike. But the effort failed and the would-be strikebreakers were returned to their camps.

The working conditions and pay of these workers were abysmal and they simply couldn't take it anymore. About nine months ago they formed a committee and got organized. "Sodexho is a low-pay company and they treated people like rubbish," said Finlay Kennedy, a shop steward at the hospital.

"When they started bringing in



Scottish health care workers proved workers can win against great odds – even if they work for giant multinationals like Sodexho.

scabs to do our work, it just made us more determined."

He says he thinks the workers' growing militancy and determination to go on an all-out strike made Sodexho back down in the end.

'Sodexho is a low-pay company and they treated people like rubbish'

"B.C.'s health authorities should take note," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"Private corporations lining up to cash in on the Campbell Liberals' health care sell-off come

with their own style of labour relations. And we don't want to see the heavy-handed anti-union practices used in Scotland in any British Columbian community. It wouldn't work here, either."

The previous week another Glasgow hospital – the Victoria Infirmary – decided to scrub its contract with

Sodexho and employ 250 cooks, cleaners, porters and switchboard operators directly.

Cleaning services had been under the microscope at the hospital following health scares earlier in the year. Workers and their union criticized massive cuts in the cleaning staff under the Sodexho contract.

Sodexho is a presence in many places around the world where public services are put on the auction block. It has won contracts to run services in many countries. In Britain, it runs programs in colleges, elementary schools and hospitals.

The Scottish workers' message to any group battling with Sodexho? "If we can beat them, anyone can." And that even where privatization of public services like health care has already occurred, it's not too late to fight for decent wages and working conditions and to return these services back to the public sector.

>>notebook>>



The gains of those with modest incomes are precarious

Tax cuts are Robin Hood in reverse

When the Liberals took power in B.C. the first order of business was a massive tax cut. Although the government promised that the cuts would pay for themselves, in reality they left a gaping hole in revenues. Painted into a corner by their promise to balance the budget by 2004/2005, the government has now instituted numerous spending cuts to compensate for the lost tax revenue.

These cuts have set in motion a dynamic we call "cost shifting" – the transfer of costs off government books and onto individuals, families and employers. A year after the income tax cuts were first introduced, with wave after wave of cost shifting, it is fair to ask if British Columbians are better off.

The Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives has released a new study analyzing this question from a fiscal perspective, comparing the size of British Columbians' tax cuts to the major new costs many now face, including higher drug,

post-secondary education and child care expenses as well as a jump in MSP premiums and de-listed health services.

The analysis reveals that while affluent individuals remain ahead financially, the gains of those with modest incomes are precarious. Overall, the tax cuts make our taxation system more regressive by giving upper-income earners a larger benefit. The cost shifts magnify this trend by piling disproportionate burdens on the shoulders of the poor and the sick. Taken as a whole, the effect of the new tax and spending regime is thus to make B. C. much more unequal.

With higher personal costs, as well as a general decline in environmental standards and the quality of government services in a more unequal society, even those who still hold onto modest tax cuts need to ask: were they worth the price? Use the cost shift calculator to find out if *your* tax cut was worth it at <www.costshift.ca>.

SYLVIA FULLER • PUBLIC INTEREST RESEARCHER, CANADIAN CENTRE FOR POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Health workers in Manitoba have agreement

5,000 Manitoba health support workers ratified a hard-fought new collective agreement by 63 per cent on September 20. With a strong strike mandate to back them up, negotiators from the Canadian Union of Public Employees and representatives of the bargaining units that on August 14 had rejected the Manitoba provincial government's last wage offer, met with mediator Wally Fox-Decent and reached a tentative agreement on September 17 on the eve of a strike that would have seen 13 Winnipeg health care centres behind picket lines.

The health care workers from Winnipeg hospitals and long-term care facilities had agreed to one last effort at mediation after 60 per cent of their members voted against the recommendation of their bargaining committees to accept the government's wage offer of 13.75 per cent over a four-year period along with a \$7.2 million standardization fund to help equalize salaries in the health care system across the province.

A new bargaining committee was set up after the rejection vote.

"We're doing everything we can to avert a strike, but the members in the 13 bargaining units are prepared to strike if necessary," said Lorraine Sigurdson, CUPE Health Care coordinator.

"Clearly these members said they didn't like the employer's wage offer and it was up to the two sides to restate their positions and make some constructive moves," she said.

Members of the Regional Distribution facility and Middlechurch Home rejected the offer that was ratified by four hospitals, five long-term care facilities, Cancer Care Manitoba, Riverview Health Centre and Rehab Centre for Children.

Sewing discontent in L.A.

The exploitation of garment workers in the developing world has gained widespread notoriety in recent years as organizations like the Maquila Solidarity Network exposed the unethical practices of well-known clothing manufacturers overseas, but many would be surprised to find that those practices are alive and well in North America.

Los Angeles is the garment capital of the U.S., employing 140,000 mostly female immigrant garment workers. According to L.A.'s Garment Worker Center (GWC), the majority of those workers labour under sweatshop conditions, without minimum wage or overtime pay, and in dangerous and unsanitary conditions.

In 2000, according to the U.S. Department of Labor, only one in three garment producers in the area complied with federal and state labour laws on minimum wage and overtime.



About 20,000 people in the Lower Mainland work in the garment industry. And according to Vas Gunaratna, spokesperson for UNITE Vancouver (Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees) only about 10 per cent of them are unionized.

Sweatshops abound. Many work at home and are paid by the piece.

UNITE is currently helping about 60 workers collect thousands of dollars owed to them by a Vancouver

There have also been gross violations of workers' safety and civil rights, like the 1995 discovery of 72 Thai garment workers held as virtual slaves in an L.A. sweatshop.

The situation cried out for a champion for these workers, and in January 2001, GWC – under the auspices of several labour and civil rights groups – opened its doors in the heart of the L.A. fashion district.

The situation cried out for a champion for these workers

Coordinator Kimi Lee says, "We see our role as primarily one of education. There is a high degree of misinformation and fear out there. A lot of workers in the L.A. garment industry do not have legal immi-

gration status, and they think they have no rights. We're here to tell them that's not true – they do have rights."

It is GWC's daunting task to try and improve the treatment of these workers who toil away in lofts, storefronts and clandestine factories and sew clothing they themselves may not be able to buy. Mostly made up of immi-

grants from Mexico and Central America, there are also sizeable contingents from the Chinese, Thai, Vietnamese and Korean communities.

About 500 workers have benefitted from the centre's educational workshops, leadership development and assistance with workplace issues so far. They're trained to teach other about workplace rights and the importance of keeping accurate records of hours of work, piece rates, the labels they are working on, etc. They also learn about how to evaluate workplace safety and health problems.

The centre helps with claims for unpaid wages, recouping about \$500,000 over the last two years. When that doesn't work, retailers that sell goods made in L.A. sweatshops are the next target. Lee says GWC's work of educating garment workers about where they fit in the garment-producing chain and how much they contribute to it has given many the courage to stand up for what is rightfully theirs. See <www.sweatshopwatch.org/gwc> for more information.

DALE FULLER

Sweating in Vancouver

knitwear company. After working 12 hours a day, often six or seven days a week, for less than minimum wage and no overtime, the company sold all its machinery and closed its doors without paying back wages.

Gunaratna says the workers still have not received their money, while the owner lives in a million dollar house in Burnaby.

UNITE has a website <www.unite-svti.org> that lists unionized garment producers in Canada, some of

whom sew in the union label only when they know the consumer will demand it. "Usually that means when the goods go to the States, they don't sew the labels in. For Canada they do," says Gunaratna. However, he adds, with the anti-sweatshop campaigns gaining ground, even American manufacturers are starting to want the union label. "People are pretty confident that if there is a union label in a garment, it wasn't produced in a sweatshop."

>>voices>>



There have been so many cutbacks that children are sitting on floors

Education cuts result in classroom chaos

Government cuts are affecting all of us. As a health care worker I am experiencing firsthand what it means to lose a sense of security and confidence that has been so hard-won over the last couple of decades. The government says we aren't deserving, we are not "entitled" to a salary we can support our families with, benefits that ensure a certain degree of well-being and good health. They call our jobs menial. They have no respect or understanding for what we do – which is provide an important and caring function in our society.

They treat teachers the same way and are running roughshod over our children. The community of Wells was able to push the government back on its decision to bus small children 150 kilometres a day over snowy mountain passes. They organized and fought back. How many other communities are there like Wells that don't have the resources or the wherewithal to fight back and win?

In my community of Mission, there have been so many cutbacks that children are sitting on the floors in my daughter's high school. Last year there were 25 to 30 kids in her classes. Now there are 40. My two other children in grade one and grade six have seen huge increases in the number of students in their classes, too.

I am lucky that my children are all good students, but I worry about others falling through the cracks. There are so many children who for some reason or another are disadvantaged and have a hard time with their studies. I am very concerned that they are going to be on their own now. With so many teachers gone this year, few are there to help.

Everyone says, "Children are our future." It's a cliché I know – but it's true.

The other cliché is "They're only paying it lip service." And that's what this government is doing to our children. It's a crime.

CINDY KELLY • OR AIDE AT MSA HOSPITAL

One more time

HEU took home four awards for communications excellence – including excellence in layout and design for the Guardian – from the Canadian Association of Labour Media (CALM) annual conference, held this summer.

HEU also garnered the coveted Muckraking Award for exposing the Liberal government's secret plans to build a private hospital in Abbotsford, best publicity audio-visual production for its Health Care or Tax Cuts video, and best poster for the Modernize Medicare campaign.

"HEU members are challenging Premier Campbell's health care privatization

agenda and working for progressive changes to Medicare in their workplaces and in their communities," says HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"Their stories from health care's front lines inspire and inform – and ensure HEU will keep winning awards for excellence in communications."

HEU opens Action Centre

On September 9, HEU opened the doors to its Action Centre.

This is a resource for HEU members who have lost their jobs.

There is help available in the form of equipment and advice as well as being able

to network with HEU sisters and brothers.

There are many resources in the community to help people in job searches, and the centre's mandate is not to replace or duplicate them. On the contrary, the centre will show people how to access the community's resources, help with practicalities like updating or preparing a resume and developing interview skills.

Help with Employment Insurance appeals will be available as well as tips on potential employers in their skill area.

The Action Centre, still in its early stages, has computers, a phone, general office supplies and reference books.

For information, or to volunteer, call Catherine Jeffrey at 604-456-7125 or Meg Stevens at 604-456-7084 or 604-880-9837.



On opening day, organizing director Sue Fisher (at right) talks to (l to r) Balwinder K. Dhillon, Ramandeep K. Mangat and Harjeet K. Dhahmi, all displaced in the recent firings at Renfrew Care Centre.

Scholarships for two members

Rebecca Ingbritson and Deana Paterson have won two of the first Columbia Institute Awards, designed to promote adult re-training and skills development in B.C.

Ingbritson works as a rehabilitation assistant at Delta Hospital and has been accepted at UBC to study occupational therapy.

Paterson, who works as an admitting clerk at 100 Mile Hospital and is raising two young children, wants to become a radiology technician and continue working at the hospital.

"We are delighted to have given out these two awards. As baby-boomers retire and desire access to health care,

BALANCING IT ALL

DALE FULLER

A desire for a stable workplace that would better serve her community was **EVELYN LUBE's** dream when she began organizing a union at the Westbank First Nations' band office.

ORGANIZER TOOK BIG RISKS

WHEN **EVELYN LUBE** asked her coworkers to sign a union card, she was asking them to risk and challenge a powerful employer who ran more than just their jobs. The elected leaders of the Westbank First Nations' band had absolute control over many other aspects of their lives.

In the 10 years that Lube worked for the band, she witnessed six changes in the political leadership of this 615-member band on the shores of Lake Okanagan.

"The whole body of work of the previous political leaders would be threatened, as well as some jobs and services," says Lube. With a staff of 65 employees, it made for an uncertain work environment.

And Lube, along with others, felt it was hurting the community. "When you have well-trained, experienced staff that know the issues and how to deal with them, the community benefits," she says. "When that gets overhauled every two years, the community suffers."

Over the last couple of decades, the work of the band office has grown in complexity. So, when older, experienced workers were turfed out, leaving newcomers with no one to mentor or train them, people from outside were brought in to fill the gap.

"It was such a waste, because opportunities to train and keep band members to serve our own people were often lost," says Lube.

Things came to a head four years ago with yet

another election. Rumours were flying of secret lists of workers to be fired or transferred. It was too much for the workers to bear any longer. Lube and a few trusted coworkers met with representatives of the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union – who already had a presence in the band, representing nursing home workers.

Bringing a union into a workplace – especially the initial stages – is a daunting task for anyone.

Workers who organize a union are bucking the power structure, but that situation is magnified in the context of a First Nations band. There unions are seen as a white invention and another attempt by a colonial power to shape the destiny of native people.

But Lube sees it in a different light. She doesn't see the First Nations traditions of peace and consensus violated by the way unions negotiate working conditions, pay and benefits. In fact, she thinks that in the changing structures of First Nations governance in Canada, unions can play a fundamental role.

"I think times are changing for First Nations," she says. "We are an emerging government. We provide government services. Other governments have labour unions. I see no reason why we shouldn't."

But to sign up enough people to join BCGEU, Lube had to resort to sneaking around to people's homes in the dark of night. It was risky for her and for anyone who signed a union card, she knew. The power of the bosses over her life and those of her coworkers was always in the forefront. But she was able to get the 32 signatures she needed, and talks soon

began. Now, four years later, negotiations for a first contract have yet to be concluded.

That's partly because this has all been happening in the context of a complete restructuring of the band's governance model. It's been going on for 15 years, and Lube has also been involved in those negotiations for the last two years. She is on the ratification committee, and the agreement has narrowly failed ratification votes twice. Now with another change in elected officials, a decision looms on making changes to the proposed governmental structure document and probably another ratification vote.

The union's bargaining committee decided to hold off until there is a new Westbank First Nations political structure in place. "We are really almost there with the first collective agreement," says Lube, who now works as an organizer out of BCGEU's headquarters in Burnaby, but who goes home to the Okanagan every weekend to be with her husband and two children.

It's been – and is – a hard struggle, for both the band and the union. But Lube is confident that in the end things will work out. "The labour movement and First Nations have a lot in common," she says. "Both struggle for justice and to empower those who have no power, to give a voice to those who have no voice."

DALE FULLER PHOTO



Now a full-time union organizer with the B.C. Government and Service Employees' Union, Evelyn Lube stands alongside images in Nora Patrich's mural in the union's Burnaby office.

we are going to rely on people like these two HEU members to fill an emerging skills gap in the province," commented Tobi Davidge, executive director of the Columbia Institute.

Jim Sinclair, president of the B.C. Federation of Labour and member of the institute's board of directors, added, "Education and training are the key to empowering workers and their communities in a changing economy. The Columbia Institute Awards are an investment in the future of working families."

HEU members are invited to apply for upcoming Columbia Institute Awards by visiting <www.columbianinstitute.ca> or phoning 604-408-2500.



Rebecca Ingbritson at work with elderly patient at Delta Hospital.

LEAP forward

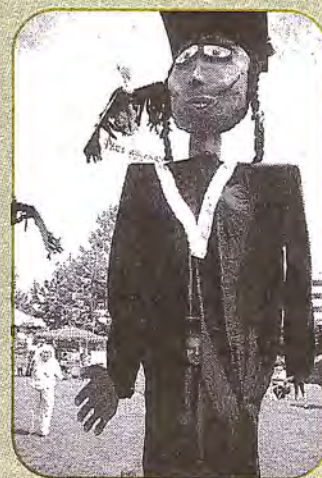
At Langley Memorial Hospital the employer, the Workers' Compensation Board and the unions representing health care workers at the facility have developed and implemented a program called LEAP – the Langley Early Assessment and Prevention Program. It was designed to provide assistance to those workers who are in the early

stages of a workplace injury so they can stay at work through access to onsite physiotherapy and other medical treatments and ergonomic intervention to fix the job.

The program is a cooperative venture. The workers' point of view was solicited and listened to in the hope that intervention will lessen the cost of injury for the employer and assist injured workers to stay healthy and working through a respectful, collaborative approach to treatment and workplace improvements.

Similar programs through OSHA are starting up at Vancouver General and Royal Columbian hospitals, where they are called PEARS –

Prevention and Early Active Return-to-work Safely.



Giant puppets like this were at the North Shore People's Picnic to remind everyone of government cutbacks to services like education.

Fun, information on B.C. Day

In August, HEU members from Lions Gate Hospital joined the North Shore Action Coalition, Seniors Network BC, North Shore Women's Centre, Council of Canadians, BCNU and others to host the North Shore People's Picnic at Waterfront Park in North Vancouver. Activities included a dunk tank, sumo wrestling, comedy improv, children's crafts and face painting.

Caravan for Care's message to FHA

Health care workers, seniors, unions and other supporters of public health care trucked down the freeway August 20

continued on page 14

>>factfile

Many Canadians are having problems obtaining affordable housing. A quarter of a million will be forced to sleep in emergency shelters this year, while almost one in five renter households is paying more than 50 per cent of monthly income on rent (that's more than 800,000 Canadians). *Sunspots/CALM*



Working TV is available across B.C. and all of North America. Check out the new high quality webcast by the Broadband server at <www.workingtv.com>. Latest at press time is the launch of author Naomi Klein's *Fences and Windows*, a new companion work to her international best-seller *No Logo* at the Committee of Progressive Electors fundraiser on Sept. 19, 2002. Introduction was by COPE Mayoral candidate Larry Campbell. See it on Working TV and stay tuned for the most recent webcast.

Change since 1988 in the number of emergency rooms in the United States: -1,235. Chance that an American filing for bankruptcy last year did so because of medical expenses: 1 in 2. Percentage change last year in the total profits of Fortune 500 pharmaceutical companies: +35. Percentage change in the total profits of all Fortune 500 companies: -54. Chance an American knows that more Palestinians than Israelis have died in political violence since 2000: 1 in 3 *Harper's Index*



AFTER THE SHIFT

DALE FULLER

After 10 years of volunteering in the Ironman Competition medic tent, **CHRIS MUSCULOW** couldn't resist taking the plunge himself, signed up and hasn't look back since.

PROUD AT 1,602

PENTICTON IS internationally known for its Ironman Competition, a demanding course of swimming, biking and running that this year's winner finished in about eight-and-a-half hours. Penticton Regional Hospital HEU member Chris Musculow came in 1,602nd out of 2,033 competitors at a time of 14 hours, 23 minutes and 43 seconds. And at 41 years of age, he's mighty proud of his accomplishment.

"This is my fourth Ironman Competition," he says. "The first time it took me 17 hours and 11 minutes, coming in just past midnight and therefore not winning a T-shirt. I was really upset after all that effort." But he signed up right away for the next year's competition.

Musculow volunteered for 10 years in the event's medic tent. After all those years of getting caught up in the excitement and the atmosphere, he started telling himself he would like to try. "I kept putting it off, year after year, until finally I signed up, put my money where my mouth was and started training."

He had never done anything like this, and at 218 pounds was far from being in good shape. (Now he is at a more healthy 175 pounds.) For the next year he trained, doing it all on his own, improvising his own program. "That's the way I did it, but I wouldn't advise anyone one else to do it that way," Musculow says.

Even seasoned athletes take a serious approach to training for what is considered to be this most grueling of athletic competitions, he says. Two years, at least.

In what has now become his routine training



HEATHER ARNOLD PHOTO

After swimming 3.8 kms and biking 180 kms, Chris Musculow sets out on wobbly legs to run the 42 kms to Okanagan Falls and back to Penticton.

schedule, he starts to prepare in January for the late summer event. He puts in about 15 hours a week on a stationary bike and treadmill, cutting out all junk food. In the spring he begins biking 80 kilometres every day before his 12:30 shift starts at the hospital. He runs for an hour-and-a-half after work. By mid-June he adds a swim every other day.

Nine weeks before his first race, he had to have a hernia operation, but went ahead with the race anyway. His friends and family told him he was crazy, but, he says, 70 per cent of this race is mental training. "You have to tell yourself to be tough, never mind the blisters and the pain – just finish."

"It's a fantastic feeling when you cross that finish line," says Musculow. He sees the benefits as better health and a different perspective on life's problems. "Problems don't seem so monumental after you've been through this experience."

continued from page 13
in the Caravan for Care. Their destination? The Fraser Health Authority offices in Surrey where they planned to tell CEO Bob Smith that the government's health care cuts and privatization must stop now. A caravan delegation of four health workers did speak with an FHA representative during the rally. CEO Smith was unavailable.

"Seniors are fighting mad about the changes in residential care with the shift away from facility care to assisted living units" said Joyce Jones of the Seniors Network BC. The 'Just say No' campaign, launched by the Seniors Network and the B.C. Health Coalition in June

for residents who didn't want to be arbitrarily moved, is still going strong in seniors' care facilities throughout the province, with measurable successes.

HEU president Fred Muzin spoke of the impacts of privatization on patient and resident care, citing the experience of the United Kingdom where the National Health Service is bringing health services back in-house after a series of disastrous experiences with private sector contracts.

Apologize, then do homework

HEU demanded an apology from Colin Hansen after the health services minister called the work of licensed

practical nurses and care aides menial on a Vancouver radio show on September 6.

"The minister's comments betray an ignorance of the role played by these health care providers," said HEU secretary-business manager Chris Allnutt.

"It's disgraceful that he doesn't seem to know that care aides provide the bulk of bedside care for seniors in B.C.'s long-term care facilities and that LPNs have a clearly defined scope of practice to provide direct nursing duties in a variety of settings. He should apologize and then do some homework.

"He showed he doesn't have a clue about solutions

to the nursing shortage when he suggested these members of the nursing team are on hand to pick up non-nursing duties," added Allnutt.

"But the Campbell government's policy to privatize support work will result in staff cuts, low wages, less experienced workers and in the final result more non-nursing duties left to nursing staff to perform," Allnutt said.

PridePages needs info

The editors of HEU's PridePages are asking for contributors to write articles.

They also would like to know if any of their mem-

bers have passed away so they can include that information in upcoming issues. Contact them at PridePages, c/o HEU, 5000 North Fraser Way, Burnaby, B.C., V5J 5M3 or go to their website <www.pridepages.org>.



Union sisters and brothers, including those from HEU, were front and centre at Vancouver's August 4 Gay Pride Parade.

OCTOBER

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

OCTOBER 7
Day of Defiance, Victoria

OCTOBER 7-11
HEU 23rd Biennial Convention
Richmond, B.C.

OCTOBER 14
Thanksgiving Day
HEU offices closed

OCTOBER 17
International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

OCTOBER 24
Mass rally at Liberal Convention, Penticton

NOVEMBER 11
Remembrance Day
HEU offices closed

NOVEMBER 16
Municipal elections

DECEMBER 2
International Day for the Abolition of Slavery

DECEMBER 3
International Day for DisAbled People

DECEMBER 6
National Day of Remembrance for women murdered at Montreal's Polytechnique L'École

Theatre on the cutting edge

M

any stories are emerging about people who are experiencing the consequences of the Campbell government's cutbacks to health care. We've all seen the story of the elderly couple in Chilliwack who were told they couldn't live together anymore — after 60 years of marriage. And the

mother and daughter in Lytton who both died soon after the 106-year old mother was told she couldn't stay in her home any longer.

A theatre group called The Virtual Stage has taken some stories about the effect of cutbacks on group homes, put some of them in a play and called it *The Birth of Freedom*.

It's a play about the denizens of a group home for mentally and behaviourally challenged adults. The playwright worked for over a decade in a group home and still works with the PRIYD Program at Family Services of Greater Vancouver and as a substitute special education assistant for the Vancouver School Board.

Andy Thompson says his play is fiction, but it was inspired by his many experiences as a caregiver.

In this brutally honest play, he portrays the lives of five adults who live together in a group home. Two are home caregivers and the other three are the ones they care for.

Josie is loving, smart and overly affectionate sometimes. Robbie is autistic who hurts only himself. Frank is overly sensitive and rushes out into the street causing great commotion when he is stressed. Isabelle and Bernard are the home caregivers.

Together the five form a family — a family that is thrown into turmoil after their house is slated for closure due to government cutbacks.

"The walls came tumbling down," says Janice St. John, an HEU member from Victoria General Hospital who saw the play on its last night at Performance Works in Vancouver in early June. "They're all separated from each other."

The play is graphic and violent at times. And it doesn't hide the fact that life doesn't always go by the book in a group home.

Josie becomes pregnant at a party the night before they all must move. In the end the government takes her baby away.

"Her screams still ring in my ears," says St. John. "The play makes you understand that everyone has the right to the basics

like food and shelter, but love is also a basic right."

THEATRE

The Birth of Freedom

Playwright:

Andy Thompson

Actors:

Scott Bellis, Dion Johnstone,

Andrew Olewine, Michael

Ryan, Naomi Snieckus,

Colleen Wheeler

by Dale Fuller

The Virtual Stage company says they are attempting to fuse cinematic and theatrical art forms and investigate how emerging technologies can support and incorporate such technologies. Their website at <www.thevirtualstage.org> explores many options in this arena — and there's more to come, they promise.

Thompson says there are no immediate plans to restage *The Birth of Freedom*. But the company is "workshopping" it right now, and it may come back in even better form.

If it does come back, St. John says the members of the Liberal cabinet should go see it to get a good idea of how their cutbacks play out on the ground. "They have no idea."

ALISTAIR EAGLE PHOTO



Bernard (Scott Bellis) and Isabelle (Naomi Snieckus) help Josie (Colleen Wheeler) through a crisis.

HEU PEOPLE



McKERACHER



POLAK



MURPHY



BIBO

Retired after 19 years

Lee Wah is retired from his maintenance job at Central City Lodge, where he worked for 19 years. He'll enjoy his grandchild and travel.

A book in her future

Elizabeth McKeracher's retired from her job in house-keeping and laundry at Richmond Lions Manor, and will write a book. A shop steward, she worked to protect the rights of health care workers.

Penticton retirements

Tina Oudman-Staples retired from her LPN position in PRH's surgical department on May 31.

LPN Shirley Flannigan will do whatever she wants now that she is retired. She's been an HEU member since 1969.

Laundry worker **Winnie Karpuk** retired after 30 years. She's going to spend time with family and friends.

Virginia Sheryle McGillis retired after 33 years. She thanks HEU for all its hard work on its members' behalf.

Perfectionist retires

Eagle Ridge food services worker **Greta Funk** retired in June. For many of her 18 years at ER, she served on the local executive.

Home playing bridge

Accounting clerk **Isabelle Anderson** retired in July after almost 13 years at Cooper Place. Her co-workers will miss her funny e-mails and friendly face.

Still caring

Care aide **Edna Larsen** retired in July from Kiwanis Care Centre. She'll look in on her friends there to "see if they are behaving themselves."

Strong man retires

Ron Dion worked for 28 years at G.F. Strong in the arthritis and acquired brain injury wards. Staff threw a party for the night-shift supervisor in May.

Director retires

Steven Polak, director of HEU's Okanagan office, retired August 1. His role as an advocate of workers' pension rights – begun in 1981 – will continue on until 2005 as the retired HEU trustee in the Municipal Pension Plan. He's very proud of having negotiated the group pension benefits for retirees. "In the 1980s, the members at RCH, Surrey and Lions Gate trusted and believed in me and we were able to achieve language changes that are now in the collective agreement."

He worked as a power engineer at MSA Hospital before he began at HEU's Provincial Office in 1981. Before that he served on the PE as trustee and senior trustee elect. In 1996 he was appointed to direct the Okanagan office.

New staff

New research analyst **Janice Murphy** was a recreation supervisor at Minoru Residence Extended Care and an HSA member. She's studying for her doctorate in education and looks forward to being a part of HEU.

In memoriam

Leo Bibb, a long-time HEU activist passed away this summer after a long battle with cancer. He'd been active in the VGH local since the 1970s, holding many offices. He was on the PE from 1997 to 2001, and he served on the 1986 and 2001 bargaining committees. When he retired from his job as maintenance supervisor in August 2000, he said, "Belonging to the union made coming to work worthwhile."

James Hennebury, a care aide/activation aide at Central Care Home in Victoria, was vacationing with his wife Mary in B.C.'s interior when he was tragically killed in an automobile accident. His wife survived. Hennebury was an HEU activist and secretary-treasurer of his local for two of the three years of its certification.

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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

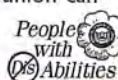
For support: afraid of being identified, feeling isolated, want to know your rights? Call for information on same sex benefits, fighting homophobia and discrimination.



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.

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• Vancouver Site
1-800-663-5813
• Abbotsford Site
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• Prince George
1-800-663-6539

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I'm joining the class action lawsuit to save BC Hydro from being privatized, deregulated and broken up!

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Letter of Intent
I, (name) _____, of (address) _____ in the City of _____ (postal code) _____ in the Province of British Columbia, wish to support the BC Citizens for Public Power ("the Society") in their class action against the Government of British Columbia and BC Hydro.

I am aware of the Society's reasons for the action and I support the action completely.

It is my intention and wish to be included in the class, should the British Columbia Supreme Court certify the action initiated by the Society as a class action.

I understand that Leo McGrady Q.C., of the law firm of McGrady, Baugh & Whyte, is counsel for the Society and the representative for plaintiffs in this matter.

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How to support the class action lawsuit to Save BC Hydro

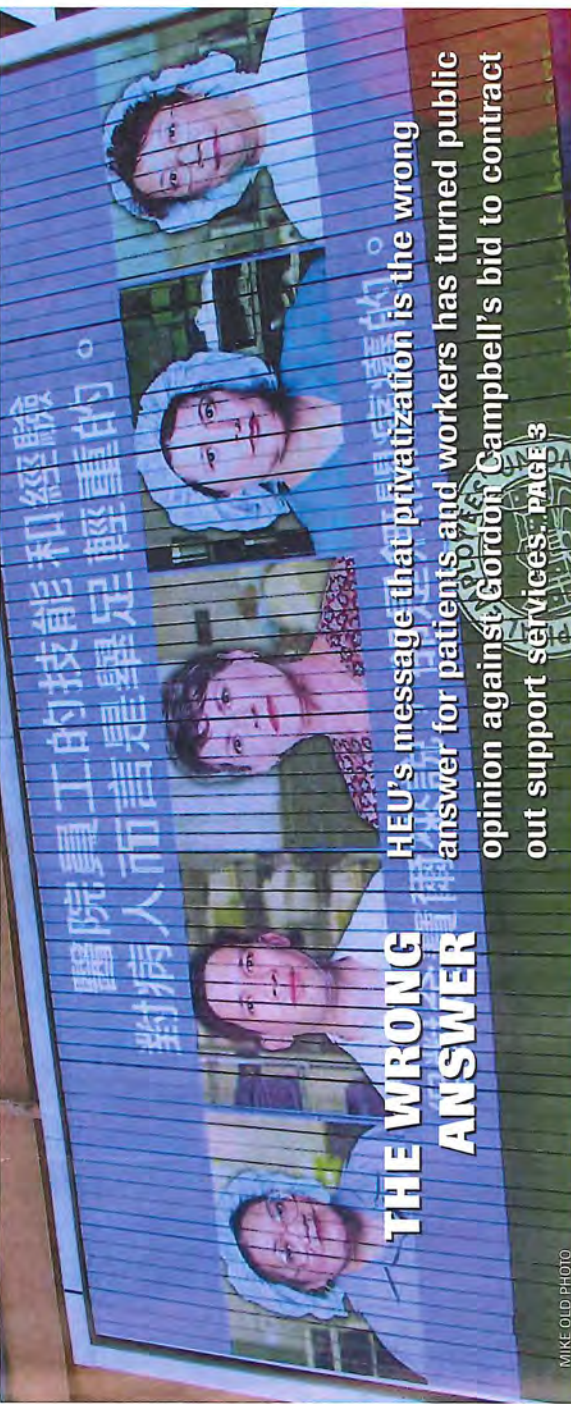
Sign this letter to show your support for the BC Citizens for Public Power Class Action Suit and mail to:

- BC Citizens for Public Power Society
53 - 1895 Commercial Drive
Vancouver, BC V5N 4A6

You can also download the letter at <www.citizensforpublicpower.ca>.

GUARDIAN

FALL 2002 • VOLUME 20 NUMBER 3 • THE VOICE OF THE HOSPITAL EMPLOYEES' UNION



THE WRONG ANSWER
HEU's message that privatization is the wrong answer for patients and workers has turned public opinion against Gordon Campbell's bid to contract out support services. **PAGE 3**

MIKE OLD PHOTO

Laundry to go
Shipping Fraser Valley laundry, jobs to Alberta. **PAGE 3**

Winning them back
Organizing the privateers who took over union jobs. **PAGE 4**

Safety threat
St. Paul's security guards won a national award for quality work. But Vancouver health bosses want to contract out security region wide - a threat to safety for patients, caregivers and the public. **PAGE 4**



Another target

Victorian Hospital in Kaslo is one of many health care targets in the Liberal government crosshairs. **PAGE 6**



STEPHEN HOWARD PHOTO

UNDER THE TENT

As this issue hits the mail, activists at HEU's 23rd convention map out new strategies to fight back. **PAGE 3**